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THEATRICAL PORTRAITS.

Published Oct.r 1825 for the Proprs. of the "London Stage" by Sherwood and Co. Paternoster Row

2010-235

THE

LONDON STAGE;

A COLLECTION OF THE MOST REPUTED

TRAGEDIES,

COMEDIES, OPERAS, MELO-DRAMAS,

FARCES, AND INTERLUDES.

ACCURATELY PRINTED FROM ACTING COPIES, AS PERFORMED

At the Theatres Royal,

AND CAREFULLY COLLATED AND REVISED.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY SHERWOOD, JONES, AND CO. PATERNOSTER ROW; AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

Gye and Balne, Typ.

ALL IN THE WRONG;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ARTHUR MURPHY.



Act II.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

SIR JOHN RESTLESS	BLANDFORD	BELINDA
SIR WILLIAM BELLMONT	ROBERT	CLARISSA
BEVERLEY	BRUSH	SERVANTS
BELLMONT	LADY RESTLESS	

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter SIR JOHN RESTLESS *and* ROBERT.

Sir J. Sir John Restless! Sir John Restless! thou hast played the fool with a vengeance. What devil whispered thee to marry such a woman? Robert, you have been a faithful servant, and I value you. Did your lady go out at this door here into the Park, or did she go out at the street door?

Rob. This door, sir.

Sir J. Robert, I will never live in a house again that has two doors to it.

Rob. Sir!

Sir J. I will give warning to my landlord instantly. The eyes of Argus are not sufficient to watch the motions of a wife, where there is a street door, and a back-door, to favour her escapes.

Rob. Upon my word, sir, I wish—you will pardon my boldness, sir—I wish you would shake off this uneasiness that preys upon your spirits. It grieves me to the heart, it does, indeed, sir, to see you in this way: banish your suspicions: you have conceived some strange aversion, I am afraid, to my lady, sir.

Sir J. No, Robert, no aversion; in spite of me, I dote upon her still.

Rob. Then why will you not think generously, sir, of the person you love? My lady, I dare be sworn—

Sir J. Is false to me. That embitters my whole life. I love her, and she repays me with ingratitude, with perfidy, with falsehood, with—

Rob. I dare be sworn, sir, she is a woman of honour.

Sir J. Robert, I have considered you as a friend in my house; don't you betray me too; don't attempt to justify her.

Rob. Dear sir, if you will but give me leave: you have been an indulgent master to me, and I am only concerned for your welfare. You married my lady for love.

Sir J. Yes; I married her for love. When first I saw her, I was not so much struck with her beauty, as with that air of an ingenuous mind that appeared in her countenance; her features did not so much charm me with their symmetry, as that expression of sweetness, that smile, that indicated affability, modesty, and compliance. But, honest Robert, I was deceived; I was not a month married, when I saw her practising those very smiles at her glass: I was alarmed; I resolved to watch her from that moment, and I have seen such things!

Rob. Upon my word, sir, I believe you wrong her, and wrong yourself: you build on groundless surmises; you make yourself unhappy, and my lady too; and, by being constantly uneasy, and never shewing her the least love,—you'll forgive me, sir,—you fill her mind with strange suspicions, and so the mischief is done.

Sir J. Suspicions, Robert!

Rob. Yes, sir, strange suspicions. My lady finds herself treated with no degree of tenderness; she infers that your inclinations are fixed elsewhere, and so she is become—you will pardon my blunt honesty—she is become downright jealous; as jealous as yourself, sir.

Sir J. Oh! Robert, you cannot see, that all her pretences to suspect me of infidelity are merely a counterplot to cover her own loose designs: it is but a gauze covering, though; it is seen through, and only serves to shew her guilt the more.

Rob. Upon my word, Sir John, I cannot see—

Sir J. No, Robert, I know you can't; but I can. Her suspicions of me all make against her; and yet it is but too true, that she still is near my heart. Oh! Robert, Robert, when I have watched her at a play, or elsewhere; when I have counted her oglings, and her whisperings, her stolen glances, and her artful leer, with the cunning of her sex, she has pretended to be as watchful of me: dissembling, false, deceitful woman!

Rob. And yet, I dare assure you—

Sir J. No more; I am not to be deceived! I know her thoroughly, and now—now—has she not escaped out of my house, even now?

Rob. But with no bad design.

Sir J. I am the best judge of that; which way did she go? [Horse-guards.

Rob. Across the Park, sir: that way, towards the—

Sir J. Towards the Horse-guards! there—there—there! the thing is evident: you may go in, Robert.

Rob. Indeed, sir, I—

Sir J. Go in, I say; go in.

Rob. There is no persuading him to his own good. [*Exit.*

Sir J. Gone towards the Horse-guards! my head aches; my forehead burns; I am cutting my horns. Gone towards the Horse-guards! I'll pursue her thither: if I find her, the time, the place, all will inform against her. Sir John! Sir John! you were a madman to marry such a woman. [*Exit.*

Enter Beverley *and* Bellmont, *meeting.*

Bev. Ha! my dear Bellmont! A fellow sufferer in love is a companion well met.

Bell. Beverley, I rejoice to see you.

Bev. Well; I suppose the same cause has brought us both into the Park; both come to sigh our amorous vows in the friendly gloom of yonder walk. Belinda keeps a perpetual war of love and grief, and hope and fear, in my heart: and let me see—(*Lays his hand on Bellmont's breast.*) how fares all here? I fancy my sister is a little busy with you.

Bell. Busy! she makes a perfect riot there. Not one wink the whole night. Oh, Clarissa! her form so animated! her eyes so—

Bev. Pr'ythee, truce; I have not leisure to attend to her praise: a sister's praise too! the greatest merit I ever could see in Clarissa is, that she loves you freely and sincerely.

Bell. And to be even with you, sir, your Belinda, upon my soul, notwithstanding all your lavish praises, her highest perfection, in my mind, is her sensibility to the merit of my friend.

Bev. Oh, Bellmont! such a girl! But tell me honestly, now, do you think she has ever betrayed the least regard for me?

Bell. How can you, who have such convincing proofs—how can you ask such a question? That uneasiness of yours, that inquietude of mind—

Bev. Pr'ythee, don't fix that character upon me.

Bell. It is your character, my dear Beverley: instead of enjoying the object before you, you are ever looking back to something past, or conjecturing about something to come, and are your own self-tormentor.

Bev. No, no, no; don't be so severe: I hate the very notion of such a temper; the thing is, when a man loves tenderly, as I do, solicitude and anxiety are natural; and when Belinda's father opposes my warmest wishes—

Bell. Why, yes; the good Mr. Blandford is willing to give her in marriage to me.

Bev. The senseless old dotard!

Bell. Thank you for the compliment: and my father, the wise Sir William Bellmont—

Bev. Is a tyrannical, positive, headstrong—

Bell. There again, I thank you. But, in short, the old couple, Belinda's father and mine, have both agreed upon the match. They insist upon compliance from their children; so that, according to their wise heads, I am to be married off-hand to Belinda, and you and your sister, poor Clarissa, are to be left to shift for yourselves.

Bev. Racks and torment!

Bell. Racks and torment! Seas of milk, and ships of amber, man! We are sailing to our wished-for harbour, in spite of their machinations. I have settled the whole affair with Clarissa.

Bev. Have you?

Bell. I have; and to-morrow morning makes me possessor of her charms.

Bev. My dear boy, give us your hand: and then, thou dear rogue, and then Belinda's mine! Loll toll loll!

Bell. Well may you be in raptures, sir, for here, here, here they both come.

Enter Belinda *and* Clarissa.

Bev. "Grace was in all her steps; heav'n in her eye;
In ev'ry gesture dignity and love."

Belin. A poetical reception, truly! But can't your passion inspire you to a composition of your own, Mr. Beverley?

Bev. It inspires me with sentiments, madam, which I can't find words to express. Suckling, Waller, Landsdown, and all our dealers in love verses, give but a faint image of a heart touched like mine.

Belin. Poor gentleman! what a terrible taking you are in! But if the sonneteers cannot give an image of you, sir, have you had recourse to a painter, as you promised me?

Bev. I have, Belinda, and here, here is the humble portrait of your adorer.

Belin. (*Takes the picture.*) Well; there is a likeness: but, after all, there is a better painter than this gentleman, whoever he be.

Bev. A better! now she is discontented. (*Aside.*) Where, madam, can a better be found? If money can purchase him—

Belin. Oh, sir! when he draws for money, he never succeeds. But, when pure inclination prompts him, then his colouring is warm, indeed. He gives a portrait that endears the original—

Bev. Such an artist is worth the Indies!

Belin. You need not go so far to seek him: he has done your business already. The limner I mean is a certain little blind god, called Love, and he has stamped such an impression of you here—

Bev. Madam, your most obedient; and I can tell you, that the very same gentleman has been at work for you too.

Bell. (*Who had been talking apart with Clarissa.*) Oh! he has had a world of business upon his hands, for we two have been agreeing what havoc he has made with us.

Cla. Yes; but we are but in a kind of fool's paradise here: all our schemes are but mere castle-building, which your father, Mr. Bellmont, and, my dear Belinda, yours, too, are most obstinately determined to destroy.

Bell. Why, as you say, they are determined that I shall have the honour of Belinda's hand in the country dance of matrimony.

Belin. Without considering that I may like another partner better.

Bev. And without considering that I, forlorn as I am, and my sister, there, who is as well inclined to a matrimonial game of romps as any girl in Christendom, must both of us sit down, and bind our brows with willow, in spite of our strongest inclinations to mingle in the group.

Bell. But we have planned our own happiness, and with a little resolution we shall be successful in the end, I warrant you. Clarissa, let us take a turn this way, and leave that love-sick pair to

themselves: they are only fit company for each other, and we may find wherewithal to entertain ourselves.

Cla. Let us try: turn this way.

Bell. Are you going to leave us, Clarissa?

Cla. Only just sauntering into this side-walk: we sha'n't lose one another. [*Exeunt Bell. & Clar.*

Bev. My sister is generously in love with Bellmont: I wish Belinda would act as openly towards me. (*Aside.*)

Belin. Well, sir! Thoughtfull! I'll call Mr. Bellmont back, if that's the case.

Bev. She will call him back. (*Aside.*)

Belin. Am I to entertain you, or you me?

Bev. Madam!

Belin. Madam! ha, ha! Why, you look as if you were frightened. Are you afraid of being left alone with me?

Bev. O, Belinda! you know that is the happiness of my life; but—

Belin. But what, sir?

Bev. Have I done any thing to offend you?

Belin. To offend me?

Bev. I should have been of the party last night; I own I should; it was a sufficient inducement to me that you were to be there; it was my fault, and you, I see, are piqued at it.

Belin. I piqued!

Bev. I see you are; and the company perceived it last night. I have heard it all: in mere resentment, you directed all your discourse to Mr. Bellmont.

Belin. If I did, it was merely accidental.

Bev. No, it was deliberately done: forgive my rash folly in refusing the invitation; I meant no manner of harm.

Belin. Who imagines you did, sir?

Bev. I beg your pardon, Belinda; you take offence too lightly.

Belin. Ha, ha! what have you taken into your head now? You create for yourself imaginary misunderstandings, and then are ever entering into explanations. But this watching for intelligence from the spies and misrepresenters of conversation, betrays strong symptoms of jealousy. I would not be married to a jealous man for the world.

Bev. Now she's seeking occasion to break off. (*Aside.*) Jealousy, madam, can never get admission into my breast. I am of too generous a temper: a certain delicacy, I own I have; I value the opinion of my friends, and when there are circumstances of a doubtful aspect, I am glad to set things in their true light. And if I do so with others, surely with you, on whom my happiness depends, to desire a favourable interpretation of my words and actions cannot be improper.

Belin. But these little humours may grow up, and gather into the fixed disease of jealousy at last.

Lady Restless *crosses the stage, and rings a bell at the door.*

And—there, now, there goes a lady, who is a victim to her own fretful imagination.

Bev. Who is the lady, pray?

Belin. My Lady Restless. Walk this way, and I will give you her whole character. I am not acquainted with her ladyship, but I have heard much of her. This way. [*Exeunt Belinda and Beverley.*

Lady R. (*Rings at the door.*) What do these servants mean? There is something going forward here. I will be let in, or I will know the reason why. (*Rings again.*) But, in the mean time, Sir John can let any body he pleases out at the street door: I'll run up the steps here, and observe. [*Exit.*

Tattle *opens the door;* Marmalet *follows her.*

Tat. Who rung this bell? I don't see anybody; and yet I am sure the bell rung. Well, Mrs. Marmalet, you will be going, I see.

Mar. Yes, Mrs. Tattle, I am obliged to leave you. I'll step across the Park, and I shall soon reach Grosvenor-square. When shall I see you at our house?

Tat. Heaven knows when I shall be able to get out, my lady leads us all such lives. I wish I had such another place as you have of it.

Mar. I have nothing to complain of.

Tat. No, that you have not: when shall I get such a gown, as that you have on, by my lady? She will never fling off such a thing, and give it to a poor servant. Worry, worry, worry, herself, and every body else, too.

Re-enter Lady Restless.

Lady R. No, there is nobody stirring that way. What do I see? A hussy coming out of my house! (*Aside.*)

Mar. Well, I must be gone, Mrs. Tattle: fare you well.

Lady R. She is dizened out too! (*Aside.*) Why did you not open the door, Tattle, when I rung?

Tat. I came as soon as possible, madam.

Lady R. Who have you with you here? What is your business, Mistress? (*To Marmalet.*)

Mar. My business, madam?

Lady R. In confusion too! The case is plain. You come after Sir John, I suppose?

Mar. I come after Sir John, madam!

Lady R. Guilt in her face! Yes; after Sir John; and, Tattle, you are in the plot against me; you were favouring her escape, were you?

Tat. I favour her escape, madam! What occasion for that? This is Mrs. Marmalet, madam, an acquaintance of mine, madam; as good a kind of body as any at all.

Lady R. O, very fine, mistress! you bring your creatures after the vile man, do you?

Mar. I assure you, madam, I am a very honest girl. [that gown?

Lady R. O! I dare say so. Where did you get

Mar. La, ma'am! I came by it honestly; my Lady Conquest gave it to me. I live with my Lady Conquest, madam.

Lady R. What a complexion she has! How long have you lived in London?

Mar. Three years, madam.

Lady R. In London three years with that complexion! it can't be: perhaps she is painted: all these creatures paint. You are all so many painted dolls. (*Rubs her face with a white handkerchief.*) No; it does not come off. So, Mrs. Tattle, you bring your fresh country girls here to my house, do you?

Tat. Upon my credit, ma'am—

Lady R. Don't tell me! I see through this affair. Go you about your business, mistress, and let me never see you about my doors again. Go, go your ways.

Mar. Lord, ma'am, I shan't trouble your house! Mrs. Tattle, a good day. Here's a deal to do, indeed! I have as good a house as her's to go to, whatever she may think of herself! [*Exit.*

Lady R. There, there, there! see there! she goes off in a huff; the way with them all. Ay, I see how it is, Tattle; you false, ungrateful—that gown was never given her by a woman; she had that from Sir John. Where is Sir John?

Tat. Sir John an't at home, ma'am.

Lady R. Where is he? Where is he gone? When did he go out?

Tat. I really don't know, ma'am.

Lady R. Tattle, I know you fib, now; but I'll sift this to the bottom. I'll write to my Lady Conquest, to know the truth about that girl that was here but now.

Tat. You will find I told you truth, ma'am.

Lady R. Very well, Mrs. Pert. I'll go and write this moment. Send Robert, to give me an account of his master. Sir John, Sir John, you will distract me. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Belinda *and* Beverley.

Belin. Ay; but that quickness, that extreme sensibility, is what I am afraid of. I positively would not have a jealous husband for the world.

Bev. By heaven! no earthly circumstance shall ever make me think injuriously of you. Jealousy! ha, ha! it is the most ridiculous passion, ha, ha?

Belin. You may laugh, sir; but I know your over-refining temper too well; and I absolutely will have it in our marriage articles, that I must not be plagued with your suspicions.

Bev. I subscribe, ma'am.

Belin. I will have no inquiries where I am going to visit: no following me from place to place; and, if we should chance to meet, and you should perceive a man of wit or a pretty fellow speaking to me, I will not have you fidgetting about on your chair, knitting your brow, and looking at your watch—"My dear, is it not time to go home? My love, the coach is waiting:" and then, if you are prevailed upon to stay, I will not have you converse with a "Yes, sir," and a "No, sir," for the rest of the evening, and then wrangle with me in the carriage all the way home, and not be commonly civil to me for the rest of the night. I positively will have none of this.

Bev. Agreed, ma'am, agreed; I subscribe to every thing you can ask. You shall have what female friends you please; lose your money to whom you please; dance with what beau you please; ride out with whom you please; and, in short, do what you please, without my attempting to bribe your footman or your maid for secret intelligence.

Belin. O lud! O lud! that is in the very strain of jealousy. Deliver me! there is my father yonder, and Sir William Bellmont with him. Fly this instant; fly, Mr. Beverley, down that walk—any where.

Bev. You promise, then—

Belin. Don't talk to me now; what would you be at? I am yours, and only yours—unalterably so. Fly! be gone! leave me, this moment.

Bev. I obey: I am gone. [*Exit.*

Belin. Now are they putting their wise heads together to thwart all my schemes of happiness; but love, imperious love, will have it otherwise.

Enter Blandford *and* Sir William Bellmont.

Bland. Sir William, since we have agreed upon every thing—

Sir W. Why, yes, Mr. Blandford, I think every thing is settled.

Bland. Why, then, we have only to acquaint the young people with our intentions, and so conclude the affair without delay.

Sir W. That is all, sir.

Bland. As to my girl, I don't mind her nonsense about Beverley: she must do as I will have her.

Sir W. And my son, too: he must follow my directions. As to his telling me of his love for Clarissa, it is all a joke with me. Children must do as their parents will have them.

Bland. Ay, so they must; and so they shall. Hey! here is my daughter. So, Belinda! Well, my girl, Sir William and I have agreed, and you are to prepare for marriage, that's all.

Belin. With Mr. Beverley, sir?

Bland. Mr. Beverley! [sir.

Belin. You know, you encouraged him yourself,

Bland. Well, well, I have changed my mind on that head. My friend, Sir William, here, offers you his son. Do as I advise you: have a care, Belinda, how you disobey my commands.

Belin. But, sir—

Bland. But, madam, I must and will be obeyed. You don't like him, you say; but I like him, and that's sufficient for you.

Sir W. And so it is, Mr. Blandford. If my son pretended to have a will of his own, I should let him know to the contrary.

Belin. And can you, Sir William, against our inclination, force us both?

Bland. Hold your tongue, Belinda; don't provoke me. What makes you from home? Go your ways back directly, and settle your mind. I tell you once for all, I will have my own way. Come, Sir William, we will step to the lawyer's chambers. Go home, Belinda, and be observant of my commands, or I'll cut you off with a shilling: I'll see you starve, beg an alms, live miserable, die wretched; in short, suffer any calamity, without the least compassion from me. If I find you an undutiful girl, I cast you off for ever. So there's one word for all. [*Exit. Sir William follows him.*

Belin. What will become of me? his inhumanity overcomes me quite: I can never consent; the very sight of this picture is enough to forbid it. O, Beverley! you are master of my heart! I'll go this instant; and—heavens! I can scarce move. I am ready to faint.

Re-enter Sir John Restless.

Sir J. No tidings of her, far or near.

Belin. How I tremble! I shall fall. No help?

Sir J. What do I see? a young lady in distress!

Belin. Oh!

(*Faints in his arms, and drops the picture.*)

Sir J. She is fallen into a fit. Would my servants were in the way!

Lady Restless *appears at the window.*

Lady R. Where can this barbarous man be gone to? How! under my very window! (*Softly.*)

Sir J. How cold she is! quite cold! (*Lays his hand on her cheek.*)

Lady R. How familiar he is with her! (*Softly.*)

Sir J. And yet she looks beautiful still.

Lady R. Does she so? (*Softly.*)

Sir J. Her eyes open: how lovely they look!

Lady R. Traitor! (*Softly.*)

Sir J. Her cheek begins to colour. Well, young lady, how fare you now, my dear? (*Softly.*)

Lady R. My dear, too!

Belin. Heavens! where am I?

Sir J. Repose yourself awhile; or will you step into my house?

Lady R. No, truly, sha'n't she. Vile man! I will come down to you directly, and flash confusion in your face. (*Softly, and exit from above.*)

Sir J. Where do you live, madam? [Park.

Belin. In Queen's-square, sir, by the side of the

Sir J. I will wait upon you; trust yourself with me. You look much better now; lean on my arm. There, there; I will conduct you. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Lady Restless.

Lady R. Now I'll make one among ye. How! fled! gone! which way? Is not that he, yonder? No; he went into my house, I dare say, as I came down stairs. Tattle! Tattle! Robert! Will nobody answer?

Re-enter Tattle.

Where is Sir John?

Tat. La, ma'am! how should I know?

Lady R. Did not he go in this moment?

Tat. No, ma'am.

Lady R. To be sure, you will say so. I'll follow him through the world, or I'll find him out. So, so! what is here? This is her picture, I suppose. I will make sure of this at least; this will discover her to me, though she has escaped me now. Cruel, false, deceitful man! [*Exit.*

Tat. Poor lady! I believe her head is turned, for my part. Well, I am determined I'll look out for another place, that's a sure thing, I will. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*Sir John Restless's House.*

Enter Sir John Restless *and* Robert.

Sir J. Robert, where is your lady?

Rob. In her own room, sir.

Sir J. Any body with her?

Rob. I can't say, sir; my lady is not well,

Sir J. Not well! fatigued with rioting about this town, I suppose. How long has she been at home?

Rob. About an hour, sir.

Sir J. About an hour! Very well, Robert; you may retire. [*Exit Robert.*] Now will I question her closely. So, so, so; she comes, leaning on her maid. Finely dissembled! finely dissembled! But this pretended illness shall not shelter her from my strict inquiry. Soft a moment: If I could overhear what passes between them, it might lead to the truth. I'll work by stratagem. The hypocrite! how she acts her part! [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Restless *and* Tattle.

Tat. How are you now, madam?

Lady R. Somewhat better, Tattle. Reach that chair. Tattle, tell me honestly; does that girl live with Lady Conquest?

Tat. She does, madam, upon my veracity.

Lady R. Very well, you will be obstinate, I see; but I shall know the truth presently. I shall have an answer from her ladyship, and then all will come out.

Tat. Your will hear nothing, ma'am, but what I have told you already.

Lady R. Tattle, Tattle, I took you up in the country, in hopes gratitude would make you my friend; but you are as bad as the rest of them. Conceal all you know; it is of very little consequence. I now see through the whole affair. Though it is the picture of a man, yet I am not to be deceived: I understand it all. This is some former gallant: the creature gave this to Sir John, as a proof that she had no affection for any one but himself. What art he must have had to induce her to this! I have found him out at last.

Sir J. (*Peeps in.*) What does she say! (*Aside.*)

Lady R. I have seen enough to convince me what kind of man he is. The fate of us poor women is hard: we all wish for husbands, and they are the torment of our lives.

Tat. There is too much truth in what you say, ma'am.

Sir J. You join her, do you, Mrs. Iniquity? (*Aside.*)

Lady R. Cruel laws of wedlock! The tyrant husband may triumph in his infidelity. He may securely trample upon all laws of decency and order: it redounds to his credit, gives him a fashionable air of vice; while a poor woman is obliged to submit to his cruelty, She remains tied to him for life, even though she has reason to entertain a mortal hatred for him.

Sir J. Oh! very well argued, madam. (*Aside.*)

Lady R. What a pity it is, Tattle, that we cannot change our husbands as we do our ear-rings, or our gloves!

Sir J. There is a woman of spirit! (*Aside.*)

Lady R. Tattle, will you own the truth to me about that girl?

Tat. I really have told you the truth, madam.

Lady R. You won't discover, I see: very well; you may go down stairs.

Tat. I assure your ladyship—

Lady R. Go down stairs.

Tat. Yes, ma'am. [*Exit.*

Lady R. Would I had never seen my husband's face!

Sir J. I am even with you: I have as good wishes for you, I assure you. (*Aside.*)

Lady R. This picture here! Oh, the base man!

Sir J. The picture of her gallant, I suppose. (*Aside.*)

Lady R. This is really a handsome picture: what a charming countenance! it is perfumed, I fancy: the scent is agreeable.

Sir J. The jade! how eagerly she kisses it! (*Aside.*)

Lady R. Why had I not such a dear, dear man, instead of the brute, the monster—

Sir J. Monster! She does not mince the matter: plain, downright English! I must contain my rage, and steal upon her meditations. So—so—so— (*Aside.*)

Re-enter Sir John Restless, *on tiptoe.*

Lady R. There is no falsehood in this look.

Sir J. (*Looks over her shoulder.*) Oh! what a handsome dog she has chosen for herself! (*Aside.*)

Lady R. With you I could be for ever happy.

Sir J. You could, could you? (*Snatches the picture.*)

Lady R. (*Screams.*) Mercy on me! Oh! is it you, sir?

Sir J. Now, madam; now, false one, have I caught you?

Lady R. You are come home at last, I find, sir.

Sir J. My Lady Restless, my Lady Restless, what can you say for yourself now;

Lady R. What can I say for myself, Sir John?

Sir J. Ay, madam; this picture—

Lady R. Yes, sir, that picture!

Sir J. Will be evidence—

Lady R. Of your shame, Sir John.

Sir J. Of my shame! 'tis very true what she says. (*Aside.*) Yes, madam, it will be an evidence of my shame; I feel that but too sensibly. But on your part—

Lady R. You own it then, do you?

Sir J. Own it! I must own it, madam; though confusion cover me, I must own it: it is what you have deserved at my hands.

Lady R. I deserved it, Sir John! find excuses, if you will. Cruel, cruel man! to make me this return at last! I cannot bear it. Oh! oh! (*Cries.*) Such black injustice!

Sir J. You may weep; but your tears are lost: they fall without effect. I now renounce you for ever. This picture will justify me to the wide world; it will shew what a base woman you have been.

Lady R. What does the man mean?

Sir J. The picture of your gallant, madam. "It's a pity," you know, madam, "that a woman should be tied to a man for life, even though she has a mortal hatred to him."

Lady R. Artful hypocrite!

Sir J. "That she can't change her husband as she does her ear-rings, or her gloves. Had such a dear, dear man fallen to my lot, instead of the brute, the monster"—Am I a monster? I am, and you have made me so. The world shall know your infamy.

Lady R. Oh! brave it out, sir; brave it out to the last. Harmless, innocent man! you have nothing to blush for, nothing to be ashamed of: you have no intrigues, no private amours abroad. I have not seen any thing, not I.

Sir J. Madam, I have seen, and I now see, your paramour.

Lady R. That air of confidence will be of great use to you, sir. You have no convenient to meet you under my very window, to loll softly in your arms?

Sir J. Hey! how?

Lady R. Her arm thrown carelessly round your neck: your hand tenderly applied to her cheek.

Sir J. 'Sdeath! that's unlucky: she will turn it against me. (*Aside.*)

Lady R. You are in confusion, are you, sir? But why should you? You meant no harm—"You are safe with me, my dear. Will you step into my house, my love?" Yes, sir, you would fain bring her into my very house.

Sir J. My Lady Restless, this evasion is mean and paltry. You beheld a lady in distress.

Lady R. Oh! I know it, sir; and you, tender-hearted man, could caress her out of mere compassion! you could gaze wantonly out of charity; from pure benevolence of disposition, you would convey her to some convenient dwelling. O, Sir John, Sir John!

Sir J. Madam, this well-acted passion—

Lady R. Don't imagine she has escaped me, sir.

Sir J. You may talk and rave, ma'am, but I will find, by means of this instrument here in my hand, who your darling is. I will go about it straight. Ungrateful, treacherous woman! [*Exit.*

Lady R. Yes; go under that pretext, in pursuit of your licentious pleasures. This ever has been his scheme to cloke his wicked practices. Abandoned man! to face me down, too, after what my eyes so plainly beheld! I wish I could wring that secret out of Tattle. I'll step to my own room directly, and try by menaces, by wheedling, by fair means, by foul means, by every means, to wrest it from her. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Park.*

Enter SIR JOHN RESTLESS, *followed by* ROBERT.

Sir J. Come hither, Robert. Look at this picture.

Rob. Yes, sir.

Sir J. Let me watch his countenance. (*Aside.*) Well, well! dost thou know it, Robert?

Rob. 'Tis a mighty handsome picture, sir.

Sir J. A handsome picture! (*Aside.*)

Rob. The finest lady in the land need not desire a handsomer man, sir.

Sir J. How well he knows the purposes of it! (*Aside.*) Well, well! honest Robert, tell me: well; who is it? tell me.

Rob. Sir!

Sir J. You know whose picture it is; I know you do. Well, well; who—who—who is it?

Rob. Upon my word, sir, it is more than I can tell.

Sir J. Not know! I am convinced you do; so own the truth: don't be a villain, don't.

Rob. As I am an honest man, sir—

Sir J. Be an honest man then, and tell me. Did you never see such a smooth-faced, fiery-eyed, warm-complexioned, taper young fellow, here about my house?

Rob. Never, sir.

Sir J. Not with my wife? to drink chocolate of a morning, tea of an evening? Come, honest Robert, I'll give you a lease of a good farm. What say you? A lease for your life? Well, well! you may take your wife's life into the bargain. Well!

Rob. Believe me, Sir John, I never saw—

Sir J. I'll add your child's life. Come, speak out. Your own life, your wife's life, and your child's! Now, now! a lease for three lives! Now, Robert.

Rob. As I hope for mercy, I never saw any such a gentleman.

Sir J. Robert, Robert, you are bribed by my wife.

Rob. No, as I am a sinner, sir.

Sir J. And the worst of sinners you will be, if you are a confederate in this plot against my peace and honour. Reflect on that, Robert.

Enter a Footman.

Foot. Pray, does not Sir John Restless live somewhere hereabout? [with him?

Sir J. He does, friend; what is your business

Foot. My business is with his lady.

Sir J. I guessed as much. (*Aside.*)

Foot. I have a letter here for my Lady Restless, sir.

Sir J. A letter for my lady! from whom, pray?

Foot. From my Lord Conquest.

Sir J. My Lord Conquest! Very well, friend: you may give the letter to me. I am Sir John Restless; there is my house. Let me have the letter: I will take care of it. [own hand.

Foot. I was ordered to deliver it into my lady's

Sir J. The devil you was! I must have the letter; I'll buy it of the rascal. (*Aside.*) Here, take this for your trouble, friend; (*gives him money*) and I'll take care of the letter.

Foot. I humbly thank your honour. [*Exit.*

Sir J. Now, now, now; let me see what this is. Now, my Lady Restless; now, false one, now!—(*Reads.*) "*Madam, My Lady Conquest being gone into the country for a few days, I have judged it proper to send a speedy answer to your's, and to assure you, for your peace of mind, that you need not entertain the least suspicion of Marmalet, my lady's woman. She has lived some years in my family, and I know her by experience to be an honest, trusty girl, incapable of making mischief between your ladyship and Sir John. I have the honour to be, madam, your very humble servant,* CONQUEST." So, so, so! Marmalet is a trusty girl! one that will not make mischief between man and wife! that is to say, she will discover nothing against my Lady Restless! for her peace of mind he lets madam know all this too! She may go on boldly now; my Lady Conquest is gone into the country, Marmalet is trusty, and my lord has given her the most speedy notice. Very well, very well! proofs thicken upon proofs. Shall I go directly and challenge his lordship? No, no, that won't do. Watch him closely, that will do better. If I could have a word in private with the maid: Robert, Robert, come hither. Step to my Lord Conquest's, but with caution proceed, inquire there for Marmalet, the maid.

Rob. I know her, sir.

Sir J. He knows her! (*Aside.*)

Rob. She visits our Tattle, sir.

Sir J. Visits our Tattle! it is a plain case. (*Aside.*) Inquire for that girl, but with caution: tell her to meet me privately, unknown to anybody, in the dusk of the evening in the Birdcage-walk

Rob. I will, sir. [yonder.

Sir J. And don't let Tattle see her. Tattle has engaged her in her mistress's interest. I see how it is. Don't let any of my servants see her: go, directly, Robert. Now shall I judge what regard you have for me. But, harkye! come hither! a word with you. Should it be known that this girl converses with me; should my lady have the least item of it, they will be upon their guard. Let her come wrapped up in darkness; concealed from every observer, with a mask on. Ay! let it be with a mask.

Rob. A mask, Sir John? Won't that make her be remarked the more?

Sir J. No, no, let her come masked; I will make every thing sure. Robert, bring this about for me, and I am your friend for ever.

Rob. I will do my endeavour, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir J. I'll now take a turn round the Park, and try if I can find the minion this picture belongs to. [*Exit.*

Enter BEVERLEY *and* BELLMONT.

Bev. Yes, they had almost surprised us; but at sight of her father, Belinda gave the word, and away I darted down towards the canal.

Bell. Was Sir William with him?

Bev. Yes; they had been plotting our ruin. But we shall out-officer them, it is to be hoped.

Bell. Yes; and it is also to be feared that we shall not.

Bev. Hey! you alarm me; no new mine sprung!

Bell. Nothing but the old story. Our wise fathers

are determined. At the turning of yonder corner, they came both full tilt upon Clarissa and me.

Bev. Well! and how—what passed?

Bell. Why, they were scarcely civil to your sister. Sir William fixed his surly eye upon me for some time; at last he began, "You will run counter to my will, I see; you will be ever dangling after that girl: but Mr. Blandford and I have agreed upon the match;" and then he peremptorily commanded me to take my leave of Clarissa, and fix my heart upon your Belinda.

Bev. And did you so?

Bell. And did I so! How can you ask such a question? "Sir," says I, "I must see the lady home;" and off I marched, arm in arm with her, my father bawling after me, and I bowing to him, "Sir, your humble servant, I wish you a good morning, sir." He continued calling out; I kissed my hand to him; and so we made our escape.

Bev. And where have you left Clarissa?

Bell. At home; at your house.

Bev. Well, and do you both continue in the same mind? is to-morrow to be your wedding-day?

Bell. Now are you conjuring up a thousand horrid fancies to torment yourself. But don't be alarmed, my dear Beverley, I shall leave you your Belinda, and content myself with the honour of being your brother-in-law.

Bev. Sir, the honour will be to me—but, uneasy! ha, ha! no, no; I am not uneasy; nor shall I ever be so again.

Bell. Keep that resolution, if you can. Do you dine with us at the club?

Bev. With all my heart: I'll attend you.

Bell. That's right; let us turn towards the Mall, and saunter there till dinner.

Bev. No, I can't go that way yet. I must inquire how Belinda does, and what her father said to her. I have not seen her since we parted in the morning.

Bell. And now, according to custom, you will make her an apology for leaving her, when there was an absolute necessity for it; and you'll fall to an explanation of circumstances, that require no explanation at all, and refine upon things, and torment yourself and her into the bargain.

Bev. Nay, if you begin with your raillery, I am off: your servant; *à l'honneur.* [*Exit.*

Bell. Poor Beverley! Though a handsome fellow, and of some agreeable talents, he has such a strange diffidence in himself, and such a solicitude to please, that he is every moment of his life most ingeniously elaborating his own uneasiness.

Re-enter Sir John Restless.

Sir J. Not yet, not yet; nobody like it as yet. Ha! who is that hovering about my house? If that should be he now! I'll examine him nearer. (*Aside.*) Pray, sir—What the devil shall I say? (*Aside.*)—Pray, sir—

Bell. Sir?

Sir J. I beg pardon for troubling you, sir; but, pray, what o'clock is it by your watch?

Bell. By my watch, sir? I'll let you know in a moment.

Sir J. Let me examine him now. (*Aside. Looks at him, and then at the picture.*)

Bell. Egad! I am afraid my watch is not right: it must be later. (*Looking at his watch.*)

Sir J. It is not like him. (*Aside. Comparing the picture.*)

Bell. It does not go, I am afraid. (*Puts it to his ear.*)

Sir J. The eye—No! (*Aside.*)

Bell. Well, sir, by my watch it wants a quarter of three.

Sir J. It is not he; and, yet—no, no, no, I am still to seek. (*Aside.*)

Re-enter Beverley.

Bev. Bellmont! another word with you.

Sir J. Here comes another; they are all swarming about my house. (*Aside.*)

Bev. I have seen her; I have seen Belinda, my boy: she will be with Clarissa, in the Park, immediately after dinner, you rogue.

Sir J. I want to see his face; this may be the original. (*Aside.*)

Bev. Her father has been rating her in his usual manner; but your marriage with my sister will settle every thing.

Sir J. I'll walk round him. (*Aside.*) Loll, toll, loll. (*Sings.*) Ha! it has his air. (*Aside. Looks at him.*) Loll, toll, loll: (*sings*) and it has his eye. (*Aside.*) Loll, toll, loll. (*Sings. Walks to and fro.*)

Bev. Pr'ythee, Bellmont, don't be such a dangling lover, but marry at once, for the sake of your friend.

Sir J. It has his nose for all the world. (*Aside.*)

Bell. Do you spirit your sister up to keep her resolution, and to-morrow puts you out of all pain.

Sir J. Loll, toll, loll—it has his complexion; the same glowing, hot, amorous complexion. (*Aside. Sings, and looks uneasy.*)

Bev. Who is this gentleman?

Bell. An odd fellow he seems to be.

Sir J. Loll, toll, loll—it has his shoulders. Loll, toll, loll—ay! and I fancy the mole upon the cheek, too. Loll, toll, loll. [keepers?

Bev. He seems mad, I think. Where are his

Sir J. Begging your pardon, sir; pray, (*looking at him and the picture*) pray, sir, can you tell whether we shall have a Spanish war?

Bev. Not I, truly, sir. Here is a politician out of his senses. (*To Bellmont.*)

Bell. He has been talking to me too.

Sir J. He has the mole, sure enough. (*Aside.*)

Bev. Let us step this way, to avoid this impertinent blockhead.

Sir J. Ay! he wants to sneak off. Guilt, guilt! conscious guilt! I'll make sure of him. (*Aside.*) Pray, sir—I beg your pardon, is not your name Wildair?

Bev. No, sir; Beverley, at your service.

Sir J. Have you no relation of that name?

Bev. None.

Sir J. You are very like a gentleman of that name, a friend of mine, whose picture I have here. Will you give me leave just to—(*Compares him with the picture.*)

Bev. An odd adventure this, Bellmont!

Bell. Very odd, indeed.

Bev. Do you find any likeness, sir?

Sir J. Your head a little more that way, if you please. Ay, ay, it is he! Yes, a plain case: this is my man, or, rather, this is my wife's man. (*Aside.*)

Bev. Did you ever know anything so whimsical?

Bell. Never. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir J. They are both laughing at me. Ay, and I shall be laughed at by the whole town, pointed at, hooted at, and gazed at! (*Aside.*)

Bev. What do I see? 'Sdeath! the setting of that picture is like what I gave to Belinda. Distraction! if it is the same—(*Drawing near Sir J.*)

Sir J. He makes his approach, and means, I suppose, to snatch it out of my hand. But I'll prevent him; and so, into my pocket it goes. There, lie safe there. (*Aside.*)

Bev. Confusion! he puts it up in a hurry. Will you be so good, sir, as to favour me with a—

Sir J. Sir, I wish you a good day.

Bev. With a sight of that picture for a moment?

Sir J. The picture, sir! Pho! a mere daub.

Bev. A motive of curiosity, sir.

Sir J. It is not worth your seeing. I wish you a good day.

Bell. I shall take it as a favour.

Sir J. A paltry thing! I have not a moment to spare; my family is waiting dinner. Sir, I wish you a good morning. (*Runs into the house.*)

Bev. Death and fire! Bellmont, my picture!

Bell. O, no; no such thing.

Bev. But I am sure of it. If Belinda—

Bell. What, relapsing into suspicion again?

Bev. Sir, I have reason to suspect. She slights me, disdains me, treats me with contempt.

Bell. But, I tell you, that unhappy temper of your's—Pr'ythee, man, leave teasing yourself, and let us adjourn to dinner.

Bev. No, sir; I sha'n't dine at all. I am not well.

Bell. Ridiculous! How can you be so absurd? I'll bet you twenty pounds that is not your picture.

Bev. Done: I take it.

Bell. With all my heart: and I'll tell you more; if it be your's, I will give you leave to be as jealous of her as you please. Come, now, let us adjourn.

Bev. I attend you. In the evening we shall know the truth. If it be that I gave Belinda, she is false, and I am miserable. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Sir John Restless, *peeping after them.*

Sir J. There he goes! there he goes! the destroyer of my peace and happiness! I'll follow him, and make sure that he has given me the right name; and, then, my Lady Restless, the mine is sprung, and I have done with you for ever. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*The Park.*

Enter Belinda *and* Clarissa.

Belin. But have you really fixed everything, Clarissa? [me his.

Cla. Positively; and to-morrow morning makes

Belin. To-morrow morning!

Cla. Yes, to-morrow morning I release Mr. Bellmont from his fetters, and resign my person to him.

Belin. Why, that is what all we poor women, after all the victories of our charms, all the triumphs of our beauty, and all the murders of our eyes, must come to at last.

Cla. Well, and in that we but imitate the men; don't we read of their conquering whole kingdoms, and then submitting at last to be governed by the vanquished?

Belin. Very true; but tell me now, am not I a very good girl to resign such a man to you?

Cla. Why, indeed, I must confess the obligation.

Belin. Ay! but to resign him for one whose temper does not promise that I shall live under so mild a government.

Cla. How do you mean?

Belin. Why, Mr. Beverley's strange caprices, suspicions, and unaccountable whimsies, are enough to alarm one upon the brink of matrimony.

Cla. Well, I vow I can't help thinking, Belinda, that you are a little subject to vain surmises and suspicions yourself.

Belin. Now, you are an insincere girl. You know I am of a temper too generous, too open—

Cla. I grant all that; but by the constant repetition of the same doubts, I should not wonder to see you most heartily jealous of him in the end.

Belin. Jealous! O heavens! Jealous indeed!

Cla. Well, I say no more. As to my brother, here he comes, and let him speak for himself.

Enter Beverley *and* Bellmont.

Bell. Well, upon my soul, Beverley, you make me laugh at you; but, come, there's an end of the matter. Ladies, your most obedient. I hope we have not transgressed our time.

Belin. Not in the least; you are both very exact. True as the dial to the sun.

Bev. Although it be not shone upon,

Belin. Although it be not shone upon, Mr. Beverley! Why with that dejected air, pray, sir?

Bell. There again, now!-you two are going to commence wrangling lovers once more. Apropos, Belinda—now, Beverley, you shall see—be so good, ma'am, as to let me see this gentleman's picture.

Belin. His picture! What can you want it for? You shall have it. (*Searching her pocket.*)

Bell. Now, Beverley, do you confess how wrong you have been? (*Apart to Bev.*)

Bev. Why, I begin to see my mistake. Say not a word to her; she'll never forgive me, if you discover my infirmity. (*Apart.*)

Belin. It is not in that pocket: it must be here. (*Searches.*)

Bell. You have been sad company on account of this strange suspicion. (*Apart.*)

Bev. I own it; let it drop; say no more. (*Apart.*)

Belin. Well, I protest and vow! where can it be? Come, gentlemen, this is some trick of your's; you have it among ye. Mr. Bellmont, Mr. Beverley, pray return it to me.

Bev. No, ma'am, it is no trick of our's. (*Angrily.*)

Belin. As I live and breathe, I have not got it.

Bev. What think you now, Bellmont? (*Apart.*)

Bell. She'll find it presently, man; don't shew your humours; be upon your guard; you'll undo yourself else. (*Apart.*) Clarissa, shall you and I saunter down this walk?

Cla. My brother seems out of humour; what is the matter now?

Bell. I'll tell you presently: let us step this way. [*Exit, with Clarissa.*

Belin. Well, I declare, I don't know what is become of this odious picture.

Bev. This odious picture! how she expresses it! (*Aside.*)

Belin. You may look grave, sir, but I have it not.

Bev. I know you have not, ma'am; and though you may imagine— [what?

Belin. Imagine! What do you mean? Imagine

Bev. Don't imagine that I am to be led blindfold as you please.

Belin. Heavens! with what gravity that was said!

Bev. I am not to be deceived; I can see all round

Belin. You can? [me.

Bev. I can, madam.

Belin. Well, and how do you like your prospect?

Bev. Oh! you may think to pass it off in raillery; but that picture I have this day seen in the hands of another; in the hands of the very gentleman to whom you gave it.

Belin. To whom I gave it? Have a care, sir; this is another symptom of your jealous temper.

Bev. But I tell you, madam, I saw it in his hand.

Belin. Who is the gentleman? What's his name!

Bev. His name, madam! 'Sdeath! I forgot that circumstance. Though I don't know his name? madam, I know his person; and that is sufficient.

Belin. Go on, sir; you are making yourself very ridiculous in this matter. Ha, ha!

Bev. You may laugh, madam; but it is no laughing matter, that let me assure you.

Belin. Oh, brave! Follow your own notions. I gave it away; I have scorned your present. Ha, ha! poor Mr. Beverley!

Bev. I don't doubt you, ma'am: I believe you did give it away.

Belin. Mighty well, sir! think so, if you please. I shall leave you to your own imagination; it will find wherewithal to entertain you. Ha, ha! the self-tormenting Beverley! Yonder I see Clarissa and Mr. Bellmont. I will join them this instant. Your servant, sir. Amuse yourself with your own fancies: ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Bev. Plague and distraction! I can't tell what to make of this! She carries it off with an air of confidence. And, yet, if that be my picture, which I saw this morning, then it is plain I am only laughed at by her.

Re-enter Belinda, Clarissa, *and* Bellmont.

Belin. Observe him now, let us walk by him without taking any notice of him. (*Apart.*)

All three. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

Bev. Ay, ay! you may laugh, ma'am; but I shall find out all your artifices. I will know the bottom of it. That's the house the gentleman went into. I'll wait on him directly. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Sir John Restless's House.*

Enter LADY RESTLESS, *meeting* ROBERT.

Lady R. Where are you going, sir?

Rob. To my master's room, madam, to leave these clothes there.

Lady R. Stay, sir; stay a moment. (*Searches the pockets.*) Where are his letters?

Rob. Letters, my lady! I know of no letters; I never touch his pockets.

Lady R. I guessed you would say so. You are Sir John's agent; the conductor of his schemes.

Rob. I, madam! [affairs.

Lady R. You, sir; you are his secretary for love

Rob. I collect his rents, my lady, and—

Lady R. Oh! sir, I am not to be deceived. I know you are my enemy.

Rob. Enemy, my lady! I am sure, as far as a poor servant dare, I am a friend to both.

Lady R. Then tell me honestly, have not you conveyed his letters out of my way?

Rob. Indeed, madam, not I.

Lady R. Then he has done it himself. Artful man! I never can find a line after him. Where did you go for him this morning?

Rob. This morning!

Lady R. Ay! this morning. I know he sent you somewhere. Where was it?

Rob. Upon my word, my lady—

Lady R. Very well, sir: I see how it is. You are all bent against me. I shall never be at rest till every servant in this house is of my own choosing. Is Tattle come home yet?

Rob. No, madam.

Lady R. Where can she be gadding? Hark! I hear a rap at the door. This is Sir John, I suppose. Stay, let me listen. I don't know that voice. Who can it be? Some of his libertine company, I suppose.

Rob. My lady, if you will believe me—

Lady R. Hold your tongue, man; let me hear. You want to hinder me, do you?

Rob. Indeed, madam—

Lady R. Hold your tongue, I say! Won't you hold your tongue? Go about your business, sir; go about your business. [*Exit Rob.*] What does he say? (*Listening.*) I can't hear a word. Who is below there?

Enter TATTLE, *with a Capuchin on.*

So, Mrs. Tattle, who is that at the door?

Tat. A gentleman, madam, speaking to William.

Lady R. And where have you been, mistress? How dare you go out without my leave?

Tat. Dear my lady, don't be angry with me. I was so terrified about what happened in the morning, and your ladyship was in such a perilous taking about it, that I went to desire Mrs. Marmalet would justify herself and me.

Lady R. Oh! very well, Mrs. Busybody. You have been there, have you? You have been to frame a story among yourselves, have you; and to hinder me from discovering? But I'll go to my Lady Conquest myself. I have had no answer to my letter, and 'tis you have occasioned it. Thanks to your meddling.

Tat. Dear my lady, if you will but give me leave: I have been doing you the greatest piece of service. I believe, in my conscience, there is something in what you suspect about Sir John.

Lady R. Do you? Why? How?

Tat. I have seen Mrs. Marmalet, and I have made such a discovery!

Lady R. Have you, Tattle? Well! What? Speak, tell me; what is it?

Tat. Robert has been there, madam, with a message from Sir John, who wants to see her in the evening; and he has desired—

Lady R. Blessings on you, Tattle! Well, go on; tell me all.

Enter a Servant.

What do you want, sir? Who called you? Go about your business.

Serv. Madam, there is a gentleman wants to speak with Sir John, about a picture.

Lady R. I had forgot me. It was he rapped at the door, I suppose.

Serv. Yes, madam.

Lady R. About a picture! This may lead to some further discovery. Desire the gentleman to step up stairs. [*Exit Serv.*] And so, Tattle, Robert, has been there?

Tat. Yes, ma'am.

Lady R. And Sir John wants to speak with Marmalet in the evening, and has desired—what has he desired?

Tat. He has desired, ma'nm—the poor girl does not know what to make of it: she is very sober and discreet, I assure you, ma'am. He has desired, ma'am, in the dusk of the evening, that Mrs. Marmalet will come and—

Lady R. How unlucky this is! The gentleman is coming. I have a mind not to see him; and yet I will too. Tattle, do you step to my room; as soon as he goes, I will come to you, and hear all in private! [*Exit Tattle.*] In the dusk of the evening, he desires to see her—abandoned wretch!

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Madam—(*Bows.*)

Lady R. Pray walk in, sir. (*Courtesies.*)

Bev. I wanted a word with Sir John Restless, madam.

Lady R. About a picture?

Bev. Yes, madam, a picture I had given to a lady; and, however insignificant in itself, it is to me of the highest consequence, as it may conduce to the explanation of an affair in which the happiness of my life is concerned.

Lady R. The lady is young?

Bev. She is.

Lady R. And handsome?

Bev. In the highest degree. My heart is devoted to her; and I have reason to suspect that a present from me is not of so much value as I could wish. To be plain, ma'am, I imagine she has given the picture away.

Lady R. As I guessed: my suspicions are just.

Bev. Your suspicions, madam! Did you suspect it was given to Sir John Restless?

Lady R. She has given it to Sir John, sir, to shew him how little she regards it.

Bev. Given it to him?

Lady R. Given it to him, sir.

Bev. Then I have no further doubt.

Lady R. He has made me miserable. O, Sir John! Sir John! (*Cries.*)

Bev. She weeps; the case is plain, and I am undone.

Lady R. Pray, sir, what is the lady's name?

Bev. Belinda Blandford.

Lady R. Belinda Blandford. So far I have discovered. (*Aside.*)

Bev. Pray, madam, have you ever seen her?

Lady R. Seen her, sir! yes, I have seen too much of her.

Bev. You alarm me, madam. You have seen nothing improper, I hope?

Lady R. I don't know what you call improper: but, pray, what ought one to think of a young lady thrown familiarly into a gentleman's arms?

Bev. In his arms, madam? Sir John's arms?

Lady R. In Sir John's! in open day, in the Park; under my very window; most familiarly, wantonly reclining in his very arms.

Bev. O, heavens!

Lady R. He clasping her with equal freedom round the waist.

Bev. False, false, Belinda!

Lady R. Both interchanging fond, mutual glances.

Bev. O, madam! the whole is come to light, and I thank you for the discovery, though I am ruined by it. But give me leave—is all this certain?

Lady R. There can be no doubt, sir; these eyes beheld their meeting.

Bev. Saw it yourself!

Lady R. Yes, all, all, sir. Sir John, I know, is capable of anything, and you know what to think of Belinda, as you call her.

Bel. I now know what to think: I have long had reason to suspect.

Lady R. You have, sir? Then the whole affair is plain enough.

Bev. It is so. I meant an honourable connexion with her; but—

Lady R. But you see, sir!

Bev. Yes, I see, madam. You are sure Sir John has the picture?

Lady R. Sure, sir! it is your own picture. I had it in my hands but a moment, and he flew with ardour, with impetuosity, like a fury flew to it, and recovered it from me. What could be the meaning of all that violence?

Bev. The meaning is too plain.

Lady R. And then, sir, when charged and pressed home with his guilt, most hypocritically he pretended to believe it the portrait of some favourite of mine. But you know, sir, how false that insinuation is.

Bev. O, madam! I can justify you. Ha, ha! that is but a poor evasion, and confirms me the more in my opinion. I return you many thanks, madam, and humbly take my leave.

Lady R. Sir, I am glad you thought it prudent to speak to me about this affair. If any other circumstances should come to your knowledge, I shall take it as a favour if you will acquaint me with them; for, indeed, sir, I am very unhappy.

Bev. I am in gratitude bound to you, and my best services you shall ever command. Madam, your most obedient. O, Belinda, Belinda! [*Exit.*

Lady R. Now, Sir John, how will you be able to confront these stubborn facts? You are now seen through all your disguises; detected in your true colours. Tattle, within here, has fresh proofs against you; and your man, Robert; and the whole house. I must hear Tattle's story this very moment. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*The Park.*

Enter Sir John Restless.

Sir J. Yes, yes; he told me his name honestly enough. Beverley is his name: and, my Lady Restless, now your gallant, your paramour is known. What do I see? By all my wrongs, the very man again! Coming out of my house before my face!

Enter Beverley *and* Robert *from the house.*

Bev. There, friend; there is something for your trouble.

Rob. I thank your honour. [*Exit.*

Sir J. He bribes my servant too; and the fellow takes it. Both in their trade; both in their trade. (*Aside.*)

Bev. Could I have suspected her of such treachery? As I could wish: I take that to be Sir John Restless. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. This is he to whom I have so many obligations. (*Aside.*)

Bev. Well encountered: your servant, sir.

Sir J. My servant, sir! I rather take it you are my lady's servant.

Bev. You, if I don't mistake, Sir John, are a pretty general servant of the ladies. Pray, sir, have not you a picture of mine in your pocket?

Sir J. That, I suppose, you have heard from my good lady within there?

Bev. Yes, sir, and I have heard a great deal more from thy lady.

Sir J. I don't in the least doubt it.

Bev. Sir, I do not mean to work myself up into any choler about such a trifling bauble. Since the lady has thought proper to give it to you—

Sir J. Do her justice, pray; she did not give it; so far she was true to you. I took it from her, sir.

Bev. Took it from her! That shews he is upon easy terms. (*Aside.*) It is of no consequence to me; I despise it, and you are welcome to make what use you will of it. This I will only say, that you have made me miserable.

Sir J. What, I have interrupted your happiness?

Bev. You have.

Sir J. And no doubt you think it cruel of me so to do?

Bev. Call it by what name you will; you have ruined me with the woman I doated on to distraction.

Sir J. A candid declaration! And so, sir, you doted on her, and never reflected that you were doing me the least injury?

Bev. Injury! I promise you, sir, I will never injure you again, and so you may set your mind at peace. I here declare, I never will hold further intercourse with her.

Sir J. O, that is too late for me. I have now done with her myself. You are very welcome to the lady, sir! you may take her home with you as soon as you please. I forswear her, and so I shall tell my lady this moment. (*Going.*)

Bev. That will make her ladyship happy, no doubt.

Sir J. Yes, I dare say you know it will.

Bev. She told me as much, sir.

Sir J. She did! why, then you may depend I shall keep my word; and my lady may depend upon it too. And that I suppose will make you both happy, sir.

Bev. My happiness is past recalling; I disdain all further connexion with the lady.

Sir J. Ay, you are tired of her?

Bev. I loathe her, detest her, hate her as much as I ever loved her.

Sir J. And so do I, d—me if I don't. And so I shall tell my lady this very instant. Your servant, sir. If I can find proof sufficient, you shall hear of me, I promise you. [*Exit.*

Bev. 'Sdeath, I'll seek her this moment, upbraid her with her falsehood, and then—by heavens! I shall do it with regret; but were I to be torn piecemeal, this shall be our last interview.

Enter Belinda, Clarissa, *and* Bellmont.

Belin. Alas a day! poor soul! see where he takes his melancholy walk. Did not I tell you, Clarissa, that the stricken deer could not quit this place?

Cla. And did not I tell you, Belinda, that you could not keep away from the pursuit?

Bell. Pray, madam, do you want to be in at the death, or do you mean to bring the poor thing to life again?

Belin. I! what do you mean? You bring me this way.

Cla. Well, if that is the case we had as good go home, for I want my tea.

Belin. Poh! not yet: it is not six o'clock.

Bell. Cla. Ha, ha!

Belin. What do you laugh at?

Cla. At you, my dear: why, 'tis past seven. O, Belinda, you are the stricken deer, I find.

Belin. Who, I! Not I, truly; I—

Cla. My dear Belinda, I know you. Come, we

will do the good-natured thing by you, and leave you to yourselves. Success attend you. Come, Mr. Bellmont. [*Exeunt.*

Belin. Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train,
Fair Sacharissa lov'd, but lov'd in vain.

Bev. Poh! poh!

Belin. Won't you know me, sir?

Bev. Yes, madam, I know you: it is but too true, that I know you.

Belin. Still gloomy and discontented! Come, come, under pain of my displeasure, brighten up this moment.

Bev. Silly, idle, ridiculous!

Belin. Take care of what you are about. When I proclaim a pardon, you had better embrace it, than reduce yourself to the necessity of sighing, vowing, protesting, writing to me, following me up and down, kneeling at my feet, imploring forgiveness—

Bev. Madam, you will never again see me humbled to that low degree.

Belin. Upon my word! ha, ha, ha!

Bev. O, you may laugh, ma'am; you have too long imposed upon my fond easy, credulity. But the witchery of your charms is over.

Belin. Very well, sir! and you are your own man again?

Bev. I am, madam, and you may be your own woman again, or anybody's woman, or everybody's.

Belin. You grow rude, sir!

Bel. It is time to waive all ceremony, and tell you plainly, that your falsehood—

Belin. My falsehood, sir?

Bev. Your falsehood. I know the whole story. I loved you once, Belinda, tenderly loved you; and, by heaven, I swear it is with sorrow that I can no longer adore you. It is with anguish that I now bid you an everlasting farewell.

Belin. Explain sir: what action of my life—

Bev. Your prudence forsook you at last. It was too glaring, too manifest in open day!

Belin. Too manifest in open day! Mr. Beverly, I shall hate you,

Bev. All circumstances combine against you: my picture given away!

Belin. Insolent, provoking, wrong-headed man! I'll confirm him in his error, to torment him as he deserves. (*Aside.*) Well, sir, what if I chose to give it away? I am mistress of my own actions, am I not?

Bev. I know that, ma'am: I know that; and I am not uneasy, ma'am. [man?

Belin. So it seems, ha, ha! why do you sigh, poor

Bev. Sigh, madam! I disdain it.

Belin. I am glad of it; now that is so manly! but pray watch yourself well, hold a guard upon all your passions, otherwise they will make a fool of you again.

Bev. And do you take care you don't expose yourself again. Lolling familiarly in a gentleman's arms.

Belin. How?

Bev. Here, in the Park! in open day!

Belin. What can this mean?

Bev. He inviting you to his house!

Belin. Oh! I understand him now; when I fainted, all this was. I'll encourage his notion, to be revenged of his waspish temper. (*Aside.*) Well, sir, and what then?

Bev. What then?

Belin. Ha, ha! poor Mr. Beverly! why should you be in a piteous taking, because I, in the gaiety of my heart, give away a picture I set no value on, or walk with a gentleman I do set a value on, or lean on his arm, or make the man happy by letting him draw on my glove?

Bev. Or draw off your glove, madam.

Belin. Ay, or draw it off.

Bev. Yes, or—or—or take any other liberties.

Belin. Very true.

Bev. You may make light of it, madam, but—

Belin. Why yes, a generous temper always makes light of the favours it confers.

Bev. And some generous tempers will make light of anything, to gratify their inclinations. Madam, I have done: I abjure you; eternally abjure you, (*Going.*)

Belin. Bon voyage!

Bev. Don't imagine that you will see me again.

Belin. Adieu! Well, what, coming again! Why do you linger so? (*Repeats affectedly.*)

"Thus o'er the dying lamp, the unsteady flame
Hangs quivering to a point!"

Bev. With what an air she carries it! (*Aside.*) I have but this one thing more to tell you: by heaven I loved you, to excess I loved you: such is my weakness, I shall never quite forget you. I shall be glad if hereafter I hear of your happiness, and if I can prevent it, no dishonour shall befal you.

Belin. Ho, ho! well, my obliging, generous, Don Quixote; Ha, ha, ha!

Bev. Confusion! Take notice, madam, that this is the last time of my troubling you.

Belin. I shall expect you to-morrow morning.

Bev. No, never; by heaven, never!

Belin. Exactly at ten; your usual hour.

Bev. May I perish at your feet, if ever again—

Belin. Oh, brave! but remember ten; kneeling, beseeching, imploring, your hand upon your heart, "Belinda, won't you forgive me?"

Bev. D—nation! I have done: I here bid you an eternal adieu! farewell for ever! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*An Apartment in Beverley's House.*
Enter Beverley.

Bev. So, Belinda, I have escaped your snares: I have recovered my freedom. And yet, if she had not proved false, what a treasure of love and happiness had I in store! Her beauty, pho! no more of her beauty: it is external, superficial, the mere result of features and complexion. I have done with her; I'll think no more of her. Oh! Belinda! Belinda!

Enter Brush.

Brush. Please your honour— [amiable!

Bev. She, that in every part of life seemed so

Brush. Sir!

Bev. Under so fair a mask, to wear such loose designs!

Brush. What is he musing upon? (*Aside.*) Sir—

Bev. I have done with her for ever; ay, for ever. (*Hums a Tune.*) I swear for ever. (*Sings.*) Are you there, Brush?

Brush. Yes, your honour: here is a letter.

Bev. So unforeseen, so unexpected a discovery! Well, well, well! what did you say, Brush?

Brush. A letter for your honour, sir.

Bev. Give it to me another time. (*Walks about.*) I'll not make myself uneasy about her. [now.

Brush. I fancy your honour will be glad to have it

Bev. What did you say?

Brush. It is a letter from madam Belinda, sir.

Bev. Belinda! I won't read it: take it away.

Brush. Hey! which way is the wind now? Some quarrel, I suppose; but the falling out of lovers. (*Aside.*) Must I take it away, sir?

Bev. I have done with her for ever.

Brush. Have done with madam Belinda, sir?

Bev. Oh! Brush, she is—but I will not proclaim her shame. No, let me still be tender of her. I will see her no more, Brush, that is all; hear from her no more: she shall not wind herself about my heart again. I'll go out of town directly. Order my chaise to the door.

Brush. Had not you better defer it till to-morrow morning, sir? perhaps then—

Bev. No, no, directly; do as I bid you.

Brush. Consider, sir, if your mind should change, the trouble of coming back post haste—

Bev. No, never; I say never: what! to her, who could smile on me, on him, on a thousand? No; she shall know that I am a man; and no longer the dupe of her artifice.

Brush. But, sir, you know that one solitary tear, which, after miserably chafing for it half an hour together, she will painfully distil from the corner of her eye, will extinguish all her rage, and then—

Bev. Poh! poh! you know nothing of the matter. Go and order the chaise directly.

Brush. Yes, sir. I suppose a couple of shirts will be sufficient, sir? You will hardly stay them out.

Bev. Pack up all, sir. I shall stay in the country a whole month, if it be necessary.

Brush. An entire month, sir?

Bev. I am resolved, fixed, determined; and so do as I have ordered you. [*Exit Brush.*] So shall I disentangle myself from her entirely, so shall I forget the fondness my foolish heart had conceived for her. I hate her, loathe her, pity her, am sorry for her, and love her still. I must expel this weakness: I will think no more of her: and yet—Brush! Brush!—I may as well see her letter too: only to try what her cunning can suggest.

Re-enter BRUSH.

You may as well leave the letter, Brush.

Brush. Yes, sir; I thought as much. [*Exit.*

Bev. Now what varnish will she put upon the matter? (*Reads.*) "*The false gaiety of my heart, through which my dear Beverley might have read my real anguish at our last meeting, has now subsided. If you will come to me, I will not laugh at your inquietude of temper, but will clear all your doubts, and shew you how much I am, my dearest Beverley, unalterably your's,* BELINDA BLANDFORD." Psha! poh! satisfy my doubts! I have no doubts; I am convinced. These arts prevail no more. Ha, ha; (*Laughs peevishly.*) "*My dear Beverley*" (*Reads, and tears the letter by degrees.*) "*real anguish,*" ha, ha! (*Tears another piece.*) "*inquietude of temper,*" (*Another piece.*) "*clear all your doubts.*" Poh! poh! poh! ha, ha! d—nation! I'll think no more of her. (*Tears another piece.*) Ha, ha! "*dearest Beverley,*" ha, ha! artful woman! "*unalterably your's.*" false! false! false! (*Tears another piece.*) I'll not make myself uneasy about her. Perfidy! treachery! and ingratitude! (*Fixes his eye, looks uneasy, and tears the letter in a violent passion.*)

Enter CLARISSA *and* BELLMONT.

Cla. So, brother!

Bell. Beverly!

Bev. Sister, your servant: Mr. Bellmont, your's.

Cla. You seem melancholy, brother.

Bev. No, not I. I am in very good spirits.

Cla. Ha, ha! my dear brother, that is seen through: you are now upon the rack.

Bev. What, about a woman? a false, ungrateful woman?

Bell. Whom you still admire. [minutes.

Cla. To whom you'll be upon your knees in five

Bev. You are mistaken: I am going out of town.

Bell. But you will take your leave.

Bev. I have done that, once for all.

Cla. Has not she written to you?

Bev. She has; and there, there you see the effect of her letter. You will see that I shall maintain a proper firmness on the occasion.

Bell. My dear Beverley, have done with this mockery: you deceive yourself.

Bev. You want to deceive me, sir: but it is in vain. What, plead for treachery, for falsehood, for deceit?

Cla. No, sir; but for my friend, my lovely friend, for Belinda, for truth, for innocence.

Bev. You don't know all the circumstances.

Cla. But we do know all the circumstances; and, my dear brother, you have behaved very ill.

Bev. Heaven knows I have not; and yet, heaven knows, I should be glad to be convinced I have.

Cla. I will be your friend, and give you a hint. We women are soft and compassionate in our nature; go to her without delay, fall at her feet, beg her pardon, drop a tear or two, and all will be well again.

Bev. Do you come to make sport of me? May contempt and beggary attend me; may all the calamities of life befal me: may shame, confusion, and disquiet of heart for ever sting me, if I hold further intercourse with her, if I do not put her from my thoughts for ever! Did you leave her at home?

Cla. We did.

Bev. Well, let her stay there; it is of no consequence to me. How did she bear what passed between us?

Cla. Like a sweet girl as she is; she behaved like an angel: I shall love her better than ever for her good humour.

Bev. Oh! I don't doubt her good humour. She has smiles at command. Let her smile or not smile, 'tis all alike to me. Did she say anything?

Cla. She told us the whole story, and told it in tears too.

Bev. Ay, them she can command too! But I have no curiosity about her. Was she in tears?

Cla. She was, and wept bitterly. How could you, brother, behave so rashly to so amiable a girl? Have you a pleasure in being the cause of her uneasiness?

Bev. I the cause! you wrong me, by heaven you wrong me; my Lady Restless was the cause. She told me such things; she planted daggers in my very heart.

Cla. You planted daggers in Belinda's heart. And it was barbarous. What! because a lady has not strength enough to bear up against a father, who is resolved to give her away to another, and because she faints out of excessive tenderness for you, and in that distress meets accidental relief from Sir John Restless, at his own door?

Bev. How!

Cla. And because my Lady Restless sees this out of her window, and has a perverse talent of misinterpreting appearances into realities, to her own disadvantage; you must therefore fill your head with ungenerous suspicions? Oh! for shame, brother; how could you?

Bev. But is this all true? is it really the case?

Bell. How can you doubt it? You know Belinda too well. It is the case, man.

Bev. May I depend upon what you say?

Cla. You may.

Bev. Then I'll fly to her this instant, humble myself to her, and promise by all my future life to atone for this brutal injury.

Re-enter BRUSH.

Brush. The chaise is at the door, sir.

Bev. You may put up again; I sha'n't go out of town.

Brush. No, sir!

Bev. No; ha, ha! you may put up, and let me have the chariot directly.

Brush. Yes, sir. I knew it would come to this. [*Exit.*

Bev. My dear sister, I am for ever obliged to you; and, Bellmont, I thank you too. How could I wrong her so? I shall behold her once again. I cannot help laughing at my own rashness. Is the chariot ready? I won't stay for it; I am on the wing, my dear Belinda, to implore forgiveness. And so she fainted away in the Park, and my Lady Restless saw Sir John afford her relief! Ha, ha, ha! whimsical enough. Ha, ha, ha! what

a strange construction her crazy temper put upon it! Ha, ha! how could the woman be so foolish? (*Going, returns.*) Sir John shall give me back the picture, and on my knees I will once more present it to her. I'll find Sir John directly, and then—ha, ha! how could I be such a madman? Ha, ha! Sister, your servant; Bellmont, yours. Ha, ha! what a piece of work has that foolish woman made for us all! [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*An Apartment at Belinda's.*

Enter Belinda.

Belin. This rash, unaccountable man! how could he entertain such a suspicion? Ungrateful Beverley! he almost deserves I should never see him again. Tippet! I sha'n't be easy till I hear from him. Tippet!

Enter Tippet.

Is the servant returned from Mr. Beverley's?

Tip. Not yet, madam.

Belin. I wonder what keeps him. I am upon thorns till I see the dear ungenerous man, and explain everything to him. Oh, Mr. Beverley! how could you treat me so? But I was partly to blame; my Lady Restless inflamed his mind, and I should not have trifled with his passion. Is the other servant returned from Sir John Restless?

Tip. He is, madam.

Belin. And what answer?

Tip. Sir John will wait upon you himself, madam, directly.

Belin. Very well; I must get him to set everything in its true light, and justify my conduct to Mr. Beverley. And yet the uncertainty of Beverley's temper alarms me strangely. His eternal suspicions! but there is nothing in that: my future conduct, my regard for him, will cure that disease, and then—

Tip. I dare be sworn it will, madam.

Belin. Yes, I think it will; when he knows me better, he will learn to think generously of me. On my part, I think I can be sure he will meet with nothing but open, unsuspecting love.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir John Restless, madam.

Belin. Shew him in. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter Sir John Restless.

Sir J. In compliance with your commands, madam—

Belin. I am obliged to you, sir, for the trouble you have been pleased to give yourself. A particular circumstance has happened in your family, to my utter disquiet.

Sir J. Madam, there have happened things in my family, to my utter disquiet too.

Belin. I am sorry for that, sir. I have been made quite unhappy, and must beg, as it is in your power, that you will be kind enough to remove the cause of my uneasiness.

Sir J. Whatever I can do, you may command.

Belin. Sir, I thank you, and must tell you that your lady has done me the most irreparable injury.

Sir J. She has done the same to me. My injuries are irreparable too. But how has she injured you madam?

Belin. She has ruined me, sir, with the man I love to distraction.

Sir J. Now here something else will come to light. (*Aside.*) How, how has she done that, madam? [from me.

Belin. She has entirely drawn off his affections

Sir J. And fixed them upon herself, I suppose.

Belin. I don't say that, sir.

Sir J. But I dare say it, and I believe it.

Belin. Pardon me, sir, I don't charge the lady with anything of that kind: but she has unaccountably taken it into her head to be jealous of me.

Sir J. Jealous of you?

Belin. Her ladyship saw the little offices of civility I received from you this morning; she misunderstood everything, it seems, and has told the gentleman, with whom I was engaged in a treaty of marriage, that improper freedoms have passed between us.

Sir J. Artifice! artifice! her usual policy, madam, to cover her own libertine ways.

Belin. I don't mean to say anything harsh of the lady. But you know what foundation there is for this, and I hope will do me justice.

Sir J. Oh! madam, to the world; to the wide world, I'll justify you. I will wait upon the gentleman. Who is he, madam? What's his name!

Belin. Beverley, sir.

Sir J. Beverley!

Belin. Yes, sir; you seem surprised. Do you know him, sir?

Sir J. Yes, yes, I know him; and he shall know me: my resentment he shall feel; he shall be answerable to me.

Belin. Answerable to you?

Sir J. To me, madam. I told you at first it was a scheme to shelter herself; and he, I suppose, is combined with her to give this turn to the affair, and to charge me with infidelity. But you, madam, can witness for me.

Belin. I can, sir; but can Mr. Beverly be capable of a dishonourable action?

Sir J. That point is clear enough. He has injured me in the highest degree, destroyed my happiness.

Belin. How, sir! are you sure of this?

Sir J. He has given her his picture; I caught her with her eyes rivetted to it; I heard her admiration, her praises of it, her wishes that she had been married to such a man; I saw her print a thousand kisses on it, and in the very fact I wrested it out of her hand.

Belin. If I imagined him capable of what you say, I should scarcely be willing to join myself to him for life. Quarrel with me about his picture, and at the same time give it to another!

Sir J. Lady Restless had the picture. Without doubt, you must be very happy with a man of such gallantry.

Belin. Happy, sir! I should be miserable, I should be distracted. But do you think you have sufficient proof?

Sir J. I have seen him coming out of my house since, clandestinely, shunning every observant eye, with the characters of guilt in his face; and all the discourse I had with him served only to convince me the more.

Belin. Abandoned wretch! was this the love he professed for me? Sir, I have only to hope you will vindicate me in this matter. I commend myself to your honour, and I thank you for this favour.

Sir J. Our evidences will mutually speak for each other, and confound their dark designs. Madam, I take my leave.

Belin. Sir, your most obedient.

Sir J. The gentleman shall feel my indignation.

Belin. You cannot treat him too severely.

Sir J. I will expose him, I promise you. Madam, your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Belin. Oh! Mr. Beverley, could I have imagined this? False! false man! and yet how shall I forget him? But I will make an effort, though it pierce me to the quick. I will tear him from my heart. This moment I will write to him, and forbid him to see me more. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*The Park.*

Enter Sir John Restless.

Sir J. If I can procure sufficient evidence, I shall bring the matter to a divorce, and make an example of them all. Would Marmalet were come! this is her time to a moment. If I can

worm the secret out of her—Is not that she yonder? Not quite day-light enough to distinguish, but I think I perceive a person masked. Hist! hist! Mrs. Marmalet!—She comes this way: it is she. Mrs. Marmalet, your servant.

Enter a Person masked.

You are very good, Mrs. Marmalet—

Mask. Bless my heart, I am scared out of my senses.

Sir J. What's the matter pray? What's the matter?

Mask. Oh, sir! I tremble like a leaf. I was accosted in a rude manner by some gentleman yonder; I can't stay here; let's go into your house, sir, I beg you will.

Sir J. My house? Would not any other house do as well?

Mask. Oh! no, sir, not for the world.

Sir J. Why my wife is not at home, and so I think I may venture: not but I had rather it were elsewhere.

Mask. Indeed, Sir John, I am frightened out of my senses. You will do me a favour if you will take me into the house.

Sir J. Say no more: it shall be so. Robert—

Rob. (*Opens the Door.*) Is that Sir John?

Sir J. Your lady is not at home, Robert, is she?

Rob. No, sir.

Sir J. Then do you go in, and take care that nobody sees Mrs. Marmalet with me. Come, I'll shew you the way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Sir John Restless's House.*

Enter TATTLE *and* BEVERLEY.

Tat. (*As she enters.*) Ay, poor lady! she is unfortunate, indeed; and, poor gentleman, he is as jealous as my lady, to the full. There has been a deal to do about that picture you mention, sir.

Bev. That will be explained presently: I'll wait till he comes home. I can't possibly go without speaking to him.

Tat. Indeed you had better not stay, sir. You don't consider the mischief your being in the house may occasion.

Bev. Mischief! how do you mean?

Tat. Lord, sir! I would not have you stay for the world: I would not indeed. You can call again in an hour, sir, and you'll certainly find him at home then. Bless my heart, sir! I fancy that's his voice. Do, dear sir, you'll be the ruin of my lady, if he sees you here, sir, waiting in his house; he'll be persuaded you come after my lady; the world will never beat it out of his head.

Bev. But I shall give him to understand—

Tat. He won't understand anything. Oh lud! oh lud! he's coming up: I'll run and look. [*Exit.*

Bev. What a flurry the woman is in! a foolish jade! I must speak with him now.

Re-enter TATTLE.

Tat. (*Entering.*) It is he, as I am alive, sir; and there is a woman in a mask with him.

Bev. A woman in a mask! Zoons! if that should be Belinda! my mind misgives me strangely. (*Aside.*)

Tat. Do, dear sir; you look like a good-natured gentleman; let me hide you out of the way, sir. You would not be the destruction of a poor servant?

Bev. A mask coming home with him! I must know who that is. I won't leave the house without knowing. If I could conceal myself—have you any private place, Mrs. Tattle?

Tat. That is the very thing I mean, sir. Let me conceal you in that closet, till he passes through this room. He never stays long here. It won't take you two minutes. Do, sweet sir, I'll down on my knees to you.

Bev. I must know who it is. Come, dispose of me as you will. If this should be Belinda! [*Aside. Exit.*

Tat. Heavens bless you, sir, for this goodness! I'll lock the door, to make sure work of it. I was never so frightened in my life. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JOHN RESTLESS *and a Person masked.*

Sir J. Mrs. Marmalet, I am obliged to you for this favour. I wanted a word or two with you.

Mask. So Robert informed me, sir.

Sir J. Did he tell you my business?

Mask. No, sir.

Sir J. Lookye, then: if you will gratify me in what I shall ask, you may command anything. Now you may be uncovered.

Mask. La! sir—I hear a noise: I am afraid somebody's coming; I shall be seen.

Sir J. Hush! no; there's nobody. If you will indulge me on this occasion, I am yours for ever. Here, here is a purse of money for you.

Mask. But if this should come to the knowledge of your lady, I am ruined and undone.

Sir J. No, no: I'll take care of you.

Mask. Will you, sir?

Sir J. I will. But come; let me remove this from your face.

Mask. But somebody may come.

Sir J. I'll lock the door. There, now we are safe.

Mask. But in a little time, you'll make up all quarrels with your lady, and I shall be ruined.

Sir J. No, no, never fear; I shall never be reconciled to her; I hate her, I detest her.

Lady R. Do you so, sir? (*Unmasking.*) Now, Sir John, what can you say now, sir?

Sir J. My Lady Restless! Confusion! what shall I say? (*Aside.*)

Lady R. O, Sir John! Sir John! what evasion have you now, sir? Can you deny your guilt any longer?

Sir J. That villain, Robert, has betrayed me. If you will but have patience, this matter shall be explained.

Lady R. Explained, sir?

Sir J. Yes, my dear, explained, and—

Lady R. My dear, too! the assurance of you!

Sir J. I say my dear, for I still regard you; and this was all done to—to—cure you of your jealousy; all done to cure you of your jealousy.

Lady R. A fine way you have taken!

Sir J. Yes, yes; all to convince you how groundless your suspicions are; and then we shall live very happy together.

Lady R. Ay!

Sir J. I had settled all this on purpose, and contrived that it should come to your ears, and then I knew you would do just as you have done; and—then—I—I resolved to just as I have done; only to hint to you, that listeners seldom hear any good of themselves; and to shew you how wrong it is to be too suspicious, my dear. Was it not well done? Ha, ha, ha!

Lady R. And do you laugh at me, too, sir? Make me your sport? I'll go and get pen and ink this moment.

Sir J. Oh! do so, madam; do so, ha, ha! you'll only expose yourself; go and write, madam, ha, ha, ha!

Lady R. I will, sir. (*Going.*) The door is locked. This won't succeed, sir. I suppose you have the key. Ay! I'll lay my life you have, and some one or other of your creatures is locked in there.

Sir J. There, again! This is of a piece with all your vain surmises. Ha, ha! you are mighty silly, indeed you are.

Lady R. I will search that closet. I am determined I will.

Sir J. Do so, madam, do so. Ha, ha! I can't but laugh at her.

Lady R. I'll have the door broken open, if you won't give me the key.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha! How you expose yourself.

Lady R. Will you give me the key, sir?

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha! it is too ridiculous.

Lady R. Mighty well, sir. Tattle! who waits there? I will find out all your artifices. Tattle, I say.

Re-enter TATTLE.

Do you know anything of the key of that closet, Tattle?

Tat. The key, ma'am; I have it, ma'am.

Lady R. Give it to me.

Tat. That is, I have it not, ma'am. Don't have it, ma'am, don't ask for it. (*Aside to her.*)

Lady R. Don't ask for it! but I will have it. Give me the key, this instant.

Sir J. How! is she not willing to give it? There is something in this, then. Give the key this moment, you jade, give it to me.

Lady R. You sha'n't have it, sir. What, you want to hinder me? Give the key to me.

Tat. Dear heart! I have lost it, ma'am. Better not have it, ma'am. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Give it to me, this moment, I say.

Tat. The devil is in it; there it is then. Let me make my escape. [*Exit.*

Lady R. Now, sir, we shall see who you have.

Sir J. Ay, now search, if you will. (*Laughing at her.*)

Lady R. (*Unlocking the door.*) You shall be found out, I promise you.—Oh! (*Screams.*)

Re-enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Madam, your most obedient. (*Bows to her.*)

Sir J. By all that's false, here he is again.

Lady R. What in the name of wonder, brings you here, sir?

Sir J. Oh, madam, you know his business, and I know his business, and the gentleman knows his business. There he is, madam; there is the gentleman waiting for you; true to his appointment, you see. Sir, your humble servant. My Lady Restless, your humble servant. Is the case plain now?

Bev. Sir, however odd this may appear—

Sir J. Ay, now settle it between yourselves; give it what turn you will, sir, she will confirm it. You need not be afraid, sir: you will agree in your story; she is quick of invention, and I dare say you are pretty quick too.

Bev. Sir, I must beg you will put no forced construction upon this matter.

Sir J. And you beg the same, madam, don't you?

Bev. Sir, I beg to be heard. My business here is to desire you will return me the picture which you have in your possession; it is now become dear to me, sir.

Sir J. I dare say it is.

Bev. And must be returned.

Sir J. It is of equal value to me. It shall rise in evidence against you both.

Lady R. Evidence against me! Explain yourself. How did you get in here? What's your business? What brought you hither? What's your errand?

Sir J. Ay, sir, speak; how did you get in here? What's your business? What brought you hither? What's your errand?

Bev. Vexation! I am beset by them both at once. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Ay, sir, explain.

Bev. Sir, if you will give me leave, I will satisfy you entirely. I assure you, sir, and you too, madam, that the liberty I have taken with your closet is entirely owing to your maid Tattle.

Sir J. The jade! I don't doubt it, sir.

Bev. To prevent, if possible, the interpretation now put, upon seeing me in this house.

Sir J. And it was well contrived, sir. Oh, my Lady Restless!

Lady R. By all that's just, I knew nothing of it.

Bev. Nothing, upon my honour, sir.

Sir J. Oh, I knew you would both agree.

Bev. As I am a gentleman, I tell you the real fact.

Sir J. You need not, sir; I know the real fact.

Bev. I have no time to lose in frivolous altercation; I must now desire the picture, directly.

Sir J. I wish you a good evening.

Bev. I shall not stir without it. I should be glad you would comply without a quarrel. I must be obliged to—

Sir J. Ay, now her bully begins. (*Aside.*)

Bev. I am not to be trifled with. If you don't return it by fair means, I shall be forced to draw.

Sir J. She has set him on to cut my throat; but I will disappoint her. She is a worthless woman, and I won't fight about her. There, sir, there is your trinket. I shall have proof sufficient without it.

Bev. Upon my honour, sir, you will have no proof of any transgression of mine. If you suspect your lady from these appearances, you wrong her much, I assure you.

Lady R. Sir, I desire you will explain all this.

Bev. Call up your maid, madam, and then—

Sir J. No, sir; no more of it. I am satisfied. I wish you good night.

Bev. When you are willing to listen to reason, I shall be ready to convince you of your error. Madam, you may depend I shall do justice to your honour upon all occasions. And now I take my leave. [*Exit.*

Sir J. Now, my Lady Restless, now! you are thoroughly known! all your artifices are known; Mr. Beverley is known; my Lord Conquest is known.

Lady R. My Lord Conquest, sir! I despise all your imputations. My Lord Conquest's maid, sir! what can you say to that?

Sir J. Very well, madam, 'tis now my turn to write to your brother, and I promise you I will do it.

Lady R. You will write, sir! you will write! ha, ha! You make yourself very ridiculous; you do indeed, ha, ha!

Sir J. 'Sdeath! madam, am I to be insulted with a contumelious laugh into the bargain?

Lady R. Why, my dear, this was all done—to—to—to—cure you of your jealousy; for I knew you would act as you have done, and so I resolved to do as I have done. Was it not well done, my dear? Ha, ha!

Sir J. D———n! this is to much; it is beyond all patience.

Lady R. Ha, ha, ha! the tables are turned, I think. (*Sings and laughs.*)

Sir J. Let me tell you it is no laughing matter. You are a vile woman; I know you, and the world shall know you, I promise you it shall.

Lady R. I am clear in my own conviction, and your slander I despise; nor shall your artifices blind me or my friends any longer. Sir, as you say, it is no laughing matter. I promise you, you shall never dishonour me again in this house.

Sir J. And I promise you, madam, that you shall never dishonour me in any house.

Lady R. Injurious, false, perfidious man!

Sir J. Deceitful, wanton, wanton woman!

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Mr. Blandford's.*

Enter BLANDFORD, SIR WILLIAM BELLMONT, *and* BELLMONT.

Bland. Well, Sir William, we have made a good

day's work of it; the writings will be ready to-morrow morning. Where is Belinda? I thought she was in this room.

Tip. She is gone to her own room, sir; she is not well.

Sir W. She has changed her mind, perhaps. I shall have no faith in this business till it is all concluded.

Bland. Changed her mind! say you? No, no; I can depend upon her. I'll bring her to you this moment, and you and your son shall hear a declaration of her mind out of her own lips. Tippet, where is Belinda?

Tip. I'll shew you the way, sir.

[*Exit, with Blandford.*

Sir W. Now we shall see what authority you have over your daughter. I have your promise, George, if she consents, you will be ready to comply with the wishes of your father?

Bell. Sir, you may depend; that is, as far as matters are in my power; but you know, as I told you already, the lady has a settled, rooted aversion to me.

Sir W. Aversion! she can change her mind, can't she? Women have no settled principle; they like to-day and dislike to-morrow. Besides, has not her father promised her to you in marriage?—If the old gentleman likes you, what have you to do with her aversion?

Bell. To do with it? A great deal, I am afraid. You are not now to learn, that when a young lady marries against her inclination, billet-doux, assignations, plots, intrigues, and a terrible *et cætera* of female stratagem, mount into her brain, and the poor husband in the mean time—

Sir W. Come, lad, don't play the rogue with your father. Did not you promise me, if she made no objection, that there would be no obstacle on your part?

Bell. I promis'd, to be sure; but yet I can't help thinking—

Sir W. And I can't help thinking that you know how to equivocate. Look you, George, your words were plain, downright English, and I expect that you will perform to the very letter. I have fixed my heart upon this match. Mr. Blandford and I have passed the day at the Crown and Rolls, to read over the deeds. I have been dining upon parchment, as I may say. I now tell you once for all, you must be observant of my will and pleasure.

Bell. To end all dispute, sir, if the lady—She will never consent; I may safely promise. (*Aside.*) If the lady, sir, can at once forget her engagements with my friend Beverley—

Sir W. You will then forget Clarissa; fairly spoken. Come, I am satisfied. And now, now we shall see.

Re-enter Blandford, *with* Belinda.

Bland. Odsheart, I am overjoyed, Sir William; my daughter is a complying girl, and obedient to her father. Young gentleman, I give you joy.

Bell. Death to my hopes! what does he mean? (*Aside.*)

Bland. Sir William, give me your hand upon it. This will not only be a match of prudence, but of inclination.

Sir W. There, George, there is news for you.

Bell. Sure she won't bring this calamity upon me? (*Aside.*) Can I believe what I hear, madam? will you yourself pronounce the sentence?

Belin. Sir, I must take shame to myself that I have been so long refractory to the dictates of the best of fathers, and blind also to your merits.

Bland. Toll loll loll.

Bell. Confusion! (*Aside.*) My merit, I fear, is overrated by you.

Belin. Pardon me, sir, I must freely declare that my heart has been fixed on a worthless man, whom I now renounce; and to you, sir, I am ready to resign myself.

Bland. There, there, all's fixed, and my blessing attend you both.

Bell. What a dilemma am I brought into! (*Aside.*)

Sir W. George, what's the matter, boy? You a bridegroom! Wounds! at your age I could cut a caper over the moon upon such an occasion.

Bell. Sir, I must beg to be excused; I am more slack-mettled, sir; I cannot leap quite so high.

Sir W. Well, well, all in good time. Mr. Blandford, where's the bottle you promised? I want to wash down the cobwebs of the law.

Bland. In truth so do I. Who waits there? Lay a table in the next room. Come, come, we'll go and drink a bumper to the young couple.

Sir W. With all my heart;—George, you are a cup too low; come with us, my lad, we'll cheer your spirits—come along, George. (*Going.*)

Bell. I attend you, sir. Is this true, Belinda?

Belin. My real sentiments, sir.

Bell. Then you have undone us all. [*Exit.*

Belin. Yes, I am resolv'd at length, and I will punish his falsehood and ingratitude, by obeying my father's commands. But my friend Clarissa, has she deserv'd this of me? My resentments have hurried me too far. Resume your strength, my heart, and let no sudden gust of passion make you false to friendship and to honour.

Enter Tippet.

Well, Tippet, have you done as I ordered you?

Tip. I have, madam.

Belin. A vile, perfidious man!

Tip. So he is, madam.

Belin. After all the love I profess'd for him! After so many ardent vows and protestations as he has made me.

Tip. After the hours he has kneel'd at your feet.

Belin. I will drive him from my thoughts; here, take this letter, Tippet, give it to him with your own hands.

Tip. Yes, madam.

Belin. Where are his letters?

Tip. Here, madam. (*Shews a large parcel.*)

Belin. The bracelet?

Tip. I have it safe.

Belin. Mighty well; take them all home to him. And in return bring me back my foolish letters to him.

Tip. Madam, I won't quit the house without them.

Belin. That letter will inform him that his falsehood has compelled me into a compliance with my father's intentions, and be sure you confirm that to him.

Tip. He shall hear it on every side of his ears, I warrant him.

Belin. Very well, you may go; and, harkye, Tippet, ask his man, as if from yourself, carelessly, whether his master ever talk'd of me, and what he said, Tippet.

Tip. Yes, madam.

Belin. But I don't care what he said; I don't want to know anything about him; it does not concern me, now. No, no; let him care as little for me as I do for him; tell him I say so.

Tip. I sha'n't forget it ma'am.

Belin. Tell him to hate me as much as I do him.

Tip. I'll tell him his own, I promise you, ma'am.

Belin. Very well; that's all, get you gone.

Tip. Yes, ma'am.

Belin. Mind what I have said.

Tip. Trust to me.

Belin. Don't forget a tittle.

Tip. No, ma'am.

Belin. Be sure you tell him how indifferent I am.

Tip. Leave all to me.

Belin. You see, Tippet, I am quite unconcerned; the barbarous wretch!

Tip. Oh, yes, ma'am, I see.

Belin. It is easy to see that I am not at all uneasy; you see that I am very gay upon it. (*Laughs affectedly.*)

Tip. Yes, ma'am. (*Laughs.*)

Belin. False! false Beverley! Tell him I will never see his face any more.

Tip. I am gone, ma'am.

Belin. That upon no account will I ever exchange a word with him, hear from him, of him, or have anything of any kind whatever to do with him. I'll never see his face again.

Tip. I have my lesson, ma'am. (*Going.*)

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Beverley, madam.

Tip. My lady won't see his face again.

Belin. Yes, I think I will see his face once more, shew him in. [*Exit Servant.*] I will see him once more and tell him all myself. You may withdraw, Tippet.

Tip. Yes, ma'am. Ah! she has a hankering after him still. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Belin. Now will I upbraid him, now tell him all his own, and—

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Belinda! how gladly do I once again behold—

Belin. And with what resentment have not I reason to behold, sir?

Bev. You have, Belinda, you have reason, I grant it; but forgive the rash words my folly utter'd—

Belin. Oh, sir, mistake me not; they are not your words I quarrel with; your actions, Mr. Beverley, your actions, sir!

Bev. They are not to be extenuated, but here is the picture which caus'd that unlucky mistake between us; I have recovered it from Sir John Restless.

Belin. From Lady Restless, sir.

Bev. Madam!

Belin. Oh! fie, sir—no more; I have done.

Bev. You must, you must accept it. Thus, on my knees I beg you will;—will you, Belinda? (*Takes her hand.*)

Belin. Leave me, sir. Let go my hand, Mr. Beverley; your falsehood, sir,—

Bev. My falsehood! By all the—

Belin. You have destroy'd my peace of mind for ever; nay, you yourself have forced me into the arms of another.

Bev. What do I hear?

Belin. In obedience to the commands of a father, I have agreed to marry Mr. Bellmont.

Bev. Mr. Bellmont! him! marry him! it is very well, ma'am; I expected it would come to this, and my Lady Restless is only mention'd on this occasion, as a retort for my accusation about Sir John; I understand it; and, by heaven! I believe the whole story.

Belin. You do, sir?

Bev. I do. Fool that I was, to humble myself to you! My pride is now piqued, and I am glad, madam, as glad as you can be to break off for ever.

Belin. Oh! sir, I can be as indifferent on my part. Then, sir, you have only to send me back my letters, and—

Bev. Oh! agreed, agreed; I'll go home this moment, and send them all; and before I go, madam, here is your own picture, which you had given me with your own hands. Mr. Bellmont will be glad of it, or Sir John Restless will be glad of it.

Belin. Very like, sir. (*Takes the picture.*) Tyrant, tyrant man! to treat me in this barbarous manner. (*Cries.*)

Bev. Tears? Belinda! (*Approaching.*) Belinda!

Belin. No more of your insidious arts; I will hear no more. Oh, my heart, my heart will break; I did not think it was in your nature to behave as you have done; but, farewell for ever. [*Exit.*

Bev. Belinda! hear me but speak. By heaven, my Lady Restless—she's gone. 'Sdeath! I have been duped by her all this time; I will now summon up all that is man within me, and in my turn despise her.

Re-enter TIPPET, *with the packet of letters.*

Tip. If you are going home, sir, pray pop these things into your pocket.

Bell. Yes, I am going; I will leave this detested—

Tip. This abominable place, sir. (*Laughing.*)

Bev. This hell!

Tip. Ha, ha! ay, sir, this hell.

Bev. This mansion of perfidy, ingratitude, and fraud.

Tip. Very right, sir, let us go.

Bev. And yet, Tippet, you must not stir; indulge me but a little, it is all a misunderstanding, this—

Tip. My lady will have no more to say to these things—

Bev. Oh! Tippet, use your interest with her, keep them in the house till I return; I will clear up this whole matter presently; I must not lose her thus. [*Exit.*

Tip. Poor gentleman! he seems in a lamentable way. Well, I fancy for my part he is a true lover after all; that's what I do, and my young lady I fear is—

Re-enter BELINDA.

Madam, madam, madam, you are to blame; you are indeed.

Belin. Is he gone?

Tip. He is, madam.

Belin. Did he say anything? was he uneasy? or did he carry it off with a—

Tip. Oh! ma'am, he went away sighing short, his heart throbbing, his eyes brimfull, his looks pale; you are to blame, you are indeed, madam; I dare be sworn he has never prov'd false.

Belin. Oh, Tippet! could I be sure of that—

Tip. But you are not sure of the contrary; why won't you see my Lady Restless? see her directly, madam; go to her now before it is too late; before the old folks, who are now putting their heads together, have settled the whole affair; do, dear ma'am, be advis'd. Shall I order you a chair?

Belin. I don't know what to say,—I am afraid I love him still; yes, I will see my Lady Restless; I will be thoroughly inform'd of the whole matter. Order my chair.

Tip. Yes, ma'am; I will, ma'am. [*Exit.*

Belin. If I should lose him through a misapprehension of things, I shall never be able to forgive myself; and if rightly inform'd, the world combin'd shall not induce me to look on him again. [*Exit.*

Re-enter SIR WILLIAM BELLMONT *and* BELLMONT.

Sir W. Well, George, everything is settled.

Bell. But still, sir, I wish you would consider.

Sir W. At your tricks again?

Bell. I am above an attempt to deceive you; but if all circumstances were known—I am not fond of speaking detractingly of a young lady; but for the honour of your family, sir, let us desist from this match.

Sir W. Roguery, lad! there's roguery in this.

Bell. I see you will force me to speak out. If there is unhappily a flaw in Belinda's reputation,—

Sir W. How?

Bell. This is no time to dissemble. In short, sir, my Lady Restless, a worthy lady here in the neighbourhood, has discovered a connexion between her and Sir John Restless; Sir John and lady Restless lived in perfect harmony till this affair broke out. The peace of the family is now destroyed. The whole is come to the knowledge of my friend Beverley; with tears in his eyes, with a bleeding heart (for he loved Belinda tenderly), he has at last mustered up resolution, and taken his final leave.

Sir W. Ay, can this be true?

Bell. It is but too true; I am sorry to report it. And now, sir, judge yourself. Oh! here comes Mr. Blandford; 'tis a dreadful scene to open to him; a terrible story for the ear of a father. You had best take no notice; we need not be accessary to a young lady's ruin; it is a family affair, and we may leave them to patch it up among themselves as well as they can.

Sir W. If these things are so, why then the case is altered.

Re-enter Blandford.

Bland. Hey! what's in the wind now? You two look as grave!—what's come over you? For my part, my spirits are above proof with joy; I am in love with my daughter for her compliance, and I fancy I shall throw in an odd thousand more to enliven the honeymoon.

Sir W. Mr. Blandford, we are rather in a hurry, I think. We had better not precipitate matters.

Bland. Nay, if you are for changing your mind —Look you, sir, my daughter shall not be trifled with. Where is she? Where is my girl? Who answers there?

Re-enter Tippet.

Where's Belinda?

Tip. She is not gone far, sir; just stepp'd out upon a moment's business to Sir John Restless.

Sir W. Gone to Sir John Restless! (*Aside.*)

Bell. You see, sir. (*To Sir William.*)

Bland. I did not think she knew Sir John.

Sir W. Yes, she knows him; she has been acquainted with him for some time past.

Bland. What freak has she got in her head? She is not gone after her Mr. Beverley, I hope. Zookers! this has an odd appearance. I don't like it; I'll follow her this moment.

Sir W. You are right; I'll attend you. Now, George, this will explain everything. (*Aside.*) Come, Mr. Blandford, this may be an escape; young birds will wing their flight.

Bland. Well, well, say no more; we shall see how it is. Come, Sir William; it is but a step. [*Exit.*

Bell. (*To Tippet.*) Where is Clarissa?

Sir W. (*Looks back.*) What, loitering, George?

Bell. I follow you, sir, [*Exit Sir W.*] Clarissa is not gone, I hope?

Tip. Gone, sir! She is writing, and crying, and wiping her eyes, and tearing her paper, and beginning again, and in such a piteous way.

Bell. I must see her; she must come with us. If Lady Restless persists in her story, who knows what turn this affair may take? Come, Mrs. Tippet, shew me the way. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*The Hall in the House of Sir John Restless. A loud rap at the door.*

Enter Robert.

Rob. What a hurry you are in there! This is my lady, I suppose. Where can she have been? Now for more confusion. If she finds Madam Belinda with Sir John, we are all blown up again.

Sir J. (*Peeping.*) Robert, Robert! is that your lady?

Rob. Mercy on us! She is coming, I believe, sir. (*Looks out.*) I see her chair; it is my lady.

Sir J. Don't let her know that Belinda is in the house.

Rob. Not if I can help it. Trust to me, sir. (*Sir J. withdraws.*) Here she comes. What has she been about?

Enter Lady Restless, *in a Chair.*

Lady R. (*Coming out of the chair.*) Is Sir John at home?

Rob. I fancy he is, my lady.

Lady R. Has anybody been with him?

Rob. He has been all alone, writing letters in his study; he desired not to be interrupted.

Lady R. I shall not interrupt him, I promise him. You never will tell me anything, Robert; I don't care who comes after him. To-morrow I shall quit this house, and then he may riot in licentious pleasure. If he asks for me, I am not well; I am gone to my own apartment; I hope to see no more of him. (*Going.*)

Chair. Shall your ladyship want the chair any more to-night?

Lady R. I don't know what I shall want. Leave the chair there; you may wait. [*Exit.*

Chair. Ay, always a waiting job. (*Puts the chair aside.*) [*Exeunt Chairmen and Rob.*

Enter Sir John Restless *and* Belinda.

Belin. If you will but permit me to say a word to her—

Sir J. Excuse me for the present, I beg you will.

Belin. A short interview with Lady Restless might clear up all my doubts. What objection can you have?

Sir J. A million of objections. You do not know the consequence of being seen in this house. She will interpret every thing her own way. I am unhappy, madam, while you stay.

Belin. There is more cruelty in your refusal than you can imagine. Mr. Beverley's character is in question; it is of the last importance to me to know the whole truth.

Sir J. You know it all, madam. Mr. Beverley's character is too clear. Proofs thicken and grow stronger every hour. Since the visit I paid you this very day, I have made another discovery. I found him lurking here in my house.

Belin. Found him here, sir?

Sir J. Found him here. He was lying in ambush for another amorous meeting.

Belin. If there is no mistake in this business—

Sir J. Mistake! May I trust my own eyes? I saw him; I spoke to him; I taxed him with his guilt. He was concealed in her closet; does that amount to proof? Her maid Tattle stationed him there. My lady was privy to it; she favoured the stratagem. Are you satisfied now, madam?

Belin. The particulars of this discovery, Sir John, may convince me. Tell me all, sir; you will oblige me.

Sir J. Inquire no more for the present. You will oblige me, madam. Robert shall see you safe home. I would not have my lady find us together. I think I hear her; no, no. In a day or two the particulars will be known to the wide world. Where is Robert? he shall conduct you home. My peace and happiness require it.

Belin. My peace and happiness are destroyed for ever. If your story be true—

Sir J. It is too true; I wish you a good night. I am miserable while you are here. Robert!

Belin. Deliver me! I am ruined. I hear my father's voice; what brings him hither? I am undone if he finds me. Let me retire into that room.

Sir J. That room will not do; you will be seen there.

Belin. Can't I go up stairs? (*Going.*)

Sir J. No; I am ruined if you go that way.—Hell and distraction! My Lady Restless coming down! Here, madam, here; into that chair. You will be concealed there; nobody will suspect you.

Belin. Anywhere, sir; put me anywhere, to avoid this impending storm. (*Goes into the chair.*)

Sir J. (*Shutting the chair.*) This is lucky. I am safe now. Let my lady come as soon as she will.

Re-enter LADY RESTLESS.

Lady R. I only wanted to say one word, sir.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. Sir John, I am obliged to intrude; I am told my daughter is here.

Lady R. There; he has heard it all.

Bland. I have heard that Belinda came to your house, on what business I do not know. I hope, Sir John, that you do not harbour the girl, to disturb the peace and happiness of a father.

Sir J. That imputation, sir—

Lady R. He does harbour her.

Sir J. Mr. Blandford, I give you my honour—

Lady R. I know he does. He has ruined your daughter; he has injured you, sir, as well as me, in the most essential point.

Sir J. She raves; she is mad. If you listen to her—

Enter SIR WILLIAM BLANDFORD *and* BEVERLEY.

Bland. I am glad you are come, Sir William. This is more than I expected.

Sir J. And more than I expected. There, madam, there is your favourite again.

Bev. My visit is public, sir. I come to demand, in the presence of this company, an explanation of the mischief you have done me.

Sir J. You need not be so public, sir. The closet is ready for you; Tattle will turn the key, and you will there be very safe.

Lady R. How can you persist in such a fallacy? He knows, he perfectly well knows, it was an accident; a mere blunder of the servant, entirely unknown to me.

Sir J. She was privy to the whole.

Bland. This is beside my purpose. I came hither in quest of my daughter; a father demands her. Is she here? Is she in the house?

Sir J. In this house, sir? Our families never visited. I am not acquainted with her.

Lady R. He is acquainted with her; I saw him clasp her in his arms. [all.

Bland. In his arms! When? Where? Tell me

Lady R. Yes, and now let him give an account of himself.

Sir J. When you have accounted for your actions, madam— [sir.

Lady R. Render an account to the lady's father,

Bland. Yes, to her father. Account with me, sir. When and where was all this?

Lady R. This very day, at noon, in the Park.

Bev. But in the eyes of the whole world; I know Belinda; I can acquit her.

Sir J. And I proclaim her innocence. We can both acquit her. (*Goes up to Bev.*)

Lady R. You are both in a plot; both combined.

Sir J. It was all harmless; all inoffensive. Was not it, Mr. Beverley?

Bev. Yes, all, all.

Lady R. All guilt, manifest, downright guilt.

Sir W. If you all talk together, we shall never understand.

Bev. I understand it all. Mr. Blandford, you met Belinda in the Park this morning?

Bland. I did, sir.

Bev. You accosted her violently; the harshness of your language overpowered her spirits; she was ready to faint; Sir John was passing by; she was going to drop down; Sir John assisted her; that is the whole of the story. Injured as I am, I must do justice to Belinda's character. She may treat me with the caprice and pride of insolent beauty; but her virtue claims respect.

Sir J. There now; there, that is the whole of the story.

Lady R. The whole of the story! No, Sir John; you shall suppress nothing; you could receive a picture from her.

Sir J. You, madam, could receive a picture; and you, Mr. Beverley, could present it.

Lady R. Mr. Beverley, you hear this.

Bev. I can justify you, madam. I gave your lady no picture, Sir John.

Sir J. She had it in her hand. I saw her print her kisses on it, and in that moment I seized it from her.

Bev. Belinda dropped it in the Park, when she was taken ill; I had just given it to her. Your lady found it there.

Lady R. I found it on that very spot.

Bev. There, sir; she found it.

Sir J. I found you locked up in her cabinet; concealed in private.

Lady R. But with no bad intent.

Sir J. With the worst intent.

Bev. Your jealousy, Sir John, has fixed an imputation upon me, who have not deserved it; and your suspicions, madam, have fallen, like a blasting mildew, upon a lady, whose name was never before sullied by the breath of calumny.

Sir W. The affair is clear, as to your daughter, Mr. Blandford. I am satisfied, and now we need not intrude any longer upon this family.

Enter BELLMONT *and* CLARISSA.

Walk in, George; every thing is right; your fears may now go to rest.

Lady R. I shall not stay another night in this house. Time will explain everything. Call my chairmen, there. Sir John has it his own way at present. You have settled this among yourselves. I shall now go to my brother. Sir John, I have no more to say at present.

Sir J. You shall not go; you shall not quit this house till I consent.

Lady R. Very well, sir; I must be your prisoner, must I?

Sir J. It is mine to command here. No loose escapes this night, no assignations, no intrigues to disgrace me.

Lady R. Such inhuman treatment; I am glad there are witnesses of your behaviour. (*Walks away.*)

Bland. I am sorry to see all this confusion; but since my daughter is not here— [find.

Lady R. He knows where she is, and so you will

Sir J. (*Coming forward.*) Your daughter is innocent, sir, I give you my honour. Where should she be in this house? Lady Restless has occasioned all this mischief. She formed a story to palliate her own misconduct. To her various artifices you are a stranger; but in a few days you may depend that I have full proof, and in a little time everything will—

BELINDA *comes out of the chair.*

Lady R. Who has proof now? There, there! in his house all the time.

Bland. What do I see?

Bev. Belinda here!

Sir W. So, so; there is something in it, I see.

Sir J. Distraction! this is unlucky. (*Aside.*)

Lady R. What say you now, Mr. Beverley? Now, Mr. Blandford, there; ocular demonstration for you.

Sir W. George, take Clarissa as soon as you will. Mr. Blandford, you will excuse me, if I now decline any further treaty with you.

Bland. This abrupt behaviour, Sir William—

Sir W. I am satisfied, sir. I am resolved.

Clarissa, you have my approbation; my son is at your service. Here, George, take her and be happy.

Bell. (*Taking her hand.*) To you, from this moment, I dedicate all my future days.

Bland. Very well; take your own way. I can still protect my daughter.

Bev. And she deserves your protection. My dear Belinda, explain all this; I know it is in your power.

Belin. This generous behaviour, sir, recalls me to new life. You, I am now convinced, have been accused by my Lady Restless without foundation. Whatever turn her ladyship's unhappy self-tormenting fancy may give to my conduct, it may provoke a smile, but will excite no other passion.

Lady R. Mighty fine! what brought you to this house?

Belin. To be a witness of your folly, madam, and Sir John's into the bargain.

Bell. That I can vouch; Sir John can fill his mind with vain chimeras, with as apt a disposition as his lady. Beverley has been represented in the falsest colours.

Lady R. That I admit; Sir John invented the story.

Bev. And Belinda, madam, has been cruelly slandered by you.

Sir J. She has so; that I admit.

Belin. And my desire to see all this cleared up, brought me to this house, madam. Now you see what has made this confusion.

Lady R. O, I expected these airs. You may discuss the point where you please; I will hear no more upon the subject. [*Exit.*

Bland. Madam, the subject must be settled. [*Follows her.*

Sir J. You have a right to insist upon it, the whole shall be explained this moment. Sir William, you are a dispassionate man, give us your assistance. [*Exit.*

Sir W. With all my heart. George, you are no longer concerned in this business, and I am glad of it. [*Exit with Bellmont.*

Cla. (*To Beverley.*) Now, brother, now is your time; your difficulties are all removed. Sir John suspected you without reason; my Lady Restless did the same to Belinda; you are both in love, and now may do each other justice. I can satisfy my Lady Restless and your father. [*Exit.*

Bev. I see, I see my rashness. (*Aside.*)

Belin. I have been terribly deceived. (*Aside.*)

Bev. If she would but forgive my folly. (*Aside.*)

Belin. Why does he not open his mind to me? I can't speak first. (*Aside.*)

Bev. What apology can I make her? (*Aside.*) Belinda!

Belin. Charming! he begins. (*Aside, and smiling.*)

Bev. (*Approaching*) Belinda! No answer. Belinda!

Belin. Mr. Beverley. (*Smiles aside.*)

Bev. Don't you think you have been very cruel to me, Belinda? (*Advancing towards her.*)

Belin. Don't you think you have been barbarous to me? (*Without looking at him.*)

Bev. I have; I grant it. Can you find in your heart to forgive me?

Belin. (*Without looking at him.*) You have kept me on the rack this whole day, and can you wonder that I feel myself unhappy?

Bev. I am to blame; I acknowledge it. If you knew how my own heart reproaches me, you would spare yourself the trouble. With tears in my eyes I now speak to you; I acknowledge all my errors.

Belin. (*Looking at him.*) Those are not tears, Mr. Beverley. (*Smiling.*)

Bev. They are; you see that they are.

Belin. Ah! you men can command tears.

Bev. My life! my angel! (*Kissing her hand.*) Do you forgive me?

Belin. No; I hate you. (*Looks pleased at him.*)

Bev. Now, I don't believe that. (*Kisses her cheek.*) Do you hate me, Belinda?

Belin. How could you let an extravagance of temper get the better of you? You know the sincerity of my affection. Oh, Mr. Beverley, was it not ungenerous?

Bev. It was; I own it; on my knees I own it.

Belin. (*Laughing.*) Oh! proud man, have I humbled you? Since you submit to my will and pleasure, I think I can forgive you. Beg my picture back this moment. (*Shews it to him.*)

Bev. (*Taking the picture.*) I shall adore it for ever, and heal this breach with uninterrupted love.

Re-enter Sir John Restless, Lady Restless, Sir William Blandford, Blandford, Bellmont, *and* Clarissa.

Sir J. (*Laughing.*) Why, yes; it is very clear. I can now laugh at my own folly, and my wife's too.

Lady R. There has been something of a mistake, I believe.

Bev. You see, Sir John, what your suspicions are come to. I never was within your doors before this day; nor should I, perhaps, have had the honour of speaking to your lady, had it not been for the misunderstanding your mutual jealousies occasioned between Belinda and me.

Bland. And your ladyship has been ingenious enough to work out of those whimsical circumstances a charge against my daughter. Ha, ha!

Sir J. It is ever her way, sir. I told you, my dear, that you would make yourself very ridiculous.

Lady R. I fancy, sir, you have not been behindhand with me. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir W. And now, Mr. Blandford, I think we may as well let the match go on as we at first intended.

Bland. No, no more of that; you have disposed of your son. Belinda, I no longer oppose your inclinations, take Mr. Beverley as soon as you will.

Sir J. Now let us see; if she agrees to marry him, why then she knows he is innocent, and I shall be satisfied. (*Aside.*)

Belin. If you insist upon it, sir.

Bland. I do insist.

Lady R. If Beverley accepts of her, all my suspicions are at an end. (*Aside.*)

Bev. Thus let me take the bright reward of all my wishes. (*Takes her hand.*)

Belin. Since it is over, you have used your authority, sir, to make me happy indeed. We have both seen our error, and frankly confess we have both been in the wrong too.

Sir W. Why, we have been all in the wrong, I think.

Sir J. It has been a day of mistakes, but of fortunate ones, conducing at last to the advantage of all parties. My Lady Restless will now be taught—

Lady R. Sir John, I hope you will be taught—

Bland. Never mention what is past. The wrangling of married people, about unlucky questions that break out between them, is like the lashing of a top; it only serves to keep it up the longer.

Sir J. Very true; and since we have been All in the Wrong to-day, we will, for the future, endeavour to be All in the Right.

Bev. A fair proposal, Sir John; we will make it our business, both you who are married, and we who are now entering into that state, by mutual confidence to ensure mutual happiness.

The god of love thinks we profane his fire,
When trifles, light as air, mistrust inspire.
But where esteem and gen'rous passions spring,
There reigns secure, and waves his purple wing;
Gives homefelt peace; prevents the nuptial strife;
Endears the bliss, and bids it last for life. [*Exeunt.*

A BOLD STROKE FOR A HUSBAND;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY MRS. COWLEY.



Jane Hughes

Act III.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

DON CÆSAR	DON VINCENTIO	GASPER	DONNA VICTORIA	MARCELLA
DON JULIO	DON GARCIA	PEDRO	DONNA LAURA	SANCHA
DON CARLOS	DON VASQUEZ	DONNA OLIVIA	MINETTE	INIS

ACT I.—SCENE I.—*A Street in Madrid.*

Enter SANCHA *from a house.*

San. Hist! Pedro, Pedro! [*Enter* PEDRO.] There he is: dost see him? just turning by St. Anthony, in the corner. Now, do you tell him that your mistress is not at home; and if his jealous donship should insist on searching the house, as he did yesterday, say that somebody is ill—the black has got a fever, or that—

Ped. Pho, pho! get you in. Don't I know that the duty of a lacquey in Madrid, is to lie with a good grace? I have been studying it now for a whole week, and I'll defy dou or devil to surprise me into a truth. Here he comes. [*Exit Sancha.*] [*Enter* DON CARLOS.] Donna Laura is not at home, sir. [ceived for telling that lie?

Car. Not at home! Come, sir, what have you re-

Ped. Lie—lie, signior!

Car. It must be a lie, by your promptness in delivering it. What a fool does your mistress trust! A clever rascal would have waited my approach, and, delivering the message with easy coolness, deceived me: thou hast been on the watch, and runnest towards me with a face of stupid importance, bawling, (that she may hear through the lattice how well thou obeyest her,) "Donna Laura is not at home, sir!"

Ped. Hear through the lattice! Ah! by'r lady! she must have long ears, to reach from the grotto in the garden to the street.

Car. Ah! (*Seizing him.*) Now, sir, your ears shall be longer, if you do not tell me who is with her in the grotto.

Ped. In the grotto, sir! Did I say anything about the grotto? I—I only meant that—

Car. Fool! Dost thou trifle with me? Who is with her? (*Pinching his ear.*)

Ped. Oh! Why, nobody, sir; only the pretty young gentleman's valet, waiting for an answer to a letter he brought. There! I have saved my ears at the expense of my place. I have worn this fine coat but a week, and I shall be sent back to Segovia for not being able to lie, though I have been learning the art six days and nights.

Car. Well; come this way; if thou wilt promise to be faithful to me, I will not betray thee, nor, at present, enter the house.

Ped. Oh! sir, blessings on you! [visit her?

Car. How often does the pretty young gentleman

Ped. Every day, sir. If he misses, madam's stark [wild.

Car. Where does he live?

Ped. Truly, I know not, sir.

Car. How! (*Menacing.*)

Ped. By the honesty of my mother, I cannot tell, sir. She calls him Florio; that's his christian name—his heathen name I never heard.

Car. You must acquaint me when they are next together. [spilt!

Ped. Lord! sir, if there should be any blood

Car. Promise! or I'll lead thee by the ears to

Ped. I promise, I promise! [the grotto.

Car. There, take that; (*gives money*) and if thou art faithful, I'll treble it. Now go in, and be a good lad; and, d'ye hear? you may tell lies to everybody else, but you must always speak truth to me.

Ped. I will, sir, I will! [*Exit.*

Car. 'Tis well my passion is extinguished, for I can now act with coolness; I'll wait patiently for the hour of their security, and take them in the softest moments of their love. But if ever I trust to woman more, may every—

Enter two Women, followed by DON JULIO.

Julio. Fie! ladies, keep your curtains drawn so late! The sun is up; 'tis time to look abroad. (*Tries to remove the veils.*) Nay, if you are determined on night and silence, I take my leave. A woman without prattle, is like Burgundy without spirit. Bright eyes, to touch me, must belong to sweet tongues. (*Going.*)

Car. Sure, 'tis Julio. Eh!

Julio. (*Returning.*) Don Carlos? Yes, by all the sober gods of matrimony! Why, what business, goodman gravity! canst thou have in Madrid? I understand you are married; quietly settled in your

own pastures; father of a family, and the intructive companion of country vine-dressers. Ha, ha!

Car. 'Tis false, by heaven! I have forsworn the country; left my family, and run away from my wife.

Julio. Really! then matrimony has not totally destroyed thy free-will.

Car. 'Tis with difficulty I have preserved it, though; for, women, thou knowest, are most unreasonable beings! As soon as I had exhausted my stock of love-tales, which, with management, lasted beyond the honeymoon, madam grew sullen; I found home dull, and amused myself with the pretty peasants of the neighbourhood—worse and worse! we had nothing now but faintings, tears, and hysterics for twenty-four honeymoons more. So, one morning, I gave her, in her sleep, a farewell kiss, to comfort her when she should awake, and posted to Madrid; where, if it was not for the remembrance of the clog at my heel, I should bound o'er the regions of pleasure with more spirit than a young Arabian on his mountains. [fairs of gallantry.

Julio. Do you find this clog no hindrance in af-

Car. Not much. In that house there—but, d—n her! she's perfidious!—in that house is a woman of beauty, with pretensions to character and fortune, who devoted herself to my passion.

Julio. If she's perfidious, give her to the winds.

Car. Ah! but there is a rub, Julio; I have been a fool—a woman's fool! In a state of intoxication, she wheedled me, or, rather, cheated me, out of a

Julio. Pho! is that— [settlement.

Car. Oh! but you know not its nature. A settlement of lands, that both honour and gratitude ought to have preserved sacred from such base alienation. In short, if I cannot recover them, I am a ruined man.

Julio. Nay, this seems a worse clog than t'other. Poor Carlos! so bewived and be—

Car. Pr'ythee, have compassion. [*Enter a Servant with a letter to Julio; and exit.*] An appointment, I'll be sworn, by that air of mystery and satisfaction: come, be friendly, and communicate.

Julio. (*Putting up the letter.*) You are married, Carlos; that's all I have to say: you are married.

Car. Pho! that's past long ago, and ought to be forgotten; but if a man does a foolish thing once, he'll hear of it all his life.

Julio. Ay, the time has been when thou mightest have been entrusted with such a dear secret; when I might have opened the billet, and feasted thee with the sweet meandering strokes at the bottom, which form her name; when—

Car. What, 'tis from a woman, then?

Julio. It is.

Car. Handsome?

Julio. Hum! not absolutely handsome; but she'll pass, with one who has not had his taste spoiled by matrimony.

Car. Malicious dog! Is she young?

Julio. Under twenty: fair complexion, azure eyes, red lips, teeth of pearl, polished neck, fine-turned shape, graceful—

Car. Hold! Julio, if thou lovest me! Is it possible she can be so bewitching a creature?

Julio. 'Tis possible; though, to deal plainly, I never saw her; but I love my own pleasure so well, that I could fancy all that, and ten times more.

Car. What stir does she inhabit?

Julio. Faith! I know not; my orders are to be in waiting, at seven, at the Prado.

Car. Prado, eh! Gad! can't you take me with you? for, though I have forsworn the sex myself, and have done with them for ever, yet I may be of use to you, you know.

Julio. Faith! I can't see that; however, as you are a poor, woe-begone, married mortal, I'll have compassion, and suffer thee to come.

Car. Then I am a man again! Wife, avaunt! mistress, farewell! At seven, you say?

Julio. Exactly.

Car. I'll meet thee at Philippi! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Garden belonging to Don Cæsar.*

Enter MINETTE *and* INIS.

Min. There, will that do? My lady sent me to make her up a nosegay; these orange-flowers are delicious! and this rose, how sweet!

Inis. Pho! what signifies wearing sweets in her bosom, unless they would sweeten her manners? 'Tis amazing you can be so much at your ease; one might think your lady's tongue were a lute, and her morning scolds an agreeable serenade.

Min. So they are. Custom, you know. I have been used to her music, now, these two years, and I don't believe I could relish my breakfast without it.

Inis. I would rather never break my fast, than do it on such terms. What a difference between your mistress and mine! Donna Victoria is as much too gentle, as her cousin is too harsh.

Min. Ay, and you see what she gets by it: had she been more spirited, perhaps her husband would not have forsaken her; men enlisted under the matrimonial banner, like those under the king's, would be often tempted to run away from their colours, if fear did not keep them in dread of desertion.

Inis. If making a husband afraid is the way to keep him faithful, I believe your lady will be the happiest wife in Spain.

Min. Ha, ha, ha! how people may be deceived! nay, how people are deceived! But time will discover all things.

Inis. What! what, is there a secret in the business, Minette? If there is, hang time! let's have it directly. [could surprise ye! (*Going.*)

Min. Now, if I dared but tell ye—lud, lud! how I

Inis. (*Stopping her.*) Don't go.

Min. I must go; I am on the very brink of betraying my mistress. I must leave you. Mercy upon me! it rises like new bread. [know all.

Inis. I hope it will choke ye, if ye stir till I

Min. Will you never breathe a syllable?

Inis. Never.

Min. Will you strive to forget it the moment you have heard it? [forget it.

Inis. I'll swear to myself forty times a-day to

Min. You are sure you will not let me stir from this spot till you know the whole?

Inis. Not as far as a thrush hops.

Min. So! now, then, in one word, here it goes. Though everybody supposes my lady an arrant scold, she's no more a—(*Looking out.*)

Don Cæsar. (*Without.*) Out upon't! eh!

Min. Oh! St. Jerome! here is her father and his privy-counsellor, Gasper. I can never communicate a secret in quiet. Well! come to my chamber; for, now my hand's in, you shall have the whole. I would not keep it another day, to be confidante to an infanta. [*Exeunt.*

Enter DON CÆSAR *and* GASPER.

Gasp. Take comfort, sir; take comfort.

Cæsar. Take it! why, where the devil shall I find it? You may say, "Take physic, sir," or "Take poison, sir;" they are to be had; but what signifies bidding me take comfort, when I can neither buy it, beg it, nor steal it?

Gasp. But patience will bring it, sir.

Cæsar. 'Tis false, sirrah! Patience is a cheat, and the man that ranked her with the cardinal virtues was a fool. I have had patience at bed and board these three long years, but the comfort she promised has never called in with a civil "How d'ye?"

Gasp. Ay, sir, but you know the poets say that the twin-sister and companion of comfort is good-humour. Now, if you would but drop that agreeable acidity which is so conspicuous—

Cæsar. Then let my daughter drop her perverse humour; 'tis a more certain bar to marriage than ugliness or folly, and will send me to my grave, at last, without male heirs. (*Crying.*) How many have laid siege to her! But that humour of hers, like the works of Gibraltar, no Spaniard can find pregnable.

Gasp. Ay, well! Troy held out but ten years. Let her once tell over her beads, unmarried, at

five-and-twenty, and, my life upon it, she ends the rosary with a hearty prayer for a good husband.

Cæsar. What, d'ye expect me to wait till the horrors of old maidenism fright her into civility? No, no; I'll shut her up in a convent, marry myself, and have heirs in spite of her. There's my neighbour Don Vasquez's daughter, she is but nineteen—

Gasp. The very step I was going to recommend, sir. You are but a young gentleman of sixty-three, I take it; and a husband of sixty-three, who marries a wife of nineteen, will never want heirs, take my word for it.

Cæsar. What! do you joke, sirrah?

Gasp. Oh! no, sir; not if you are serious. I think it would be one of the pleasantest things in the world! Madam would throw a new life into the family; and when you are above stairs, in the gout, sir, the music of her concerts, and the spirit of her converzationes, would reach your sick-bed, and be a thousand times more comforting than flannels and panada.

Cæsar. Come, come, I understand ye. But this daughter of mine—I shall give her but two chances more. Don Garcia and Don Vincentio will both be here to-day; and if she plays over the old game, I'll marry to-morrow morning, if I hang myself the next.

Gasp. You decide right, signior; at sixty-three, the marriage-noose and the hempen-noose should always go together.

Cæsar. Why, you dog you! do you suppose—There's Don Garcia—there he is coming through the portico. Run to my daughter, and bid her remember what I have said to her. [*Exit Gasper.*] She has had her lesson; but another memento mayn't be amiss—a young slut! pretty, and witty, and rich! a match for a prince, and yet—but, hist! Not a word to my young man; if I can but keep him in ignorance till he is married, he must make the best of his bargain afterwards, as other honest men have done before him. [*Enter* DON GARCIA.] Welcome, Don Garcia! why, you are rather before your time.

Gar. Gallantry forbid that I should not, when a fair lady is concerned! Should Donna Olivia welcome me as frankly as you do, I shall think I have been tardy.

Cæsar. When you made your overtures, signior, I understood it was from inclination to be allied to my family, not from a particular passion to my daughter. Have you ever seen her?

Gar. But once: that transiently; yet sufficient to convince me that she is charming.

Cæsar. Why, yes, though I say it, there are few prettier women in Madrid; and she has got enemies amongst her own sex accordingly. They pretend to say that—I say, sir, they have reported that she is not blessed with that kind of docility and gentleness that a—now, though she may not be so very placid and insipid, as some young women, yet, upon the whole—

Gar. Oh, fie! sir; not a word! A beauty cannot be ill-tempered; gratified vanity keeps her in good humour with herself, and everybody about her.

Cæsar. Yes, as you say, vanity is a prodigious sweetener; and Olivia, considering how much she has been humoured, is as gentle and pliant as—

Enter MINETTE.

Min. Oh! sir, shield me from my mistress. She is in one of her old tempers: the whole house is in an uproar. I cannot support it.

Cæsar. Hush!

Min. No, sir, I can't hush. A saint could not bear it. I am tired of her tyranny, and must quit her service.

Cæsar. Then quit it in a moment; go to my steward, and receive your wages; go, begone! 'Tis a cousin of my daughter's she is speaking of.

Min. A cousin, sir! No, 'tis Donna Olivia, your daughter, my mistress. Oh! sir, you seem to be a sweet, tender-hearted, young gentleman—'twould move you to pity, if—(*To Garcia.*)

Cæsar. I'll move you, hussy! to some purpose, if you don't move off. [Olivia—

Gar. I am really confounded. Can the charming

Cæsar. Spite, sir; mere malice! My daughter has refused her some cast gown, or some—

Olivia. (*Without.*) Where is she? Where is Minette?

Cæsar. Oh! 'tis all over! the tempest is coming!

Enter DONNA OLIVIA.

Oliv. Oh! you vile creature! to speak to me! to answer me! Am I made to be answered?

Cæsar. Daughter, daughter!

Oliv. Because I threw my work-bag at her, she had the insolence to complain; and on my repeating it, said she would not bear it. Servants choose what they shall bear!

Min. When you are married, madam, I hope your husband will bear your humour less patiently than I have done.

Oliv. My husband! Dost think my husband shall contradict my will? Oh! I long to set a pattern to those milky wives, whose mean compliances degrade

Gar. Opportune! (*Aside.*) [the sex.

Oliv. The only husband on record who knew how to treat a wife was Socrates; and, though his lady was a Grecian, I have some reason to believe her descendants matched into our family; and never shall my tame submission disgrace my ancestry.

Gar. Heavens! Why have you never curbed this intemperate spirit, Don Cæsar?

Oliv. (*Starting.*) Curbed, sir! talk thus to your grooms. Curbs and bridles for a woman's tongue!

Gar. Not for your's, lady, truly! 'tis too late. But had the torrent, now so overbearing, been taken at its spring, it might have been stemmed, and turned in gentle streamlets, at the master's pleasure.

Oliv. A mistake, friend! my spirit, at its spring, was too powerful for any master.

Gar. Indeed! perhaps you may meet a Petruchio, gentle Catherine, yet.

Oliv. But no gentle Catherine will he find me, believe it. Catherine! why, she had not the spirit of a roasted chesnut! a few big words, an empty oath, and a scanty dinner, made her as submissive as a spaniel. My fire will not be so soon extinguished; it shall resist big words, oaths, and starving.

Min. I believe so, indeed; help the poor gentleman, I say, to whose fate you fall!

Gar. Don Cæsar, adieu! My commiseration for your fate subdues the resentment I should otherwise feel at your endeavouring to deceive me into such a marriage.

Oliv. Marriage! Oh, mercy! Is this Don Garcia? (*Apart to Cæsar.*)

Cæsar. Yes, termagant!

Oliv. Oh! what a misfortune! Why did you not tell me it was the gentleman you designed to marry me to? Oh! sir, all that is past was in sport; a contrivance between my maid and me: I have no spirit at all; I am as patient as poverty.

Gar. This mask fits too ill on your features, fair lady! I have seen you without disguise, and rejoice in your ignorance of my name; since, but for that, my peaceful home might have become the seat of perpetual discord. [a quiet hour—

Min. Ay, sir, you would never have known what

Oliv. (*Strikes her.*) Impertinence! Indeed, sir, I can be as gentle and forbearing as a pet lamb.

Gar. I cannot doubt it, madam; the proofs of your placidity are very striking. But, adieu! though I shall pray for your conversion, rather than have the honour of it, I'd turn Dominican, and condemn myself to perpetual celibacy. [*Exit.*

Cæsar. Now, hussy! what do you expect?

Oliv. Dear me! how can you be so unreasonable! did ever daughter do more to oblige a father? I absolutely begged the man to have me.

Cæsar. Yes, vixen! after you had made him detest ye. What, I suppose, he had not hit your fancy, madam; though there is not, in all Spain, a man of prettier conversation.

Oliv. Yes, he has a very pretty kind of conversation; 'tis like a parenthesis.

Cæsar. Like a parenthesis!

Oliv. Yes, it might be all left out and never missed. However, I thought him a modest kind of a well-meaning young man, and that he would make a pretty sort of a husband; for, notwithstanding his blustering, had I been his wife, in three months, he should have been as humble and complaisant as—

Cæsar. Ay, there it is; there it is! that spirit of your's, hussy! you can neither conquer nor conceal: but I'll find a way to tame it, I'll warrant me! [*Exit.*

Min. Well, madam, I give you joy! had other ladies as much success in getting lovers, as you have in getting rid of your's, what contented faces we should see!

Oliv. But to what purpose do I get rid of them, whilst they rise in succession like monthly pinks? Was there ever anything so provoking? After some quiet, and believing the men had ceased to trouble themselves about me, no less than two proposals have been made to my inexorable father this very day. What will become of me?

Min. What should become of you? You'll choose one from the pair, I hope. Believe me, madam, the only way to get rid of the impertinence of lovers, is to take one, and make him a scarecrow to the rest. [this one day!

Oliv. Oh! but I cannot. Invention assist me

Min. Upon my word, madam, invention owes you nothing; and I am afraid you can draw on that bank no longer. You must trust to your established character of vixen.

Oliv. But that won't frighten them all, you know, though it did its business with sober Don Garcia. The brave General Antonio would have made a property of me, in spite of everything, had I not, luckily, discovered his antipathy to cats, and so scared the hero, by pretending an immoderate passion for young kittens.

Min. Yes, but you was still harder pushed by the Castilian count, and his engraved genealogy from Noah.

Oliv. Oh! he would have kept his post as immovably as the griffins at his gate, had I not very seriously imparted to him, that my mother's great-uncle sold oranges in Arragon.

Min. And pray, madam, if I may be so bold, who is the next gentleman?

Oliv. Oh! Don Vincentio, who distracts everybody with his skill in music. He ought to be married to a viol de gamba. I bless my stars I have never yet had a miser in my list; on such a character all art would be lost, and nothing but an earthquake, to swallow up my estate, could save me.

Min. Well, if some one did but know, how happy would some one be, that for his sake—

Oliv. Now, don't be impertinent, Minette. You have several times attempted to slide yourself into a secret, which I am resolved to keep to myself. Continue faithful, and suppress your curiosity. [*Exit.*

Min. Suppress my curiosity, madam! Why, I am a chambermaid, and a sorry one, too, it should seem, to have been in your confidence two years, and never have got the master-secret yet. I never was six weeks in a family before but I knew every secret they had in it for three generations; ay, and I'll know this, too, or I'll blow up all her plans, declare to the world that she is no more a vixen than other fine ladies: they have most of them a touch on't. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Donna Laura's.*

Enter DONNA LAURA, *followed by* DON CARLOS.

Car. Nay, madam, you may as well stop here; for I'll follow you through every apartment, but I will be heard. (*Seizing her hand.*)

Laura. This insolence is not to be endured; within my own walls, to be thus—

Car. The time has been, when, within your walls, I might be master.

Laura. Yes, you were, then, master of my heart; that gave you a right which—

Car. You have now transferred to another.

Laura. Well, sir! [False, fickle woman!

Car. "Well, sir!" Unblushing acknowledgment!

Laura. Because I have luckily got the start of you. In a few weeks, I should have been the accuser, and you the false and fickle.

Car. And, to secure yourself from that disgrace, you prudently looked out in time for another lover.

Laura. I can pardon your sneer, because you are

Car. Mortified! [mortified.

Laura. Yes; mortified to the soul, Carlos!

Car. (*Stamping.*) Madam, madam!

Laura. This rage would have been all cool insolence, had I waited for your change. Scarcely would you have deigned to form a phrase of pity for me; perhaps, have bid me forget a man no longer worthy my attachment, and recommended me to hartshorn and my woman.

Car. Has any hour, since I have first known you, given you cause for such unjust—

Laura. Yes, every hour! Now, Carlos, I bring thee to the test! You saw, you liked, you loved me; was there no fond, trusting woman whom you deserted to indulge the transient passion? Yes; one blessed with beauty, gentleness, and youth; one, who more than her own being loved thee, who made thee rich, and whom thou madest thy wife.

Car. My wife! Here's a turn! So, to revenge the quarrels of my wife—

Laura. No, do not mistake me: what I have done was merely to indulge myself, without more regard to your feelings, than you had to hers.

Car. And you dare avow to my face, that you have a passion for another?

Laura. I do; and, for I am above disguise, I confess, so tender is my love for Florio, it has scarcely left a trace of that I once avowed for Carlos.

Car. Well, madam, if I hear this without some sudden vengeance on the tongue which speaks it, thank the annihilation of that passion, whose remembrance is as dead in my bosom as in your's. Let us, however, part friends, and with a mutual acquittal of every obligation; so, give up the settlement of that estate, which left me almost a beggar.

Laura. Give it up! ha, ha! No, Carlos; you consigned me that estate as a proof of love; do not imagine, then, I'll give up the only part of our connexion of which I am not ashamed.

Car. Base woman! you know 'twas not a voluntary gift: after having in vain practised on my fondness, whilst in a state of intoxication, you prevailed on me to sign the deed, which you had artfully prepared for the purpose: therefore, you must restore

Laura. Never, never! [it.

Car. Ruin is in the word! Call it back, madam, or I'll be revenged on thee in thy heart's dearest object—thy minion, Florio! he shall not riot on my fortune.

Laura. Ha, ha, ha! Florio is safe; your lands are sold; and, in another country, we shall enjoy the blessing of thy fond passion, whilst that passion is indulging itself in hatred and execrations. [*Exit.*

Car. My vengeance shall first fall on her. (*Following.*) No; he shall be the first victim, or 'twill be incomplete. Reduced to poverty, I cannot live. Oh, folly! where are now all the gilded prospects of my youth? Had I—but 'tis too late to look back; remorse attends the past, and ruin—ruin waits me in the future!

SCENE II.—*Don Cæsar's House.*

Enter DONNA VICTORIA, *perusing a letter, meeting* DONNA OLIVIA.

Oliv. (*Speaks as entering.*) If my father should inquire for me, tell him I am in Donna Victoria's apartment. Smiling, I protest! my dear, gloomy cousin, where have you purchased that sun-shiny look?

Vict. It is but April sun-shine, I fear; but who

could resist such a temptation to smile? a letter from Donna Laura, my husband's mistress, styling me her dearest Florio! her life! her soul! and complaining of a twelve hours' absence, as the bitterest misfortune.

Oliv. Ha, ha, ha! most doughty don! pray, let us see you in your feather and doublet; as a cavaliero, it seems, you are formidable. So suddenly to rob your husband of his charmer's heart! you must have used some witchery.

Vict. Yes, powerful witchery—the knowledge of my sex. Oh! did the men but know us as well as we do ourselves—but, thank fate! they do not: 'twould be dangerous.

Oliv. What, I suppose, you praised her understanding, was captivated by her wit, and absolutely struck dumb by the amazing beauties of her mind?

Vict. Oh! no: that's the mode prescribed by the essayists on the female heart. Ha, ha, ha! not a woman breathing, from fifteen to fifty, but would rather have a compliment to the tip of her ear, or the turn of her ancle, than a volume in praise of her intellects.

Oliv. So, flattery, then, is your boasted pill?

Vict. No, that's only the occasional gilding; but 'tis in vain to attempt a description of what changed its nature with every moment. I was now attentive, now gay; then tender, then careless. I strove rather to convince her that I was charming, than that I myself was charmed; and, when I saw love's arrow quivering in her heart, instead of falling at her feet, sung a triumphant air, and remembered a sudden engagement.

Oliv. (*Archly.*) Would you have done so, had you been a man? [woman.

Vict. Assuredly! knowing what I now do as a

Oliv. But can all this be worth while, merely to rival a fickle husband with one woman, whilst he is setting his feather, perhaps, at half-a-score others?

Vict. To rival him was not my first motive. The Portuguese robbed me of his heart; I concluded she had fascinations which nature had denied to me; it was impossible to visit her as a woman; I, therefore, assumed the cavalier to study her, that I might, if possible, be to my Carlos, all he found

Oliv. Pretty, humble creature! [in her.

Vict. In this adventure, I learnt more than I expected; my—(oh, cruel!)—my husband has given this woman an estate, almost all that his dissipa-

Oliv. Indeed! [pations had left us.

Vict. To make him more culpable, it was my estate; it was that fortune which my lavish love had made his, without securing it to my children.

Oliv. How could you be so improvident?

Vict. Alas! I trusted him with my heart, with my happiness, without restriction. Should I have shewn a greater solicitude for anything than for these?

Oliv. The event proves that you should; but how can you be thus passive in your sorrow? since I had assumed the man, I'd make him feel a man's resentment for such injuries.

Vict. Oh! Olivia, what resentment can I shew to him I have vowed to honour, and whom both my duty and my heart compel me yet to love?

Oliv. Why, really, now, I think—positively, there's no thinking about it; 'tis among the arcana of the married life, I suppose.

Vict. You, who know me, can judge how I suffered in prosecuting my plan. I have thrown off the delicacy of my sex; I have worn the mask of love to the destroyer of my peace—but the object is too great to be abandoned—nothing less than to save my husband from ruin, and to restore him, again a lover, to my faithful bosom.

Oliv. Well, I confess, Victoria, I hardly know whether most to blame or praise you; but, with the rest of the world, I suppose, your success will determine me. [*Enter* GASPER.]

Gasp. Pray, madam, are your wedding-shoes ready? (*To Olivia.*)

Oliv. Insolence! I can scarcely ever keep up the vixen to this fellow. (*Apart to Victoria.*)

Gasp. You'll want them, madam, to-morrow morning, that's all; so I came to prepare ye.

Oliv. I want wedding-shoes to-morrow! If you are kept on water-gruel till I marry, that plump face of your's will be chap-fallen, I believe.

Gasp. Yes, truly, I believe so, too. Lack-a-day! did you suppose I came to bring you news of your own wedding? no such glad tidings for you, lady, believe me. You married! I am sure the man who ties himself to you, ought to be half a salamander, and able to live on fire. [honour to inform me of?

Oliv. What marriage, then, is it you do me the

Gasp. Why, your father's marriage. You'll have a mother-in-law to-morrow; and having, like a dutiful daughter, danced at the wedding, be immured in a convent for life.

Oliv. Immured in a convent! then I'll raise sedition in the sisterhood, depose the abbess, and turn the confessor's chair to a go-cart.

Gasp. So, the threat of the mother-in-law, which I thought would be worse than that of the abbess, does not frighten ye?

Oliv. No, because my father dares not give me one. Marry without my consent! no, no; he'll never think of it, depend on't! however, lest the fit should grow strong upon him, I'll go and administer my volatiles to keep it under. [*Exit.*

Gasp. Administer them cautiously, then; too strong a dose of your volatiles would make the fit stubborn. Who'd think that pretty arch look belonged to a termagant? what a pity! 'twonld be worth a thousand ducats to cure her.

Vict. Has Inis told you I wanted to converse with you in private, Gasper?

Gasp. Oh! yes, madam; and I took particular notice that it was to be in private. "Sure," says I, "Mrs. Inis, Madame Victoria has not taken a fancy to me, and is going to break her mind." [per?

Vict. Whimsical! ha, ha! Suppose I should, Gas-

Gasp. Why, then, madam, I should say, fortune had used you devilish scurvily, to give you a grey-beard in a livery. I know well enough, that some young ladies have given themselves to grey-beards in a gilded coach, and others have run away with a handsome youth in worsted lace; they each had their apology; but if you run away with me—pardon me, madam, I could not stand the ridicule.

Vict. Oh! very well; but if you refuse to run away with me, will you do me another favour?

Gasp. Anything you'll order, madam, except dancing a fandango. [country?

Vict. You have seen my rich old uncle in the

Gasp. What, Don Sancho, who, with two-thirds of a century in his face, affects the misdemeanors of youth; hides his baldness with amber locks, and complains of the tooth-ache, to make you believe that the two rows of ivory he carries in his head grew there.

Vict. Oh! you know him, I find: could you assume his character for an hour, and make love for him? you know, it must be in the style of King Roderigo the First.

Gasp. Hang it! I am rather too near his own age; to appear an old man with effect, one should not be above twenty; 'tis always so on the stage.

Vict. Pho! you might pass for Juan's grandson.

Gasp. Nay, if your ladyship condescends to flatter me, you have me.

Vict. Then follow me; for Don Cæsar, I hear, is approaching: in the garden I'll make you acquainted with my plan, and impress on your mind every trait of my uncle's character. If you can hit him off, the arts of Laura shall be foiled, and Carlos be again Victoria's. [*Exeunt.*

Enter DON CÆSAR, *followed by* DONNA OLIVIA.

Cæsar. No, no; 'tis too late; no coaxings; I am resolved, I say.

Oliv. But it is not too late, and you sha'n't be resolved, I say. Indeed, now, I'll be upon my guard with the next Don—what's his name? not a trace of the Xantippe left; I'll study to be charming.

Cæsar. Nay, you need not study it, you are always charming enough, if you would but hold your tongue.

Oliv. Do you think so? then, to the next lover I won't open my lips; I'll answer everything he says with a smile, and if he asks me to have him, drop a courtesy of thankfulness.

Cæsar. Psha! that's too much t'other way; you are always either above the mark or below it; you must talk, but talk with good-humour. Can't you look gently and prettily, now, as I do? and say, "yes, sir," and "no, sir;" and, "'tis very fine weather, sir;" and, "pray, sir, were you at the ball last night?" and, "I caught a sad cold the other evening;" and, "bless me! I hear Lucinda has run away with her footman, and Don Philip has married his housemaid." That's the way agreeable ladies talk, you never hear anything else.

Oliv. Very true! and you shall see me as agreeable as the best of them, if you won't give me a mother-in-law to snub me, and set me tasks, and to take up all the fine apartments, and send up poor little Livy to lodge next the stars.

Cæsar. Ah! if thou wert but always thus soft and good-humoured, no mother-in-law in Spain, though she brought the Castiles for her portion, should have power to snub thee. But, Livy, the trial's at hand; for, at this moment do I expect Don Vincentio to visit you. He is but just returned from England, and probably, has yet heard only of your beauty and fortune; I hope it is not from you he will learn the other part of your character.

Oliv. This moment expect him! two new lovers in a day!

Cæsar. Beginning already, as I hope to live! ay, I see 'tis in vain; I'll send him an excuse, and marry Marcella before night.

Oliv. Oh! no: upon my obedience, I promise to be just the soft, civil creature, you have described.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Don Vincentio is below, sir. [*Exit.*

Cæsar. I'll wait upon him. Well, go and collect all your smiles and your simpers, and remember all I have said to you; be gentle, and talk pretty little small talk, d'ye hear? and, if you please him, you shall have the portion of a Dutch burgomaster's daughter, and the pin-money of a princess, you jade you! I think, at last, I have done it; the fear of this mother-in-law will keep down the fiend in her, if anything can. [*Aside, and exit.*

Oliv. Ah! my poor father! your anxieties will never end till you bring Don Julio. But what shall I do with this Vincentio? I fear he is so perfectly harmonized, that to put him in an ill temper will be impracticable. I must try, however; if 'tis possible to find a discord in him, I'll touch the string. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter DON VINCENTIO *and* DON CÆSAR.

Vin. Presto, presto! signor, where is the Olivia? Not a moment to spare. I left off in all the fury of composition; minums and crotchets have been battling it through my head the whole day; and trying a semibreve in G sharp, has made me as flat as double F.

Cæsar. Sharp and flat! trying a semibreve! Oh! 'gad, sir, I had like not to have understood you; but a semibreve is something of a demi-culverin, I take it; and you have been practising the art military. [quainted with music?

Vin. Art military! What, sir, are you unac-

Cæsar. Music! oh! I ask pardon; then you are fond of music. Beware of discords. (*Aside.*)

Vin. Fond of it! devoted to it. I composed a thing to-day, in all the gusto of Sacchini, and the sweetness of Gluck. But this recreant finger fails me in composing a passage in E octave: if it does not gain more elastic vigour in a week, I shall be tempted to have it amputated, and supply the shake with a spring. [shake!

Cæsar. Mercy! amputate a finger to supply a

Vin. Oh! that's a trifle in the road to reputation; to be talked of is the *summum bonum* of this life. A young man of rank should not glide through the world, without a distinguished rage; or, as they call it in England, a hobby-horse.

Cæsar. A hobby-horse!

Vin. Yes; that is, every man of figure determines on setting out in life, in that land of liberty, in what line to ruin himself; and that choice is called his hobby-horse. One makes the turf his scene of action; another drives about tall phætons, to peep into their neighbours' garret windows; and a third rides his hobby-horse in parliament, where it jerks him sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other; sometimes in, and sometimes out; till at length, he is jerked out of his honesty, and his constituents out of their freedom.

Cæsar. Ay! Well, 'tis a wonder, that with such sort of hobby-horses as these, they should still outride all the world to the goal of glory.

Vin. This is all cantabile; nothing to do with the subject of the piece, which is Donna Olivia; pray give me the key-note to her heart.

Cæsar. Upon my word, signor, to speak in your own phrase, I believe that note has never yet been sounded. Ah! here she comes; look at her. Isn't she a fine girl?

Vin. Touching! Musical I'll be sworn! her very air is harmonious. [tongue so.

Cæsar. (*Aside.*) I wish thou may'st find her

Enter DONNA OLIVIA.

Daughter, receive Don Vincentio; his rank, fortune, and merit, entitle him to the heiress of a grandee; but he is contented to become my son-in-law, if you can please him. (*Olivia curtsies.*)

Vin. Please me! she entrances me! Her presence thrills me like a cadenza of Pachierotti's, and every nerve vibrates to the music of her looks.

Her step andante gently moves,
Pianos glance from either eye;
Oh! how larghetto is the heart
That charms so forte can defy!

Donna Olivia, will you be contented to receive me

Oliv. Yes, sir—No, sir. [as a lover?

Vin. Yes, sir! no, sir! bewitching timidity!

Cæsar. Yes, sir, she's remarkably timid. She's in the right cue, I see. (*Aside.*)

Vin. 'Tis clear you have never travelled; I shall be delighted to shew you England. You will there see how entirely timidity is banished the sex. You must affect a marked character, and maintain it at

Oliv. 'Tis a very fine day, sir. [all hazards.

Vin. Madam!

Oliv. I caught a sad cold the other evening. Pray, was you at the ball last night?

Vin. What ball, fair lady?

Oliv. Bless me! they say Lucinda has run away with her footman, and Don Philip has married his housemaid. Now am I not very agreeable? (*Apart to Don Cæsar.*)

Cæsar. Oh! such perverse obedience.

Vin. Really, madam, I have not the honour to know Don Philip and Lucinda, nor am I happy enough entirely to comprehend you.

Oliv. No! I only meant to be agreeable; but, perhaps, you have no taste for pretty, little small

Vin. Pretty, little small talk! [talk?

Oliv. A marked character you admire; so do I —I dote on it. I would not resemble the rest of the world, in anything.

Vin. My taste to the fiftieth part of a crochet! We shall agree admirably when we are married.

Oliv. And that will be unlike the rest of the world, and therefore, charming!

Cæsar. (*Aside.*) It will do! I have hit her humour at last. Why didn't this young dog offer himself before?

Oliv. I believe, I have the honour to carry my taste that way farther than you, Don Vincentio. Pray, now, what is your usual style in living?

Vin. My winters I spend in Madrid, as other

people do. My summers I drawl through at my castle—

Oliv. As other people do! and yet you pretend to taste and singularity. Ha, ha, ha! Good Don Vincentio, never talk of a marked character again. Go into the country in July, to smell roses and woodbines, when everybody regales on their fragrance! Now, I would rusticate only in winter, and my bleak castle should be decorated with verdure and flowers, amidst the soft zephyrs of Decem-

Cæsar. (*Aside.*) Oh! she'll go too far. [ber.

Oliv. On the leafless trees I would hang green branches—the labour of silk-worms, and, therefore, natural; whilst my rose-shrubs and myrtles should be scented by the first perfumers in Italy. Unnatural, indeed; but, therefore, singular and striking.

Vin. Oh! charming; you beat me, where I thought myself the strongest. Would they but establish newspapers here, to paragraph our singularities, we should be the most envied couple in Spain. [as she is.

Cæsar (*Aside.*) By St. Anthony, he is as mad

Vin. What say you, Don Cæsar? Olivia and her winter garden, and I and my music.

Oliv. Music, did you say? Music! I am passionately fond of that.

Cæsar. She has saved my life; I thought she was going to knock down his hobby-horse.(*Aside.*)

Vin. You enchant me! I have the finest band in Madrid: my first violin draws a longer bow than Giardini; my clarionets, my viol de gamba—Oh! you shall have such concerts!

Oliv. Concerts! pardon me there; my passion is a single instrument.

Vin. That's carrying singularity very far, indeed! I love a crash; so does everybody of taste.

Oliv. But my taste isn't like everybody's; my nerves are so particularly fine, that more than one instrument overpower them.

Vin. Pray tell me the name of that one: I am sure it must be the most elegant and captivating in the world. I am impatient to know it. We'll have no other instrument in Spain; and I will study to become its master, that I may woo you with its music. Olivia! tell me, is it a harpsichord? a piano-forte? a pentachord? a harp?

Oliv. You have it, you have it! a harp—yes, a Jew's-harp is to me the only instrument. Are you not charmed with the delightful h—u—m of its base, running on the ear like the distant rumble of a state coach? It presents the idea of vastness and importance to the mind. The moment you are its master, I'll give you my hand.

Vin. Da capo, madam, da capo! a Jew's-harp!

Oliv. Bless me, sir, don't I tell you so? Violins chill me; clarionets, by sympathy, hurt my lungs; and, instead of maintaining a band under my roof, I would not keep a servant who knew a bassoon from the flute, or could tell whether he heard a jig, or a canzonetta.

Cæsar. Oh! thou perverse one! you know you love concerts; you know you do.(*In great agitation.*)

Oliv. I detest them! It's vulgar custom that attaches people to the sound of fifty different instruments at once; 'twould be as well to talk on the same subject in fifty different tongues. A band! 'tis a mere olio of sound; I'd rather listen to a three-stringed guitar, serenading a sempstress in some neighbouring garret.

Cæsar. Oh! you—Don Vincentio, this is nothing but perverseness, wicked perverseness. Hussy! didn't you shake when you mentioned a garret? didn't bread and water and a step-mother come into your head at the same time?

Vin. Piano, piano, good sir; spare yourself all farther trouble. Should the Princess of Guzarat, and all her diamond mines, offer themselves, I would not accept them in lieu of my band—a band that has half ruined me to collect. I would have allowed Donna Olivia a blooming garden in winter; I would even have procured barrenness and snow for her in the dog-days; but to have my band insulted! to have my knowledge in music slighted! to be roused from all the energies of composition, by the drone of a Jew's-harp! I cannot breathe under the idea.

Cæsar. Then, then you refuse her, sir?

Vin. I cannot use so harsh a word: I take my leave of the lady. Adieu, madam; I leave you to enjoy your solos, whilst I fly to the raptures of a crash. [*Exit with Don Cæsar.*

Oliv. Mercy! that silent anger is terrifying; I read a young mother-in-law, and an old lady abbess, in every line of his face. [*Enter* DONNA VICTORIA.] Well, you heard the whole, I suppose? heard poor unhappy me scorned and rejected.

Vict. I heard you in imminent danger; and expected Signor da Capo would have snapped you up, in spite of caprice and extravagance.

Oliv. Oh! they charmed, instead of scaring him. I soon found that my only chance was to fall across his caprice. Where is the philosopher who could withstand that? [tend to?

Vict. But what, my good cousin, does all this

Oliv. I dare say you can guess. Penelope had never cheated her lovers with a never-ending web, had she not had an Ulysses.

Vict. An Ulysses! what, are you then married?

Oliv. Oh! no, not yet; but, believe me, my design is to lead apes; nor is my heart an icicle. If you choose to know more, put on your veil, and slip with me through the garden to the Prado.

Vict. I can't, indeed. I am this moment going to dress *en homme*, to visit the impatient Portuguese.

Oliv. Send an excuse; for, positively, you go with me. Heaven and earth! I am going to meet a man whom I have been fool enough to dream and think of these two years, and I don't know that ever he thought of me in his life.

Vict. Two years discovering that?

Oliv. He has been abroad. The only time I ever saw him was at the Duchess of Medina's; there were a thousand people; and he was so elegant, so careless, so handsome!—In a word, though he set off for France the next morning, by some witchcraft or other, he has been before my eyes ever since.

Vict. Was the impression mutual?

Oliv. He hardly noticed me. I was then a bashful thing, just out of a convent, and shrunk from observation. [him?

Vict. Why, I thought you were going to meet

Oliv. To be sure; I sent him a command this morning, to be at the Prado. I am determined to find out if his heart is engaged, and if it is—

Vict. You'll cross your arms, and crown your brow with willows?

Oliv. No, positively; not whilst we have myrtles. I would prefer Julio, 'tis true, to all his sex; but if he is stupid enough to be insensible to me, I sha'n't, for that reason, pine like a girl, on chalk and oatmeal. No, no; in that case I shall form a new plan, and treat my future lovers with more civility. [heard talk reasonably.

Vict. You are the only woman in love, I ever

Oliv. Well, prepare for the Prado, and I'll give you a lesson against your days of widowhood. Don't you wish this the moment, Victoria? A pretty widow at four-and-twenty has more subjects, and a wider empire, than the first monarch upon earth. I long to see you in your weeds.

Vict. Never may you see them. Oh! Olivia, my happiness, my life, depend upon my husband. The fond hope of still being united to him, gives me spirits in my affliction, and enables me to support even the period of his neglect with patience. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.—SCENE I.—*A long Street.*

JULIO *enters from a garden-gate, with precipitation; a Servant within fastens the gate.*

Julio. Yes, yes; bar the gate fast, Cerberus, lest some other curious traveller should stumble on your confines. If ever I am so caught again—

Enter DON GARCIA. (*Julio seizes him.*)

Don Garcia, never make love to a woman in a veil.

Gar. Why so, pr'ythee? Veils and secrecy are the chief ingredients in a Spanish amour; but in two years, Julio, thou art grown absolutely French.

Julio. That may be; but if ever I trust to a veil again, may no lovely, blooming beauty ever trust me. Why, dost know, I have been an hour at the feet of a creature, whose first birth-day must have been kept the latter end of the last century, and whose trembling weak voice I mistook for the timid cadence of bashful fifteen.

Gar. Ha, ha, ha! What a happiness to have seen thee in thy raptures, petitioning for a half glance only, of the charms the envious veil concealed!

Julio. Yes; and when she unveiled her gothic countenance, to render the thing completely ridiculous, she begin moralizing; and positively would not let me out of the snare, till I had persuaded her she had worked a conversion, and that I'd never make love, but in an honest way again.

Gar. Oh! that honest way of love-making is delightful to be sure! I had a dose of it this morning; but, happily, the ladies have not yet learned to veil their tempers, though they have their faces.

Enter DON VINCENTIO.

Vin. Julio! Garcia! congratulate me! Such an

Julio. What have you escaped? [escape!

Vin. Matrimony.

Gar. Nay, then our congratulations may be mutual. I have had a matrimonial escape, too, this very day. I was almost on the brink of the ceremony with the veriest Xantippe!

Vin. Oh! that was not my case; mine was a sweet creatnre, all elegance, all life.

Julio. Then where's the cause of congratulation?

Vin. Cause! why she's ignorant of music! prefers a jig to a canzonetta, and a Jew's-harp to a pentachord.

Gar. Had my nymph no other fault, I would pardon that, for she was lovely and rich.

Vin. Mine, too, was lovely and rich; and, I'll be sworn, as ignorant of scolding, as of the gamut! But not to know music! [only of music!

Julio. Gentle, lovely, and rich! and ignorant

Gar. A venial crime, indeed; if the sweet creature will marry me, she shall carry a Jew's-harp always in her train, as a Scotch laird does his bagpipes. I wish you'd give me your interest.

Vin. Oh! most willingly, if thou hast so gross an inclination; I'll name thee as a dull-souled largo fellow, to her father, Don Cæsar.

Gar. Cæsar! what Don Cæsar?

Vin. De Zuniga.

Gar. Impossible!

Vin. Oh! I'll answer for her mother. So much is Don Zuniga her father, that he does not know a semibreve from a culverin.

Gar. The name of the lady?

Vin. Olivia. [gant!

Gar. Why, you must be mad; that's my termagant!

Vin. Termagant! ha, ha, ha! Thou hast certainly some vixen of a mistress, who infects thy ears towards the whole sex. Olivia is timid and elegant.

Gar. By Juno, there never existed such a scold!

Vin. By Orpheus, there never was a gayer tempered creature! Spirit enough to be charming, that's all. If she loved harmony, I'd marry her to-morrow.

Julio. Ha, ha! what a ridiculous jangle! 'tis evident you speak of two different women.

Gar. I speak of Donna Olivia, heiress to Don Cæsar de Zuniga.

Vin. I speak of the heiress of Don Cæsar de Zuniga, who is called Donna Olivia.

Gar. I perceive you mean to insult me.

Vin. Your perceptions are very rapid, sir, but if you choose to think so, I'll settle that point with you immediately: but, for fear of consequences, I'll fly home, and add the last bar to my concerto, and then meet you where you please.

Julio. Pho! this is evidently misapprehension. To clear the matter up, I'll visit the lady, if you'll introduce me, Vincentio; but you shall both promise to be governed in this dispute by my decision.

Vin. I'll introduce you with joy, if you'll try to persuade her of the necessity of music, and the charms of harmony. [jar and discord.

Gar. Yes, she needs that—You'll find her all

Julio. Come, no more, Garcia; thou art but a sort of male vixen thyself. Melodious Vincentio, when shall I expect you?

Vin. This evening.

Julio. Not this evening; I have engaged to meet a goldfinch in a grove—then I shall have music,

Vin. It won't, being at night. [you rogue!

Julio. Then I'll talk to it till the morning, and hear it pour out its matins to the rising sun. Call on me to-morrow; I'll then attend you to Donna Olivia, and declare faithfully the impression her character makes on me. Come, Garcia, I must not leave you together, lest his crotchets and your minums should fall into a crash of discords. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Prado.*—*Enter* DON CARLOS.

Car. All hail to the powers of Burgundy! Three flasks to my own share! What sorrows can stand against three flasks of Burgundy? I was a d—d melancholy fellow this morning, going to shoot myself to get rid of my troubles. Where are my troubles now? Gone to the moon, to look for my wits; and there, I hope, they'll remain together, if one cannot come back without t'other. But where is this indolent dog, Julio? He fit to receive appointments from ladies! Sure, I have not missed the hour. No! but seven yet. (*Looks at his watch.*) Seven's the hour, by all the joys of Burgundy! The rogue must be here; let's reconnoitre.

Enter DONNA VICTORIA *and* DONNA OLIVIA, *veiled.*

Oliv. Positively, mine's a pretty spark, to let me be first at the place of appointment. I have half resolved to go home again, to punish him.

Vict. I'll answer for its being but half a resolution; to make it entire, would be to punish yourself. There's a solitary man, is not that he?

Oliv. I think not. If he'd please to turn his face this way—

Vict. That's impossible, while the loadstone is the other way. He is looking at the woman in the next walk: can't you disturb him?

Oliv. Oh! a frightful frog. (*Carlos turns.*)

Vict. Heavens! 'tis my husband.

Oliv. Your husband! Is that Don Carlos?

Vict. It is indeed.

Oliv. Why, really, now I see the man, I don't wonder that you are in no hurry for your weeds. He is moving towards us. [to meet him.

Vict. I cannot speak to him, and yet my soul flies

Car. Pray, lady, what occasioned that pretty scream? I shrewdly suspect it was a trap.

Oliv. A trap! Ha, ha, ha! a trap for you?

Car. Why not, madam? Zounds! a man six feet high, and three flasks of Burgundy in his head, is worth laying a trap for.

Oliv. Yes; unless he happens to be trapped before. 'Tis about two years since you was caught, I take it. Do keep farther off! Odious! a married man!

Car. The devil! Is it posted under every saint in the street, that I am a married man?

Oliv. No, you carry the marks about you; that rueful phiz could never belong to a bachelor. Besides, there's an odd appearance on your temples. Does your hat sit easily?

Car. By all the thorns of matrimony, if—

Oliv. Poor man! how natural to swear by what one feels; but why were you in such haste to gather the thorns of matrimony? Bless us! had you but looked about you a little, what a market might have been made of that fine, proper, promising person of your's!

Car. Confound thee, confound thee! If thou art a wife, may thy husband plague thee with jealousies, and thou never able to give him cause for them; and if thou art a maid, may'st thou be an

old one! (*Going, meets* Don Julio.) Oh! Julio, look not that way; there's a tongue will stun thee.

Julio. Heaven be praised! I love female prattle. A woman's tongue can never scare me. Which of these two goldfinches makes the music?

Car. Oh! this is as silent as a turtle; (*taking Victoria's hand*) only coos now and then. Perhaps you don't hate a married man, sweet one?

Vict. You guess right; I love a married man.

Car. Ha! say'st thou so? wilt thou love me?

Vict. Will you let me?

Car. Let thee, my charmer! how I'll cherish thee for't. What would I not give for thy heart!

Vict. I demand a price, that perhaps you cannot give: I ask unbounded love; but you have a wife.

Car. And, therefore, the readier to love every other woman; 'tis in your favour, child.

Vict. Will you love me ever?

Car. Ever! yes, ever; till we find each other dull company, and yawn, and talk of our neighbours for amusement.

Vict. Farewell; I suspected you to be a bad chapman, and that you would not reach my terms.

Car. Nay, I'll come to your terms, if I can; but move this way; I am fearful of that woodpecker at your elbow; should she begin again, her noise will scare all the pretty loves that are playing about my heart. Don't turn your head towards them; if you like to listen to love tales, you'll meet fond pairs enough in this walk. [*Forces her gently off.*

Julio. I really believe, though you deny it, that you are my destiny; that is, you fated me hither. See, is not this your mandate? (*Shewing a letter.*)

Oliv. Oh! delightful; the scrawl of some chambermaid; or, perhaps, of your valet, to give you an air. What is it signed? Marriatornes? Tomasa? Sancha?

Julio. Nay, now I am convinced the letter is your's, since you abuse it: so you may as well confess? [do not deceive you.

Oliv. Suppose I should, you can't be sure that I

Julio. True; but there is one point in which I have made a vow not to be deceived; therefore, the preliminary is, that you throw off your veil.

Oliv. My veil! [negociation ends.

Julio. Positively, if you reject this article, our

Oliv. You have no right to offer articles, unless you own yourself conquered.

Julio. I own myself willing to be conquered, and have, therefore, a right to make the best terms I can. Do you accede to the demand?

Oliv. Certainly not.

Julio. You had better.

Oliv. I protest I will not.

Julio. (*Aside.*) My life upon't, I make you. Why, madam, how absurd this is; yet, 'tis of no consequence, for I know your features, as well as

Oliv. How can that be? [though I saw them.

Julio. I judge of what you hide, by what I see—I could draw your picture.

Oliv. Charming! pray begin the portrait.

Julio. Imprimis, a broad high forehead, rounded at the top, like an old-fashioned gateway.

Oliv. Oh! horrid. [colour of rusty prunello.

Julio. Little grey eyes, a sharp nose, and hair the

Oliv. Odious!

Julio. Pale cheeks, thin lips, and—

Oliv. Hold! thou vilifier! (*Throws off her veil.*) There! yes, kneel in contrition for your malicious libel. [ing creature! (*Aside.*)

Julio. Say rather, in adoration. What a charm-

Oliv. So, now for what lies on the other side.

Julio. A forehead formed by the graces; hair, which Cupid would steal for his bow-strings, were he not engaged in shooting through those sparkling hazel circlets, which nature has given you for eyes; lips, that 'twere a sin to call so; they are fresh-gathered rose-leaves, with the fragrant morning-dew still hanging on their rounded surface.

Oliv. Is that extemporaneous, or ready cut for every woman who takes off her veil to you?

Julio. I believe 'tis not extemporaneous; for nature, when she finished you, formed the sentiment in my heart, and there it has been hid, till you, for whom it was formed, called it into words.

Oliv. Suppose I should understand, from all this, that you have a mind to be in love with me, would you not be finely caught?

Julio. Charmingly caught! if you'll let me understand, at the same time, that you have a mind to be in love with me.

Oliv. In love with a man! Heavens! I never loved anything but a squirrel!

Julio. Make me your squirrel; I'll put on your chain, and gambol and play for ever at your side.

Oliv. But suppose you should have a mind to break the chain!

Julio. Then loosen it; for, if once that humour seizes me, restraint won't cure it. Let me spring and bound at liberty; and when I return to my lovely mistress, tired of all but her, fasten me again to your girdle, and kiss me while you chide.

Oliv. Your servant—to encourage you to leave me again?

Julio. No; to make returning to you the strongest attachment of my life. Why are you silent?

Oliv. I am debating, whether to be pleased or displeased at what you have said.

Julio. Well?

Oliv. You shall know when I have determined. My friend and your's are approaching this way, and they must not be interrupted.

Julio. 'Twould be barbarous; we'll retire as far off as you please.

Oliv. But we retire separately, sir; that lady is a woman of honour, and this moment of the greatest importance to her. You may, however, conduct me to the gate, on condition that you leave me instantly.

Julio. Leave her instantly.—Oh! then I know my cue. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Carlos, *followed by* Victoria, *unveiled.*

Car. (*Looking back on her.*) My wife!

Vict. Oh! heavens, I will veil myself again. I will hide my face for ever from you, if you will still feast my ears with those soft vows, which, a moment since, you poured forth so eagerly.

Car. My wife! making love to my own wife!

Vict. Why should one of the dearest moments of my life be to you so displeasing?

Car. So, I am caught in this snare, by way of agreeable surprise, I suppose.

Vict. Would you could think it so!

Car. No, madam! by heaven, 'tis a surprise fatal to every hope with which you may have flattered yourself. What! am I to be followed, haunted, watched?

Vict. Not to upbraid you. I followed you because my castle, without you, seemed a dreary desert. Indeed, I will never upbraid you.

Car. Generous assurance! never upbraid me.—No, by heavens! I'll take care you never shall. She has touched my soul, but I dare not yield to the impression. Her softness is worse than death to me! (*Aside.*)

Vict. Would I could find words to please you.

Car. You cannot; therefore leave me, or suffer me to go, without attempting to follow me.

Vict. Is it possible you can be so barbarous?

Car. Do not expostulate; your first vowed duty is obedience—that word so grating to your sex.

Vict. To me it was never grating; to obey you has been my joy; even now I will not dispute your will, though I feel, for the first time, obedience hateful. (*Going, returns.*) Oh! Carlos, my dear Carlos! I go, but my soul remains with you. [*Exit.*

Car. Oh! horrible. Had I not taken this harsh measure, I must have killed myself; for how could I tell her that I have made her a beggar? Better she should hate, detest me, than that my tenderness should give her a prospect of felicity, which now she can never taste. Oh! wine-created

spirit, wher art thou now? Madness, return to me again; for reason presents me nothing but despair. *Re-enter* Julio.

Julio. Carlos, who the devil can they be? my charming little witch was inflexible; I hope your's has been more communicative.

Car. Folly! Nonsense!

Julio. Folly! Nonsense! What, a pretty woman's smile! but you married fellows have neither taste nor joy.

Car. Psha! [*Exit.*

Julio. Psha! that's a husband. Humph! suppose my fair one should want to debase me into such an animal; she can't have so much villany in her disposition: and yet, if she should? pho! it won't bear thinking about. If I do so mad a thing, it must be as cowards fight, without daring to reflect on the danger. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*Don Vasquez's Apartment.*

Enter Don Cæsar *and* Don Vasquez.

Cæsar. Well, Don Vasquez, and a—you—then I say, you have a mind that I should marry your daughter?

Vasq. It is sufficient, signor, that you have signified to us your intention; my daughter shall prove her gratitude, in her attention to your felicity.

Cæsar. Egad! now it comes to the push. (*Aside.*) Hem, hem! but just nineteen, you say?

Vasq. Exactly, the eleventh of last month.

Cæsar. Pity it was not twenty.

Vasq. Why, a year can make no difference, I should think. [are so skittish at nineteen.

Cæsar. Oh! yes it does; a year's a great deal, they

Vasq. Those who are skittish at nineteen, I fear, you won't find much mended at twenty. Marcella is very grave, and a pretty, little, plump, fair— [olive; I like your olives.

Cæsar. Ay, fair again! pity she isn't brown or

Vasq. Brown and olive! you are very whimsical, my old friend!

Cæsar. Why, these fair girls are so stared at by the men; and the young fellows, now-a-days, have a d—d impudent stare with them; 'tis very abashing to a woman; 'tis very distressing!

Vasq. Yes, so it is; but happily their distress is of that nature, that it generally goes off in a simper. But, come, I'll send Marcella to you, and she will—

Cæsar. No, no; stay, my good friend. (*Gasping.*) You are in a violent hurry!

Vasq. Why, truly, signor, at our time of life, when we determine to marry, we have no time to lose.

Cæsar. Why, that's very true, and so—Oh! St. Anthony, now it comes to the point! But there can be no harm in looking at her; a look won't bind us for better for worse. (*Aside.*) Well, then, if you have a mind, I say, you may let me see her. [*Exit Vasquez. Cæsar puts on his spectacles.*] Ay, here she comes; I hear her—trip, trip, trip! I don't like that step. A woman should always tread steadily, with dignity; it awes the men.

Re-enter Don Vasquez, *leading* Marcella.

Vasq. There, Marcella, behold your future husband; and, remember, that your kindness to him will be the standard of your duty to me. [*Exit.*

Mar. Oh! heavens. (*Aside.*)

Cæsar. Somehow, I am afraid to look round. (*Aside.*)

Mar. Surely he does not know that I am here. (*Aside, and coughs gently.*)

Cæsar. So, she knows how to give an item, I find. (*Aside.*) [me?

Mar. Pray, signor, have you any commands for

Cæsar. Hum! not nonplussed at all! (*Looks round.*) Oh! that eye; I don't like that eye.

Mar. My father commanded me—

Cæsar. Yes, I know, I know. Why, now I look again, there is a sort of a modest—Oh! that smile; that smile will never do. (*Aside.*)

Mar. I understand, signor, that you have demanded my hand in marriage?

Cæsar. Upon my word, plump to the point! (*Aside.*) Yes, I did a sort of—I can't say but that I did—

Mar. I am not insensible of the honour you do me, sir; but—but— [of the match?

Cæsar. But! What, don't you like the thoughts

Mar. Oh! yes, sir, yes—exceedingly. I dare not say no. (*Aside.*)

Cæsar. Oh! you do—exceedingly! What, I suppose, child, your head is full of jewels, and finery,

Mar. No, indeed, sir. [and equipage?

Cæsar. No; what then? what sort of a life do you expect to lead, when you are my wife? what pleasures do ye look forward to?

Mar. None.

Cæsar. Eh!

Mar. I shall obey my father, sir; I shall marry you; but I shall be most wretched. (*Weeps.*)

Cæsar. Indeed! [pardon me.

Mar. There is not a fate I would not prefer; but

Cæsar. Go on, go on! I never was better pleased.

Mar. Pleased at my reluctance!

Cæsar. Never, never better pleased in my life! So you had really, now, you young baggage! rather have me for a grandfather than a husband?

Mar. Forgive my frankness, sir—a thousand times.

Cæsar. My dear girl, let me kiss your hand. Egad! you've let me off charmingly. I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should have taken as violent an inclination to the match as your father has.

Mar. Dear sir, you charm me.

Cæsar. But, harkye! you'll certainly incur your father's anger, if I don't take the refusal entirely on myself, which I will do, if you'll only assist me in a little business I have in hand.

Mar. Anything to shew my gratitude.

Cæsar. You must know I can't get my daughter to marry; there's nothing on earth will drive her to it, but the dread of a mother-in-law. Now if you will let it appear to her, that you and I are driving to the goal of matrimony, I believe it will do; what say you? shall we be lovers in play?

Mar. If you are sure it will be only in play.

Cæsar. Oh! my life upon't; but we must be very fond, you know.

Mar. To be sure; exceedingly tender. Ha, ha, ha!

Cæsar. You must smile upon me, now and then, roguishly; and slide your hand into mine, when you are sure she sees you, and let me pat your cheek, and— [sufficient.

Mar. Oh! no farther, pray; that will be quite

Cæsar. Gad! I begin to take a fancy to your rogue's face, now I'm in no danger; mayn't we, mayn't we salute sometimes? it will seem infinitely more natural. [fly off at once.

Mar. Never! such an attempt would make me

Cæsar. Well, you must be lady governess in this business. I'll go home now, and fret, madam, about her young mother-in-law. B'ye, sweeting!

Mar. B'ye, charmer!

Cæsar. Oh! bless its pretty eyes. [*Exit.*

Mar. Bless its pretty spectacles. Ha, ha, ha! enter into a league with a cross old father against a daughter! why, how could he suspect me capable of so much treachery; I could not answer it to my conscience. No, no; I'll acquaint Donna Olivia with the plot; and, as in duty bound, we'll turn our arms against Don Cæsar. [*Exit.*

Act IV.—Scene I.—*Donna Laura's.*

Enter Donna Laura *and* Pedro.

Laura. Well, Pedro, hast thou seen Don Florio?

Ped. Yes, Donna. [ter?

Laura. How did he look when he read my let-

Ped. Mortal well; I never see'd him look better; he'd got on a new cloak, and a—

Laura. Pho! blockhead; did he look pleased? did he kiss my name? did he press the billet to his bosom with all the warmth of love?

Ped. No, he didn't warm it that way; but he did another, for he put it into the fire.

Laura. How!

Ped. Yes, and when I spoke, he started, for, I think, he had forgot that I was by: So, says he, go home, and tell Donna Laura I fly to her presence. (*She waves her hand for him to go.*)

Laura. Is it possible? so contemptuously to destroy the letter, in which my whole heart overflowed with tenderness. Oh! how idly I talk, he is here; his very voice pierces my heart! I dare not meet his eye thus discomposed! [*Exit.*

Enter VICTORIA, *in man's clothes, preceded by* SANCHA.

San. I will inform my mistress that you are here, Don Florio; I thought she had been in this apartment. [*Exit.*

Vict. Now must I, with a mind torn by anxieties, once more assume the lover of my husband's mistress—of the woman who has robbed me of his heart, and his children of their fortune. Sure, my task is hard. Oh, love! Oh! married love, assist me. If I can, by any art, obtain from her that fatal deed, I shall save my little ones from ruin, and then—But I hear her step. (*Agitated.*) There! I have hid my griefs within my heart; and, now for all the impudence of an accomplished cavalier. (*Sings and dances.—Re-enter* LAURA.) My lovely Laura! [as lovely.

Laura. That look speaks Laura loved, as well

Vict. To be sure! Petrarch immortalized his Laura by his verses, and mine shall be immortal in my passion.

Laura. Oh! Florio, how deceitful. I know not what enchantment binds me to thee.

Vict. Me! my dear! is all this to me?

Laura. Yes, ingrate, thee!

Vict. Positively, Laura, you have these extravagancies so often, I wonder my passion can stand them. To be plain, those violences in your temper may make a pretty relief in the flat of matrimony, child, but they do not suit that state of freedom which is necessary to my happiness. It was by such destructive arts as these you cured Don Carlos of his love. [thou but as he is?

Laura. Cured Don Carlos! Oh! Florio, wert

Vict. Why, you don't pretend he loves you still?

Laura. Yes, most ardently and truly.

Vict. Ha!

Laura. If thou wouldst persuade me that thy passion is real, borrow his words, his looks, be a hypocrite one dear moment, and speak to me in all the phrensy of that love which warms the heart of

Vict. The heart of Carlos! [Carlos.

Laura. Ha! that seemed a jealous pang; it gives my hopes new life. (*Aside.*) Yes, Florio; he, indeed, knows what it is to love. For me he forsook a beauteous wife; nay, and with me would forsake

Vict. Villain, villain! [his country.

Laura. Nay, let not the thought distress you thus; Carlos I despise; he is the weakest of mankind.

Vict. 'Tis false, madam; you cannot despise him. Carlos the weakest of mankind! Heavens! what woman could resist him. Persuasion sits on his tongue, and love, almighty love, triumphant in his eyes!

Laura. This is strange; you speak of your rival with the admiration of a mistress.

Vict. Laura! it is the fate of jealousy, as well as love, to see the charms of its object increased and heightened. I am jealous, jealous to distraction of Don Carlos; and cannot taste peace, unless you'll swear never to see him more.

Laura. I swear, joyfully swear, never to behold or speak to him again. When, dear youth, shall we retire to Portugal? We are not safe here.

Vict. You know I am not rich. You must first sell the lands my rival gave you.

Laura. 'Tis done; I have found a purchaser, and to-morrow the transfer will be finished.

Vict. (*Aside.*) Ah! I have now, then, nothing to trust to but the ingenuity of Gasper. There is reason to fear Don Carlos had no right in that estate with which you suppose yourself endowed.

Laura. No right! what can have given you those suspicions?

Vict. A conversation with Juan, his steward, who assures me, that his master never had an estate in Leon.

Laura. Never! what, not by marriage?

Vict. Juan says so.

Laura. My blood runs cold; can I have taken pains to deceive myself? Could I think so, I should be mad!

Vict. Those doubts may soon be annihilated, or confirmed to certainty. I have seen Don Sancho, the uncle of Victoria; he is now in Madrid. You have told me that he once professed a passion for you. [another object.

Laura. Oh! to excess; but, at that time, I had

Vict. Have you conversed with him much?

Laura. I never saw him nearer than from my balcony, where he used to ogle me through a glass, suspended by a riband, like an order of knighthood; he is weak enough to fancy it gives him an air of distinction. Ha, ha! But where can I find him? I must see him. [lodgings.

Vict. Write him a billet, and I will send it to his

Laura. Instantly. Dear Florio, a new prospect opens to me; Don Sancho is rich and generous; and, by playing on his passions, his fortune may be a constant fund to us. I'll dip my pen in flattery. [*Exit.*

Vict. Base woman! how can I pity thee, or regret the steps which my duty obliges me to take? For myself, I would not swerve from the nicest line of rectitude, nor wear the shadow of deceit. But, for my children!—Is there a parental heart that will not pardon me? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Don Cæsar's.*

Enter DONNA OLIVIA *and* MINETTE.

Oliv. Well, here we are in private: what is this charming intelligence of which thou art so full this morning?

Min. Why, ma'am, as I was in the balcony that overlooks Don Vasquez's garden, Donna Marcella told me, that Don Cæsar had last night been to pay her a visit previous to their marriage, and—

Oliv. Their marriage! How can you give me the intelligence with such a look of joy? Their marriage! what will become of me?

Min. Dear ma'am! if you'll but have patience: she says, that Don Cæsar and she are perfectly agreed— [patience.

Oliv. Still with that smirking face? I can't have

Min. Then, madam, if you won't let me tell the story, please to read it. Here's a letter from Donna Marcella.

Oliv. Why did you not give it me at first? (*Reads.*)

Min. Because I didn't like to be cut out of my story. If orators were obliged to come to the point at once, mercy on us! what tropes and figures we should lose!

Oliv. Oh, Minette! I give you leave to smirk again. Listen! (*Reads.*) "*I am more terrified at the idea of becoming your father's wife, than you are in the expectation of a stepmother; and Don Cæsar would be as loth as either of us. He only means to frighten you into matrimony, and I have, on certain conditions, agreed to assist him; but, whatever you may hear, or see, be assured that nothing is so impossible, as that he should become the husband of* DONNA MARCELLA." Oh! delightful girl! how I love her for this!

Min. Yes, ma'am; and if you'd had patience, I should have told you that she's now here with Don Cæsar, in grave debate, how to begin the attack, which must force you to take shelter in the arms of a husband.

Oliv. Ah! no matter how they begin it! Let them amuse themselves in raising batteries; my reserved fire shall tumble them about their ears, in the moment my poor father is singing his Io's for victory. But here come the lovers. Well, I protest now, sixteen and sixty is a very comely sight. 'Tis con-

trast gives effect to every thing. Lud! how my father ogles! I had no idea he was such a sort of man. I am really afraid he isn't quite so good as he should be!

Enter Don Cæsar, *leading* Marcella.

Cæsar. Hem! Madam looks very placid; we shall discompose her, or I am mistaken. (*Apart.*) So, Olivia, here's Donna Marcella come to visit you, though as matters are, that respect is due from you.

Oliv. I am sensible of the condescension. My dear ma'am, how very good this is! (*Taking her hand.*)

Cæsar. Yes, you'll think yourself wonderfully obliged, when you know all. (*Aside.*) Pray, Donna Marcella, what do you think of these apartments? The furniture and decorations are my daughter's taste; would you wish them to remain, or will you give orders to have them changed?

Mar. Changed! undoubtedly; I can have nobody's taste govern my apartments but my own.

Cæsar. Ah, that touches! See how she looks! (*Apart.*) They shall receive your orders. You understand, I suppose, from this, that every thing is fixed on between Donna Marcella and me?

Oliv. Yes, sir, I understand it perfectly; and it gives me infinite pleasure.

Cæsar. Eh! pleasure?

Oliv. Entirely, sir.

Cæsar. Tol de rol! Ah! that won't do, that won't do! You can't hide it. You are frightened out of your wits at the thoughts of a mother-in-law; especially a young, gay, handsome one.

Oliv. Pardon me, sir; the thought of a mother-in-law was, indeed, disagreeable; but her being young and gay qualifies it. I hope, ma'am, you'll give us balls, and the most spirited parties. You can't think how stupid we have been. My dear father hates those things; but I hope now—

Cæsar. Eh, eh, eh! what's the meaning of all this? Why, hussy, don't you know you'll have no apartment but the garret?

Oliv. That will benefit my complexion, sir, by mending my health. 'Tis charming to sleep in an elevated situation.

Cæsar. Here! here's an obstinate, perverse slut!

Oliv. Bless me, sir, are you angry that I look forward to your marriage without murmuring?

Cæsar. Yes, I am! yes, I am! you ought to murmur; and you ought to—to—to—

Oliv. Dear me! I find love, taken up late in life, has a bad effect on the temper. I wish, my dear papa, you had felt the influence of Donna Marcella's charms somewhat sooner.

Cæsar. You do! you do! why this must be all put on. This can't be real.

Oliv. Indeed, indeed it is; and I protest, your engagement with this lady has given me more pleasure than I have tasted ever since you began to tease me about a husband. You seem determined to have a marriage in the family; and I hope, now, I shall live in quiet with my dear, sweet, young mother-in-law.

Cæsar. Oh, oh! (*Walking about.*) Was there ever—She doesn't care for a mother-in-law! Can't frighten her!

Oliv. Sure my fate is very peculiar; that being pleased with your choice, and submitting, with humble duty, to your will, should be the cause of offence.

Cæsar. Hussy! I don't want you to be pleased with my choice; I don't want you to submit with humble duty to my will. Where I do want you to submit, you rebel: you are a—you are—But I'll mortify that wayward spirit yet.

[*Exeunt Don Cæsar and Marcella.*

Min. Well, really, my master is in a piteous passion; he seems more angry at your liking his marriage, than at your refusing to be married yourself. Wouldn't it have been better, madam, to have affected discontent?

Oliv. To what purpose, but to lay myself open to fresh solicitations, in order to get rid of the evil I pretended to dread? Bless us! nothing can be more easy than for my father to be gratified, if he were but lucky in the choice of a lover.

Min. As much as to say, madam, that there is—

Oliv. Why, yes, as much as to say—I see you are resolved to have my secret, Minette; and so—

Enter a Servant.

Serv. There is a gentleman at the door, madam, called Don Julio de Melessina. He waits on you from Don Vincentio.

Oliv. Who? Don Julio? it cannot be. Art thou sure of his name?

Serv. The servant repeated it twice. He is in a fine carriage, and seems to be a nobleman.

Oliv. Conduct him hither. [*Exit Servant.*] I am astonished! I cannot see him! I would not have him know the incognita to be Olivia for worlds! There is but one way. (*Aside.*) Minette, ask no questions; but do as I order you. Receive Don Julio in my name; call yourself the heiress of Don Cæsar; and, on no account, suffer him to believe that you are anything else. [*Exit.*

Min. So, then, this is some new lover she is determined to disgust; and fancies that making me pass for her, will complete it. Perhaps her ladyship may be mistaken, though. (*Looking through the wing.*) Upon my word, a sweet man! Oh, lud! my heart beats with the very idea of his making love to me, even though he takes me for another! Stay! I think he sha'n't find me here. Standing in the middle of a room gives one's appearance no effect. I'll enter upon him with an easy swim, or an engaging trip, or a—something that shall strike: the first glance is everything. [*Exit.*

Enter Don Julio, *with a Servant, who retires.*

Julio. Not here! The ridiculous dispute between Garcia and Vincentio gives me irresistible curiosity; though, if she is the character Garcia describes, I expect to be cuffed for my impertinence. Here she comes! A pretty, little, smiling girl, 'faith! for a vixen!

Enter Minette, *very affectedly.*

Min. Sir, your most obedient humble servant. You are Don Julio de Melessina? I am extremely glad to see you, sir.

Julio. (*Aside.*) A very courteous reception: you honour me infinitely, madam. I must apologize for waiting on you without a better introduction. Don Vincentio promised to attend me; but a concert called him to another part of the town, at the moment I prepared to come hither. [music.

Min. A concert! Yes, sir, he is very fond of

Julio. He is, madam: you, I suppose, have a passion for that charming science?

Min. Oh! yes, I love it mightily.

Julio. (*Aside.*) This is lucky! I think I have heard, Donna Olivia, that your taste that way is peculiar; you are fond of a—'faith! I can hardly speak it, (*aside*)—of a—Jew's-harp.

Min. A Jew's-harp! Mercy! What, do you think a person of my birth and figure can have such fancies as that? No, sir; I love fiddles, French-horns, tabors, and all the cheerful, noisy instruments in the world.

Julio. (*Aside.*) Vincentio must have been mad; and I as mad as him to mention it. Then you are fond of concerts, madam?

Min. Dote on them! I wish he'd offer me a ticket. (*Aside.*)

Julio. (*Aside.*) Vincentio is clearly wrong. Now, to prove how far the other was right in supposing her a vixen.

Min. There is a grand public concert, sir, to be to-morrow. Pray, do you go? [dam.

Julio. I believe I shall have that pleasure, ma-

Min. My father, Don Cæsar, won't let me purchase a ticket: I think it's very hard.

Julio. Pardon me; I think it's perfectly right.

Min. Right! what, to refuse me a trifling expense, that would procure me a great pleasure?

Julio. Yes, doubtless; the ladies are too fond of pleasure: I think Don Cæsar is exemplary.

Min. Lord, sir! you'd think it very hard, if you were me, to be locked up all your life, and know nothing of the world but what you could catch through the bars of your balcony.

Julio. Perhaps I might; but, as a man, I am convinced 'tis right. Daughters and wives should be equally excluded those destructive haunts of dissipation. Let them keep to their embroidery, nor ever presume to shew their faces but at their own firesides. This will bring out the Xantippe, surely! (*Aside.*)

Min. Well, sir, I don't know; to be sure, home, as you say, is the fittest place for women. For my part, I could live for ever at home. I am determined he shall have his way; who knows what may happen? (*Aside.*)

Julio. (*Aside.*) By all the powers of caprice, Garcia is as wrong as the other!

Min. I delight in nothing so much as in sitting by my father, and hearing his tales of old times; and I fancy, when I have a husband, I shall be more happy to sit and listen to his stories of present times.

Julio. Perhaps, your husband, fair lady, might not be inclined so to amuse you. Men have a thousand delights that call them abroad; and, probably, your chief amusements would be counting the hours of his absence, and giving a tear to each as it passed.

Min. Well, he should never see them, however. I would always smile when he entered; and if he found my eyes red, I'd say, I had been weeping over the history of the unfortunate damsel, whose true love hung himself at sea, and appeared to her afterwards in a wet jacket. Sure, this will do! (*Aside.*)

Julio. (*Aside.*) I am every moment more astonished! Pray, madam, permit me a question. Are you, really—yet I cannot doubt it—are you, really, Donna Olivia, the daughter of Don Cæsar, to whom Don Garcia and Don Vincentio had lately the honour of paying their addresses?

Min. Am I Donna Olivia! ha, ha, ha! what a question! Pray, sir, is this my father's house? Are you Don Julio?

Julio. I beg your pardon; but, to confess, I had heard you described as a lady who had not quite so much sweetness, and—

Min. Oh! what, you had heard that I was a termagant, I suppose. 'Tis all slander, sir: there is not in Madrid, though I say it, a sweeter temper than my own; and though I have refused a good many lovers, yet, if one were to offer himself that I could like— [passion?

Julio. You would take pity, and reward his

Min. I would.

Julio. Lovely Donna Olivia, how charming is this frankness! 'Tis a little odd, though! (*Aside.*)

Min. Why, I believe I should take pity; for it always seemed to me to be very hard-hearted, to be cruel to a lover that one likes; because, in that case, one should—a—you know, sir, the sooner the affair is over, the better for both parties.

Julio. What the deuce does she mean? Is this Garcia's sour fruit? (*Aside.*)

Cæsar. (*Without.*) Olivia, Olivia!

Min. Bless me, I hear my father! Now, sir, I have a particular fancy that you should not tell him, in this first visit, your design.

Julio. Madam! my design!

Min. Yes, that you will not speak out, till we have had a little further conversation, which I'll take care to give you an opportunity for very soon. He'll be here in a moment: now, pray, Don Julio, go. If he should meet you, and ask who you are, you can say, that you are—you may say, that you came on a visit to my maid, you know. [*Exit.*

Julio. I thank you, madam, (*aloud*) for my dismission. (*Aside.*) I never was in such a peril in my life. I believe she has a license in her pocket, a priest in her closet, and the ceremony by heart. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Don Carlos'.*

DON CARLOS *discovered writing.*

Car. (*Tearing paper, and rising.*) It is in vain! Language cannot furnish me with terms to soften to Victoria the horrid transaction. Could she see the compunctions of my soul, her gentle heart would pity me. But what then? She's ruined! my children are undone! Oh! the artifices of one base woman, and my villany to another most amiable one, has made me unfit to live. I am a wretch, who ought to be blotted from society.

Enter PEDRO, *hastily.*

Ped. Sir—sir!

Car. Well!

Ped. Sir, I have just met Don Florio; he asked if my mistress was at home; so I guesses he is going to our house, and so I run to let you know; for I loves to keep my promises, though I am deadly afraid of some mischief.

Car. You have done well. Go home, and wait for me at the door, and admit me without noise. [*Exit Pedro.*] At least, then, I shall have the pleasure of revenge; I'll punish that harlot, by sacrificing her paramour in her arms; and, then—Oh! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Donna Laura's.*

Enter DONNA LAURA, *followed by* VICTORIA.

Laura. 'Tis his carriage! How successful was my letter! This, my Florio, is a most important moment.

Vict. It is, indeed! and I will leave you to make every advantage of it. If I am present, I must witness condescensions from you that I shall not be able to bear, though I know them to be but affected. Now, Gasper, (*aside*) play thy part well, and save Victoria! [*Exit.*

Enter GASPER, *dressed as an old Beau; two Servants follow him, and take off a rich cloak.*

Gasp. Take my cloak; and, d'ye hear? Ricardo, go home and bring the elder-down cushions for the coach, and tell the fellow not to hurry me post through the streets of Madrid. [*Exeunt Servants.*] I have been jolted from side to side, like a pippin in a mill-stream. Drive a man of my rank, as he would a city vintner and his fat wife, going to a bull-fight! Ha, there she is! (*Looking through a glass suspended by a red riband.*) there she is! Charming Donna Laura! let me thus at the shrine of your beauty. (*Makes an effort to kneel, and falls on his face; Laura assists him to rise.*) Fie, fie! those new shoes! they have made me skate all day, like a Dutchman on a canal; and now—Well, you see how profound my adoration is, madam. Common lovers kneel; I was prostrate.

Laura. You do me infinite honour. Disgustful wretch! (*Aside.*) You are thinner than you were, Don Sancho: I protest, now I observe you, you are much altered!

Gasp. Ay, madam—fretting. Your absence threw me into a fever, and that destroyed my bloom: you see, I look almost a middle-aged man, now.

Laura. No, really; far from it, I assure you. The fop is as wrinkled as a baboon! (*Aside.*)

Gasp. Then jealousy; that gave me a jaundice. My niece's husband, I hear, Don Carlos, has been my happy rival. Oh! my blade will hardly keep in its scabbard, when I think of him.

Laura. Think no more of him; he has been long banished my thoughts, be assured. I wonder you gave your niece to him with such a fortune.

Gasp. Gave! she gave herself; and, as to fortune, she had not a pistole from me.

Laura. 'Twas, indeed, unnecessary, with so fine an estate as she had in Leon.

Gasp. My niece an estate in Leon! Not enough to give shelter to a field-mouse; and if he has told you so, he is a braggart.

Laura. Told me so! I have the writings: he has made over the lands to me.

Gasp. Made over the lands to you! Oh! a de-

ceiver! I begin to suspect a plot. Pray let me see this extraordinary deed. (*She runs to a cabinet.*) A plot, I'll be sworn!

Laura. Here is the deed which made that estate mine for ever. No, sir; I will intrust it in no hand but my own. Yet look over me, and read the description of the lands.

Gasp. (*Reading through his glass.*) H—m—m: "*In the vicinage of Rosalvo, bounded on the west by the river—h—m—m, on the east by the forest.*" Oh! an artful dog! I need read no further; I see how the thing is.

Laura. How, sir! but hold! Stay a moment! I am breathless with fear.

Gasp. Nay, madam, don't be afraid! 'Tis my estate—that's all; the very castle where I was born; and which I never did, nor ever will, bestow on any Don in the two Castiles. Dissembling rogue! Bribe you with a fictitious title to my estate. Ha, ha, ha!

Laura. (*Aside.*) Curses follow him! The villain I employed must have been his creature; his reluctance all art; and whilst I believed myself undoing him, was duped myself!

Gasp. Could you suppose I'd give Carlos such an estate for running away with my niece? No, no! the vineyards, and the corn-fields, and the woods of Rosalva, are not for him. I've somebody else in my eye—in my eye, observe me—to give those to: can't you guess who it is?

Laura. No, indeed! He gives me a glimmering that saves me from despair! (*Aside.*)

Gasp. I won't tell you, unless you'll bribe me; I won't, indeed. (*Kisses her cheek.*) There, now I'll tell you: they are all for you. Yes, this estate, to which you have taken such a fancy, shall be your's. I'll give you the deeds, if you'll promise to love me, you little cruel thing!

Laura. Can you be serious?

Gasp. I'll sign and seal to-morrow.

Laura. Noble Don Sancho! Thus then I annihilate the proof of his perfidy and my weakness. Thus, I tear to atoms his detested name; and as I tread on these, so would I on his heart.

Enter Victoria.

Vict. My children, then, are saved! (*In transport.*)

Laura. (*Apart.*) Oh, Florio! 'tis as thou saidst; Carlos was a villain, and deceived me. Why this strange air! Ah! I see the cause; you think me ruined, and will abandon me. Yes, I see it in thy averted face; thou darest not meet my eyes. If I misjudge thee, speak!

Vict. Laura, I cannot speak. You little guess the emotions of my heart. Heaven knows I pity you!

Laura. Pity! Oh, villain! and has thy love already snatched the form of pity? Base, deceitful—

Car. (*Without.*) Stand off! loose your weak hold! I'm come for vengeance!

Enter Don Carlos.

Where is this youth? Where is the blooming rival for whom I have been betrayed? Hold me not, base woman! In vain the stripling flies me; for by heaven, my sword shall in his bosom write its master's wrongs!

Vict. Strike, strike it here! Plunge it deep into that bosom, already wounded by a thousand stabs, keener and more painful than your sword can give! Here lives all the gnawing anguish of love betrayed; here live the pangs of dissapointed hopes—hopes sanctified by holiest vows, which have been written in the book of heaven. Ha! he sinks. (*She flies to him.*) Oh! my Carlos! my beloved! my husband! forgive my too severe reproaches; thou art dear, yet dear as ever, to Victoria's heart.

Car. (*Recovering.*) Oh! you know not what you do; you know not what you are. Oh! Victoria, thou art a beggar!

Vict. No, we are rich, we are happy! See there, the fragments of that fatal deed, which, had I not recovered, we had been indeed undone; yet still not wretched, could my Carlos think so!

Car. The fragments of the deed! the deed which that base woman—

Vict. Speak not so harshly. To you, madam, I fear, I seem reprehensible; yet, when you consider my duties as a wife and mother, you will forgive me. Be not afraid of poverty; a woman has deceived, but she will not desert you!

Laura. Is this real? Can I be awake?

Vict. Oh! mayest thou indeed awake to virtue! You have talents that might grace the highest of our sex; be no longer unjust to such precious gifts, by burying them in dishonour. Virtue is our first, most awful duty; bow, Laura! bow before her throne, and mourn in ceaseless tears, that ever you forgot her heavenly precepts!

Laura. So, by a smooth speech about virtue, you think to cover the injuries I sustain. Vile, insinuating monster! but thou knowest me not. Revenge is sweeter to my heart, than love; and if there is a law in Spain to gratify that passion, your virtue shall have another field for exercise. [*Exit.*

Car. (*Turning towards Victoria.*) My hated rival and my charming wife! How many sweet mysteries have you to unfold? Oh, Victoria! my soul thanks thee; but I dare not yet say I love thee, till ten thousand acts of watchful tenderness have proved how deep the sentiment's engraved.

Vict. Can it be true that I have been unhappy? But the mysteries, my Carlos, are already explained to you: Gasper's resemblance to my uncle—

Gasp. Yes, sir; I was always apt at resemblances. In our plays at home, I am always Queen Cleopatra; you know she was but a gipsy queen, and I hits her off to a nicety.

Car. Come, my Victoria. Oh! there is a painful pleasure in my bosom. To gaze on thee, to listen to, and to love thee, seems like the bliss of angels' cheering whispers to repentant sinners.

[*Exeunt Carlos and Victoria.*

Gasp. Lord help 'em! how easily the women are taken in! [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*The Prado.*

Enter Minette.

Min. Ah! here comes the man at last, after I have been sauntering in sight of his lodgings these two hours. Now, if my scheme takes, what a happy person shall I be! and sure, as I was Donna Olivia to-day, to please my lady, I may be Donna Olivia to-night, to please myself. I'll address him as the maid of a lady who has taken a fancy to him, then convey him to our house; then retire, and then come in again; and, with a vast deal of confusion, confess I sent my maid for him. If he should dislike my forwardness, the censure will fall on my lady; if he should be pleased with my person, the advantage will be mine. But, perhaps, he's come here on some wicked frolic or other. I'll watch him at a distance before I speak. [*Exit.*

Enter Don Julio.

Julio. Not here, 'faith! though she gave me last night but a faint refusal, and I had a right, by all the rules of gallantry, to construe that into an assent. Then she's a jilt; hang her! I feel I am uneasy; the first woman that ever gave me pain. I am ashamed to perceive that this spot has attractions for me, only because it was here I conversed with her. 'Twas here the little syren, conscious of her charms, unveiled her fascinating face. 'Twas here—Ha!

Enter Don Garcia *and* Don Vincentio.

Gar. Ha! Don Julio!

Julio. Psha! gentlemen, pray be quick.

Gar. 'Twas here that Julio, leaving champaigne untasted, and songs of gallantry unsung, came to talk to the whistling branches.

Vin. 'Twas here that Julio, flying from the young and gay, was found in doleful meditation—(*altering his tone*) on a wench, for a hundred ducats!

Gar. Who is she? [Olivia!

Julio. Not Donna Olivia, gentlemen; not Donna

Gar. We have been seeking you, to ask the event of your visit to her.

Julio. The event has proved that you have been most grossly duped.

Vin. I knew that. Ha, ha, ha!

Julio. And you likewise, I know that. Ha, ha, ha! The fair lady, so far from being a vixen, is the very essence of gentleness. To me, so much sweetness in a wife would be downright mawkish.

Vin. Well, but she's fond of a Jew's-harp.

Julio. Detests it; she would be as fond of a Jew.

Gar. Pho, pho! this is a game at cross purposes; let us all go to Don Cæsar's together, and compare opinions on the spot.

Julio. I'll go most willingly; but it will be only to cover you both with confusion, for being the two men in Spain most easily imposed on. (*All going.*)

Enter MINETTE.

Min. Gentlemen, my lady has sent me for one of you, pray which of you is it?

Julio. (*Returning.*) Me, without doubt, child.

Vin. I don't know that. [the man?

Gar. Look at me, my dear; don't you think I am

Min. Let me see; a good air, and well made; you are the man for a dancer. (*To Garcia.*) Well dressed, and nicely put out of hands; you are the man for a bandbox. (*To Vincentio.*) Handsome and bold; you are the man for my lady. (*To Julio.*)

Julio. My dear little Iris, here's all the gold in my pocket. Gentlemen, I wish you a good night; I am your very obedient, humble—(*Stalking by them, with his arm round Minette.*)

Gar. Pho! pr'ythee, don't be a fool. Are we not going to Donna Olivia?

Julio. Donna Olivia must wait, my dear boy; we can decide about her to-morrow. Come along, my little dove of Venus! [*Exit.*

Gar. What a rash fellow it is! ten to one but this is some common business, and he'll be robbed and murdered; they take him for a stranger.

Vin. Let's follow, and see where she leads him.

Gar. That's hardly fair; however, as I think there's danger, we will follow. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Don Cæsar's.*

Enter MINETTE *and* DON JULIO.

Min. There, sir, please to sit down till my lady is ready to wait on you; she won't be long; I'm sure she's out, and I may do great things before she returns. [*Aside, and exit.*

Julio. Through fifty back lanes, a long garden, and a narrow staircase, into a superb apartment; all that's in the regular way; as the Spanish women manage it, one intrigue is too much like another. If it was not now and then for the little lively fillip of a jealous husband or brother, which obliges one to leap from a window, or crawl, like a cat, along the gutters, there would be no bearing the *ennui*. Ah, ah! but this promises novelty; (*looking through the wing*) a young girl and an old man; wife or daughter? They are coming this way. My lovely incognita, by all that's propitious! Why did not some kind spirit whisper to me my happiness? but, hold! she can't mean to treat the old gentleman with a sight of me. (*Goes behind the sofa.*)

Enter DON CÆSAR *and* DONNA OLIVIA.

Cæsar. No, no, madam; no going out. There, madam, this is your apartment, your house, your garden, your assembly, till you go to your convent. Why, how impudent you are, to look thus unconcerned! Can hardly forbear laughing in my face! Very well, very well! [*Exit, double locking the door.*

Oliv. Ha, ha, ha! I'll be even with you, my dear father, if you treble lock it. I'll stay here two days, without once asking for my liberty, and you'll come the third, with tears in your eyes, to take me out. He has forgot the door leading to the garden; but I vow I'll stay. (*Sitting down.*) I can make the time pass pleasantly enough.

Julio. I hope so. (*Looking over the back of the sofa.*)

Oliv. Heaven and earth!

Julio. My dear creature, why are you so alarmed? am I here before you expected me? (*Coming round.*)

Oliv. Expected you!

Julio. Oh! this pretty surprise! Come, let us sit down; I think your father was very obliging to lock us in together.

Oliv. Sir, sir! my father! (*Calling at the door.*)

Cæsar. (*Without.*) Ay, 'tis all in vain. I won't come near you. There you are, and there you may stay. I sha'n't return, make as much noise as you will.

Julio. Why, are you not ashamed that your father has so much more consideration for your guest than you have?

Oliv. My guest! how is it possible he can have discovered me? (*Aside.*)

Julio. Pho! this is carrying the thing further than you need; if there were a third person here, it might be prudent.

Oliv. Why, this assurance, Don Julio, is really—

Julio. The thing in the world you are most ready to pardon. [you.

Oliv. Upon my word, I don't know how to treat

Julio. Consult your heart!

Oliv. I shall consult my honour.

Julio. Honour is a pretty thing to play with, but when spoken with that very grave face, after having sent your maid to bring me here, is really more than I expected. I shall be in an ill-humour presently; I won't stay if you treat me thus.

Oliv. Well, this is superior to every thing! I have heard that men will slander women privately to each other; 'tis their common amusement; but to do it to one's face! And you really pretend that I sent for you?

Julio. Ha, ha, ha! Well, if it obliges you, I will pretend that you did not send for me; that your maid did not conduct me hither; nay, that I have not now the supreme happiness—(*Catching her in his arms.*)

Enter MINETTE; *she screams, and runs back.* Donna Olivia de Zuniga! how the devil came she here?

Oliv. (*Aside.*) That's lucky! Olivia, my dear friend, why do you run away? Keep the character, I charge you. (*Apart to Minette.*) Be still, Olivia.

Min. Oh! dear madam! I was—I was so frightened when I saw that gentleman.

Oliv. Oh! my dear, it's the merriest pretty kind of gentleman in the world; he pretends that I sent my maid for him into the streets. Ha, ha!

Julio. That's right; always tell a thing yourself, which you would not have believed.

Min. It is the readiest excuse for being found in a lady's apartment, however. Now will I swear I know nothing of the matter. (*Aside.*)

Oliv. Now, I think it a horrid poor excuse; he has certainly not had occasion to invent reasons for such impertinencies often. Tell me that he has made love to you to-day. (*Apart.*)

Min. I fancy that he has had occasion to excuse impertinencies often; his impertinence to me to-day—

Julio. To you, madam?

Min. Making love to me, my dear, all the morning; could hardly get him away, he was so desirous to speak to my father. Nay, sir, I don't care for your impatience.

Julio. (*Aside.*) Now would I give a thousand pistoles if she were a man!

Oliv. Nay, then, this accidental meeting is fortunate; pray, Don Julio, don't let my presence prevent your saying what you think proper to my friend; shall I leave you together?

Julio. (*Apart.*) To contradict a lady on such an assertion would be too gross; but, upon my honour, Donna Olivia is the last woman upon earth who could inspire me with a tender idea. Find an excuse to send her away, my angel, I entreat you. I have a thousand things to say, and the moments are too precious to be given to her.

Oliv. I think so, too; but one can't be rude, you know. Come, my dear, sit down, (*seating herself,*) have you brought your work?

Julio. The devil! what can she mean? (*Pushing himself between Minette and the sofa.*) Donna Olivia, I am sorry to inform you that my physician has just been sent for to your father, Don Cæsar. The poor gentleman was seized with a vertigo.

Oliv. Vertigoes! Oh! he has them frequently, you know. (*To Minette.*) [sight.

Min. Yes, and they always keep me from his

Julio. Did ever one woman prevent another from leaving her at such a moment before? I really, madam, cannot comprehend—

Cæsar. (*Without.*) It is impossible! impossible, gentlemen! Don Julio cannot be here.

Julio. Ah! who's that?

Enter Don Cæsar, Don Garcia, *and* Don Vincentio.

Gar. There! did we not tell you so? we saw him enter the garden.

Cæsar. What can be the meaning of all this? A man in my daughter's apartment! (*Attempting to draw.*)

Gar. Hold, sir! Don Julio is of the first rank in Spain; and will, unquestionably, be able to satisfy your honour, without troubling your sword. We have done mischief, Vincentio! (*Apart.*)

Julio. (*To Olivia.*) They have been cursedly impertinent! but I'll bring you off, never fear, by pretending a passion for your busy friend, there.

Cæsar. Satisfy me, then, in a moment; speak, one of you.

Julio. I came here, sir, by the merest accident. The garden-door was open, curiosity led me to this apartment. You came in a moment after, and very civilly locked me in with your daughter.

Cæsar. Locked you in! why, then, did you not, like a man of honour, cry out?

Julio. The lady cried out, sir, and you told her you would not return; but when Donna Olivia de Zuniga entered, for whom I have conceived a most violent passion—

Cæsar. A passion for her! Oh! let me hear no more on't. A passion for her! You may as well entertain a passion for the untameable hyena.

Gar. There, Vincentio, what think you now? Xantippe or not?

Vin. I am afraid I must give up that—but, pray, support me as to this point, Don Cæsar; is not the lady fond of a Jew's-harp!

Cæsar. Fond! she's fond of nothing, but playing the vixen; there is not such a fury upon earth!

Julio. These are odd liberties, with a person who does not belong to him.

Cæsar. I'll play the hypocrite for her no more; the world shall know her true character, they shall know—but ask her maid there.

Julio. Her maid!

Min. Why, yes, sir; to say the truth, I am but Donna Olivia's maid after all. [am now ruined.

Oliv. (*Apart.*) Dear Minette! speak for me, or I

Min. I will, madam. I must confess, sir, (*going up to Julio*) there never was so bitter a tempered creature, as my lady is. I have borne her humours for two years; I have seen her by night and by day. (*Olivia pulls her sleeve, impatiently.*) I will, I will! (*To Olivia.*) And this I am sure, that if you marry her, you'll rue the day every hour the first month, and hang yourself the next. There, madam, I have done it roundly now. [snare! (*Aside.*)

Oliv. I am undone! I am caught in my own

Cæsar. After this true character of my daughter, I suppose, signor, we shall hear no more of your passion; so, let us go down, and leave madam to begin her penance.

Julio. My ideas are totally confused! You Donna Olivia de Zuniga, and the person I thought you, her maid! something too flattering darts across my mind.

Cæsar. If you have taken a fancy to her maid, I have nothing farther to say; but as to that violent creature—

Julio. Oh! do not profane her. Where is that spirit which you tell me of? Is it that which speaks in modest, conscious blushes on her cheeks? Is it that which bends her lovely eyes to earth?

Cæsar. Ay, she's only bending them to earth, considering how to afflict me with some new obstinacy; she'll break out like a tigress in a moment.

Julio. It cannot be! are you, charming woman! such a creature? [one.

Oliv. (*Looking down.*) Yes, to all mankind—but

Julio. But one! Oh! might that excepted one be me!

Oliv. Would you not fear to trust your fate with her you have cause to think so hateful?

Julio. No; I'd bless the hour that bound my fate to her's: permit me, sir, to pay my vows to this fair vixen.

Cæsar. What, are you such a bold man as that? Pho! but if you are, 'twill only be lost time; she'll contrive, some way or other, to return your vows upon your hands. [turn them only with my own.

Oliv. If they have your authority, sir, I will re-

Cæsar. What's that? what did she say? my head is giddy with surprise.

Julio. And mine with rapture. (*Catching her hand.*) [marry him?

Cæsar. Don't make a fool of me, Olivia. Wilt

Oliv. When you command me, sir.

Cæsar. My dear Don Julio, thou art my guardian angel! shall I have a son-in-law at last? Garcia, Vincentio, could you have thought it?

Gar. No, sir; if we had, we should have saved that lady much trouble; 'tis pretty clear, now, why she was a vixen.

Vin. Yes, yes, 'tis clear enough; and I beg your pardon, madam, for the share of trouble I gave you; but, pray, have the goodness to tell me, sincerely, what do you think of a crash?

Oliv. I love music, Don Vincentio, I admire your skill; and, whenever you'll give me a concert, I shall be obliged. [you had married me.

Vin. You could not have pleased me so well, if

Enter Don Carlos *and* Donna Victoria.

Oliv. Ah! here comes Victoria and her Carlos! My friend, you are happy; 'tis in your eyes; I need not ask the event.

Cæsar. What! is this Don Carlos, whom Victoria gave us for a cousin? Sir, you come in a happy

Car. I do, indeed, for I am most happy. [hour!

Julio. My dear Carlos, what has new made thee thus, this morning?

Car. A wife! Marry, Julio, marry!

Julio. What! this advice from you?

Car. Yes; and when you have married an angel, when that angel has done for you such things as makes your gratitude almost equal to your love, you may then guess something of what I feel, in calling this angel mine.

Oliv. Now, I trust, Don Julio, after all this, that if I should do you the honour of my hand, you'll treat me cruelly, be a very bad man, that I, like my exemplary cousin—

Vict. Hold, Olivia! it is not necessary that a husband should be faulty to make a wife's character exemplary. Should he be tenderly watchful of your happiness, your gratitude will give a thousand graces to your conduct; whilst the purity of your manners, and nice honour of your life, will gain you the approbation of those whose praise is fame.

Oliv. Pretty and matronly! thank you, my dear! We have each struck a bold stroke to-day; your's has been to reclaim a husband, mine to get one; but the most important is yet to be obtained—the approbation of our judges.

That meed withheld, our labours have been vain,
Pointless my jests, and doubly keen your pain;
Might we their plaudits, and their praise provoke,
Our bold should then be term'd a happy stroke.

[*Exeunt.*

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.



Act V.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

COLONEL FEIGNWELL	FREEMAN	TRAVELLERS
SIR PHILIP MODELOVE	SIMON PURE	COACHMAN
PERIWINKLE	SACKBUT	ANNE LOVELY
TRADELOVE	GENTLEMEN	MRS. PRIM
OBADIAH PRIM	STOCKBROKERS	BETTY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Tavern.*

COLONEL FEIGNWELL *and* FREEMAN *are discovered over a bottle.*

Free. Come, Colonel, his majesty's health. You are as melancholy as if you were in love; I wish some of the beauties of Bath ha'n't snapt your heart.

Col. F. Why, 'faith, Freeman, there is something in't: I have seen a lady at Bath, who has kindled such a flame in me, that all the waters there can't quench.

Free. Is she not to be had, Colonel?

Col. F. That's a difficult question to answer; however, I resolve to try; perhaps you may be able to serve me; you merchants know one another. The lady told me herself she was under the charge of four persons.

Free. Odso! 'tis Miss Anne Lovely.

Col. F. The same; do you know her?

Free. Know her! ay. 'Faith, Colonel, your condition is more desperate than you imagine: why, she is the talk and pity of the whole town; and, it is the opinion of the learned, that she must die a maid.

Col. F. That's somewhat odd, in this charitable city. She's a woman, I hope?

Free. For aught I know; but it had been as well for her, had nature made her any other part of the creation. The man who keeps this house, served her father; he is a very honest fellow, and may be of use to you: we'll send for him to take a glass with us; he'll give you her whole history, and 'tis worth your hearing.

Col. F. But may one trust him?

Free. With your life. I have obligations enough upon him, to make him do anything: I serve him with wine. (*Rings.*)

Col. F. Nay, I know him very well myself. I once used to frequent a club that was kept here.

Enter Waiter.

Wai. Gentlemen, d'ye call?

Free. Ay; send up your master.

Wai. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Col. F. Do you know any of this lady's guardians, Freeman?

Free. I know two of them very well.

Enter SACKBUT.

Free. Here comes one will give you an account of them all. Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a glass with us. 'Tis a maxim among the friends of the bottle, that, as long as the master is in company, one may be sure of good wine.

Sack. Sir, you shall be sure to have as good wine as you send in. Colonel, your most humble servant; you are welcome to town.

Col. F. I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. I am as glad to see you as I should a hundred tuns of French claret, custom free: my service to you, sir. (*Drinks.*) You don't look so merry as you used to do; aren't you well, Colonel?

Free. He has got a woman in his head, landlord; can you help him?

Sack. If 'tis in my power, I sha'n't scruple to serve my friend.

Col F. 'Tis one perquisite of your calling.

Sack. Ay; at t'other end of the town, where you officers use, women are good forcers of trade: a well-customed house, a handsome bar-keeper, with clean, obliging drawers, soon get the master an estate; but our citizens seldom do anything but cheat, within the walls. But, as to the lady, Colonel; point you at particulars? Or have you a good champagne stomach? Are you in full pay, or reduced, Colonel?

Col. F. Reduced, reduced, landlord!

Free. To the miserable condition of a lover.

Sack. Pish! that's preferable to half-pay: a woman's resolution may break before the peace: push her home, Colonel, there's no parleying with the fair sex.

Col. F. Were the lady her own mistress, I have some reasons to believe I should soon command in chief.

Free. You know Miss lovely, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Know her! ay, poor Nancy! I have carried her to school many a frosty morning. Alas! if she's the woman, I pity you, Colonel; her father, my old master, was the most whimsical, out-of-the-way tempered man, I ever heard of, as you will guess by his last will and testament. This was his only child; and I have heard him wish her dead a thousand times. He died worth thirty thousand pounds, which he left to his daughter, provided she married with the consent of her guardians; but that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the care of four men, as opposite to each other as the four elements; each has his quarterly rule, and three months in the year she is obliged to be subject to each of their humours; and they are pretty different, I assure you. She is just come from Bath.

Col. F. 'Twas there I saw her.

Sack. Ay, sir; the last quarter was her beau guardian's. She appears in all public places during his reign.

Col. F. She visited a lady, who boarded in the same house with me; I liked her person, and found an opportunity to tell her so. She replied, she had no objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile contradictions, I must not think of her; for that she was condemned to the caprice of four persons, who never yet agreed in any one thing, and she was obliged to please them all.

Sack. 'Tis most true, sir; I'll give you a short description of the men, and leave you to judge of the poor lady's condition. One is a kind of virtuoso, a silly, half-witted fellow, but positive and surly, fond of every thing antique and foreign, and wears his clothes of the fashion of the last century, doats upon travellers, and believes more of Sir John Mandeville than he does of the Bible.

Col. F. That must be a rare odd fellow.

Sack. Another is a change broker; a fellow that will out-lie the devil for the advantage of stock, and cheat his father that got him, in a bargain; he is a great stickler for trade, and hates every man that wears a sword.

Free. He is a great admirer of the Dutch management, and swears they understand trade better than any nation under the sun.

Sack. The third is an old beau, that has May in his fancy and dress, but December in his face and his heels: he admires all new fashions, and those must be French; loves operas, balls, masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole company on a birth-day.

Col. F. These are pretty opposite one to another, truly; and the fourth, what is he, landlord?

Sack. A very rigid quaker, whose quarter began this day. I saw Miss Lovely go in, not above two hours ago: Sir Philip set her down. What think you now, Colonel? Is not the poor lady to be pitied?

Col. F. Ay; and rescued, too, landlord.

Free. In my opinion that's impossible.

Col. F. There is nothing impossible to a lover. What would not a man attempt for a fine woman and thirty thousand pounds? Besides, my honour is at stake: I promised to deliver her, and she bid me win her, and wear her.

Sack. That's fair, 'faith!

Free. If it depended upon knight-errantry, I should not doubt your setting free the damsel; but to have avarice, impertinence, hypocrisy, and pride, at once to deal with, requires more cunning than generally attends a man of honour.

Col. F. My fancy tells me I shall come off with glory: I resolve to try, however. Do you know all the guardians, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Very well; they all use my house.

Col. F. And will you assist me, if occasion requires?

Sack. In every thing I can, Colonel.

Free. I'll answer for him.

Col. F. First, I'll attack my beau guardian: where lives he?

Sack. 'Faith, somewhere about St. James's; though, to say in what street, I cannot; but any chairman will tell you where Sir Philip Modelove lives.

Free. Oh! you'll find him in the Park at eleven every day; at least, I never pass through at that hour without seeing him there. But what do you intend?

Col. F. To address him in his own way, and find what he designs to do with the lady.

Free. And what then?

Col. F. Nay, that I can't tell; but I shall take my measures accordingly.

Sack. Well, 'tis a mad undertaking, in my mind; but here's to your success, Colonel. (*Drinks.*)

Col. F. 'Tis something out of the way, I confess; but fortune may chance to smile, and I succeed.

Bold was the man who ventur'd first to sea,
But the first vent'ring lovers bolder were.
The path of love's a dark and dang'rous way,
Without a landmark, or one friendly star.
And he, that runs the risk, deserves the fair.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*An Apartment in Prim's house.*

Enter Miss Lovely *and her Maid* Betty.

Betty. Bless me, madam! why do you fret and tease yourself so? This is giving them the advantage, with a witness!

Miss L. Must I be condemned all my life to the preposterous humours of other people, and pointed at by every boy in town? Oh! I could tear my flesh, and curse the hour I was born! Isn't it monstrously ridiculous, that they should desire to impose their quaking dress upon me at these years? When I was a child, no matter what they made me wear; but now—

Betty. I would resolve against it, madam; I'd see 'em hanged before I'd put on the pinched cap again.

Miss L. Then I must never expect one moment's ease: she has rung such a peal in my ears already, that I sha'n't have the right use of them this month. What can I do?

Betty. What can you not do, if you will but give your mind to it? Marry, madam.

Miss L. What! and have my fortune go to build churches and hospitals?

Betty. Why, let it go. If the Colonel loves you, as he pretends, he'll marry you without a fortune,

madam; and, I assure you, a colonel's lady is no despicable thing.

Miss L. So, you would advise me to give up my own fortune, and throw myself upon the Colonel's?

Betty. I would advise you to make yourself easy, madam.

Miss L. That's not the way, I'm sure. No, no, girl; there are certain ingredients to be mingled with matrimony, without which I may as well change for the worse as the better. When the woman has fortune enough to make the man happy, if he has either honour or good manners, he'll make her easy. Love makes but a slovenly figure in a house, where poverty keeps the door.

Betty. And so you resolve to die a maid, do you, madam?

Miss L. Or have it in my power to make the man I love master of my fortune.

Betty. Then you don't like the Colonel so well as I thought you did, madam, or you would not take such a resolution.

Miss L. It is because I do like him, Betty, that I do take such a resolution.

Betty. Why, do you expect madam, the Colonel can work miracles? Is it possible for him to marry you with the consent of all your guardians?

Miss L. Or he must not marry me at all; and so I told him; and he did not seem displeased with the news. He promised to set me free; and I, on that condition, promised to make him master of that freedom.

Betty. Well! I have read of enchanted castles, ladies delivered from the chains of magic, giants killed, and monsters overcome; so that I shall be the less surprised if the Colonel shall conjure you out of the power of your four guardians: if he does, I am sure he deserves your fortune.

Miss L. And shall have it, girl, if it were ten times as much; for I'll ingenuously confess to thee, that I do love the Colonel above all the men I ever saw: there's something so jaunty in a soldier, a kind of *je ne scais quoi* air, that makes them more agreeable than all the rest of mankind. They command regard, as who shall say, "We are your defenders; we preserve your beauties from the insults of rude and unpolished foes, and ought to be preferred before those lazy, indolent mortals, who, by dropping into their fathers' estates, set up their coaches, and think to rattle themselves into your affections."

Betty. Nay, madam, I confess that the army has engrossed all the prettiest fellows. A laced coat and a feather have irresistible charms.

Miss L. But the Colonel has all the beauties of the mind, as well as the body. O, all ye powers that favour happy lovers, grant that he may be mine! Thou god of love, if thou be'st aught but name, assist my Feignwell!

Point all thy darts to aid his just design,
And make his plots as prevalent as thine.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*The Park.*

Sir Philip Modelove *discovered upon a bench, with a Woman, masked.*

Sir P. Well but, my dear, are you really constant to your keeper?

Wom. Yes, really, sir. Heyday! who comes yonder? He cuts a mighty figure.

Sir P. Ha! a stranger, by his equipage keeping so close at his heels. He has the appearance of a man of quality: positively French, by his dancing air.

Wom. He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.

Sir P. He has a mind to make love to thee, child.

Enter Colonel Feignwell.

Wom. It will be to no purpose, if he does.

Sir P. Are you resolved to be cruel, then?

Col. F. You must be very cruel, indeed, if you can deny anything to so fine a gentleman, madam. (*Takes out his watch.*)

Wom. I never mind the outside of a man.

Col. F. And I'm afraid thou art no judge of the inside.

Sir P. I am positively of your mind, sir; for creatures of her function seldom penetrate beyond the pocket.

Wom. Coxcombs! [*Aside and exit.*

Sir P. Pray what says your watch? mine is down. (*Pulling out his watch.*)

Col. F. I want thirty-six minutes of twelve, sir. (*Puts up his watch, and takes out his snuff-box.*)

Sir P. May I presume, sir—

Col. F. Sir, you honour me. (*Presenting the box.*)

Sir P. He speaks good English; though he must be a foreigner. (*Aside.*) This snuff is extremely good, and the box prodigious fine: the work is French, I presume, sir.

Col. F. I bought it in Paris, sir. I do think the workmanship pretty neat.

Sir P. Neat! 'tis exquisitely fine, sir! Pray, sir, if I may take the liberty of inquiring,—what country is so happy to claim the birth of the finest gentleman in the universe? France, I presume.

Col. F. Then you don't think me an Englishman?

Sir P. No, upon my soul, don't I.

Col. F. I am sorry for it.

Sir P. Impossible you should wish to be an Englishman! Pardon me, sir, this island could not produce a person of such alertness.

Col. F. As this mirror shews you, sir. (*Puts up a pocket-glass to Sir Philip's face.*) I know not how to distinguish you, sir; but your mien and address speak you right honourable.

Sir P. Thus great souls judge of others by themselves. I am only adorned with knighthood: that's all, I assure you, sir; my name is Sir Philip Modelove.

Col. F. Of French extraction?

Sir P. My father was French.

Col. F. One may plainly perceive it. There is a certain gaiety peculiar to my nation, (for I will own myself a Frenchman,) which distinguishes us every where. A person of your figure would be a vast addition to a coronet.

Sir P. I must own I had the offer of a barony about five years ago; but I abhorred the fatigue which must have attended it. I could never yet bring myself to join with either party.

Col. F. You are perfectly in the right, Sir Philip:—a fine person should not embark himself in the slovenly concern of politics: dress and pleasure are objects proper for the soul of a fine gentleman.

Sir P. And love!

Col. F. Oh! that's included under the article of pleasure.

Sir P. Parbleu! il est un homme d'esprit. May I crave your name, sir?

Col. F. My name is La Feignwell, sir, at your service.

Sir P. The La Feignwells are French, I know; though the name is become very numerous in Great Britain, of late years. I was sure you was French the moment I laid my eyes upon you: I could not come into the supposition of your being an Englishman: this island produces few such ornaments.

Col. F. Are you married, Sir Philip?

Sir P. No; nor do I believe I shall ever enter into that honourable state; I have an absolute *tendre* for the whole sex.

Col. F. That's more than they have for you, I dare swear. (*Aside.*) I find I was very much mistaken. I imagined you had been married to that young lady whom I saw in the chariot with you this morning in Gracechurch-street.

Sir P. Who, Nancy Lovely? I am a piece of a guardian to that lady. You must know, her father, I thank him, joined me with three of the most preposterous old fellows—that, upon my soul, I am in pain for the poor girl: she must certainly lead apes; ha, ha!

Col. F. That's a pity, Sir Philip. If the lady would give me leave, I would endeavour to avert that curse.

Sir F. As to the lady, she'd gladly be rid of us at any rate, I believe; but here's the mischief—he who marries Miss Lovely, must have the consent of us all four, or not a penny of her portion. For my part, I shall never approve of any but a man of figure; and the rest are not only averse to cleanliness, but have each a peculiar taste to gratify. For my part, I declare I would prefer you to all men I ever saw.

Col. F. And I her, to all women.

Sir P. I assure you, Mr. Feignwell, I am for marrying her; for I hate the trouble of a guardian, especially among such wretches. But I resolve never to agree to the choice of any one of them; and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any proposal of mine yet.

Col. F. I wish I had leave to try them, Sir Philip.

Sir P. With all my soul, sir; I can refuse a person of your appearance nothing.

Col. F. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Sir P. But do you really like matrimony?

Col. F. I believe I could with that lady.

Sir P. The only point in which we differ. But you are master of so many qualifications, that I can excuse one fault; for I must think it a fault in a fine gentleman; and that you are such, I'll give it under my hand.

Col. F. I wish you'd give me your consent to marry Miss Lovely, under your hand, Sir Philip.

Sir P. I'll do't, if you'll step into St. James's coffee-house, where we may have pen and ink; though I can't foresee what advantage my consent will be to you, without you can find a way to get the rest of the guardians; but I'll introduce you, however. She is now at a Quaker's, where I carried her this morning, when you saw us in Gracechurch-street. I assure you she has an odd *ragoût* of guardians, as you will find when you hear the characters, which I'll endeavour to give you as we go along. Hey! Pierre, Jacque, Renno! Where are you all, scoundrels? Order the chariot to St. James's coffee-house.

Col. F. Le Noire, La Brun, La Blanc! *Morbleu, où sont ces coquins là? Allons, Monsieur le Chevalier.*

Enter three Servants.

Sir P. Ah! Pardonnez moi, monsieur.

Col. F. Not one step upon my soul, Sir Philip.

Sir P. The best bred man in Europe, positively

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Obadiah Prim's House.*

Enter Miss Lovely *and* Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Then thou wilt not obey me; and thou dost really think those fallals become thee?

Miss L. I do, indeed.

Mrs. P. Now will I be judged by all sober people, if I don't look more like a sober woman than thou dost, Anne.

Miss L. More like a hypocrite you mean, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Ah! Anne, Anne, that wicked Philip Modelove will undo thee. Satan so fills thy heart with pride, during the three months of his guardianship, that thou becomest a stumbling-block to the upright.

Miss L. Pray, who are they? Are the pinched cap and formal hood the emblems of sanctity? Does your virtue consist in your dress, Mrs. Prim?

Mrs. P. It doth not consist in cut hair, spotted face, and a bare neck. Oh, the wickedness of the generation! The primitive women knew not the abomination of short petticoats.

Miss L. No; nor the abomination of cant neither. Don't tell me, Mrs. Prim, don't; I know you have as much pride, vanity, self-conceit, and ambition among you, couched under that formal habit and sanctified countenance, as the proudest of us all; but the world begins to see your prudery.

Mrs. P. Prudery! What! do they invent new words as well as new fashions? Ah! poor, fantastic age, I pity thee. Poor deluded Anne, which dost thou think most resembleth the saint, and which the sinner, thy dress or mine! Thy naked bosom allureth the eye of the by-stander, encourageth the frailty of human nature, and corrupteth the soul with evil longings.

Miss L. And pray who corrupted your son Tobias with longings? Your maid Tabitha wore a handkerchief, and yet he made the saint a sinner.

Mrs. P. Well, well, spit thy malice. I confess Satan did buffet my son Tobias, and my servant Tabitha: the evil spirit was at that time too strong, and they both became subject to its workings; not from any outward provocation, but from an inward call: he was not tainted with the rottenness of the fashions, nor did his eyes take in the drunkenness of beauty.

Miss L. No! that's plainly to be seen.

Mrs. P. Tabitha is one of the faithful; he fell not with a stranger.

Miss L. So! then you hold wenching no crime, provided it be within the pale of your own tribe. You are an excellent casuist, truly!

Enter Obadiah Prim.

Obad. Not stripped of thy vanity yet, Anne! Why dost thou not make her put it off, Sarah?

Mrs. P. She will not do it.

Obad. Verily thy naked bosom troubleth my outward man: put on a handkerchief, Anne Lovely.

Miss L. I hate handkerchiefs when 'tis not cold weather, Mr. Prim.

Mrs. P. I have seen thee wear a handkerchief, in the middle of July.

Miss L. Ay, to keep the sun from scorching me.

Obad. If thou couldst not bear the sunbeams, how dost thou think man can bear thy beams?

Miss L. Let me be quiet, I say. Must I be tormented thus for ever? Sure no woman's condition ever equalled mine! Foppery, folly, avarice, and hypocrisy, are, by turns, my constant companions. I cannot think my father meant this tyranny. No, you usurp an authority which he never intended you should take.

Obad. Hark thee, dost thou call good counsel tyranny? Do I or my wife tyrannise, when we desire thee in all love to put off thy tempting attire?

Miss L. I wish I were in my grave! Kill me rather than treat me thus.

Obad. Kill thee! ha, ha! thou thinkest thou art acting some lewd play sure. Kill thee! Art thou prepared for death, Anne Lovely? No, no; thou would'st rather have a husband, Anne. Thou wantest a gilt coach, with six lazy fellows behind, to flaunt it in the ring of vanity, among the princes and rulers of the land, who pamper themselves with the fatness thereof; but I will take care that none shall squander away thy father's estate; thou shalt marry none such, Anne.

Miss L. Would you marry me to one of your own canting sect?

Obad. Yea, verily, no one else shall ever get my consent, I do assure thee, Anne.

Miss L. And I do assure thee, Obadiah, that I will as soon turn papist, and die in a convent.

Mrs. P. O wickedness!

Miss L. O stupidity!

Obad. O blindness of heart!

Miss L. Thou blinder of the world, don't provoke me, lest I betray your sanctity, and leave your wife to judge of your purity? What were the emotions of your spirit, when you squeezed Mary by the hand last night in the pantry. Don't you remember, Mr. Prim?

Mrs. P. What does she say, Obadiah?

Obad. She talketh unintelligibly, Sarah. Which way did she hear this? This should not have reach'd the ears of the wicked ones. Verily it troubleth me. (*Aside.*)

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Philip Modelove, whom they call Sir Philip, is below, and such another with him; shall I send them up?

Obad. Yea. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter Sir Philip Modelove, *and* Colonel Feignwell.

Sir P. How dost thou do, friend Prim? Odso! my she friend here too! What, are you documenting, Miss Nancy? Reading her a lecture upon the pinch'd coif, I warrant ye!

Mrs. P. I am sure thou didst never read her any lecture that was good. My flesh so riseth at these wicked ones, that prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their sight. [*Exit.*

Col. F. Oh, that I could find means to speak with her! How charming she appears! I wish I could get this letter into her hand. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. Well, miss, I hope thou hast got the better of them.

Miss L. The difficulties of my life are not to be surmounted, Sir Philip. I hate the impertinence of him as much as the stupidity of the other. (*Aside.*)

Obad. Verily, Philip, thou wilt spoil this maiden.

Sir P. I find we still differ in opinion; but that we may none of us spoil her, pr'ythee, Prim, let us consent to marry her. I have sent for our brother Quadrant to meet me here about this very thing. Madam, will you give me leave to recommend a husband to you? Here's a gentleman, whom, in my mind, you can have no objection to. (*Presents the Colonel to her; she looks another way.*)

Miss L. Heaven deliver me from the formal and the fantastic fool!

Col. F. A fine woman,—a fine horse, and fine equipage, are the finest things in the universe; and if I am so happy to possess you, madam, I shall become the envy of mankind, as much as you outshine your whole sex. (*As he takes her hand to kiss it, he endeavours to put a letter into it; she lets it drop; Prim takes it up.*)

Miss L. I have no ambition to appear conspicuously ridiculous, sir. (*Turning from him.*)

Col. F. So fail the hopes of Feignwell.

Miss L. Ha! Feignwell! 'tis he! What have I done! Prim has the letter, and it will be discovered. (*Aside.*)

Obad. Friend, I know not thy name, so cannot call thee by it; but thou seest thy letter is unwelcome to the maiden: she will not read it.

Miss L. Nor shall you: (*snatches the letter*) I'll tear it in a thousand pieces, and scatter it, as I will the hopes of all those that any of you shall recommend to me. (*Tears the letter.*)

Sir P. Ha! right woman, 'faith!

Col. F. Excellent woman! (*Aside.*)

Obad. Friend, thy garb savoureth too much of the vanity of the age for my approbation; nothing that resembleth Philip Modelove, shall I love. Mark that, therefore, friend Philip; bring no more of thy own apes, under my roof.

Sir P. I am so entirely a stranger to the monsters of thy breed, that I shall bring none of them, I am sure.

Col. F. I am likely to have a pretty task by the time I have gone through them all; but she's a city worth taking, and egad I'll carry on the siege: if I can but blow up the out-works, I fancy I am pretty secure of the town. (*Aside.*)

Enter Servant.

Serv. Toby Periwinkle and Thomas Tradelove demand to see thee. (*To Sir Philip.*)

Sir P. Bid them come up. [*Exit Servant.*

Miss L. Deliver me from such an inundation of noise and nonsense. Oh, Feignwell! whatever thy contrivance be, prosper it, heaven. [*Exit.*

Sir P. Sic transit gloria mundi!

Enter Periwinkle *and* Tradelove.

These are my brother guardians, Mr. Feignwell. Pr'ythee observe the creatures. (*Aside to Colonel Feignwell.*)

Trade. Well, Sir Philip, I obey your summons.

Per. Pray what have you to offer for the good of Miss Lovely, Sir Philip?

Sir P. First, I desire to know what you intend to do with that lady? Must she be sent to the Indies for a venture, or live an old maid; and then be entered amongst your curiosities, and shewn for a monster, Mr. Periwinkle?

Col. F. Humph! curiosities; that must be the virtuoso. (*Aside.*)

Per. Why what would you do with her?

Sir P. I would recommend this gentleman to her for a husband, sir; a person whom I have picked out from the whole race of mankind.

Obad. I would advise thee to shuffle him again with the rest of mankind; for I like him not.

Col. F. Pray, sir, without offence to your formality, what may be your objections?

Obad. Thy person, thy manners, thy dress, thy acquaintance, thy every thing, friend.

Sir P. You are most particularly obliging, friend. Ha, ha!

Trade. What business do you follow, pray, sir?

Col. F. Humph! by that question he must be the broker. (*Aside.*) Business, sir! the business of a gentleman.

Trade. That is as much as to say, you dress fine, feed high, and pay your debts of honour better than your tailor's or your butcher's.

Col. F. The court is much obliged to you, sir, for your character of a gentleman.

Trade. The court, sir! What would the court do without us citizens?

Sir P. Without your wives and daughters, you mean, Mr. Tradelove.

Per. Have you ever travelled, sir?

Col. F. That question must not be answered now. (*Aside.*) In books I have, sir.

Per. In books! That's fine travelling indeed! Sir Philip, when you present a person I like, he shall have my consent to marry Miss Lovely; till then, your servant. [*Exit.*

Col. F. I'll make you like me before I have done with you, or I am mistaken. (*Aside.*)

Trade. And when you can convince me that a beau is more useful to my country than a merchant, you shall have mine; till then you must excuse me. [*Exit.*

Col. F. So much for trade. I'll fit you too. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. In my opinion, this is very inhuman treatment, as to the lady, Mr. Prim.

Obad. Thy opinion and mine happen to differ as much as our occupations, friend: business requireth my presence, and folly thine; and so I must bid thee farewell. [*Exit.*

Sir P. Here's breeding for you, Mr. Feignwell! 'Gad take me.

Half my estate I'd give to see 'em bit.
(*Aside.*)
Col. F. I hope to bite you all, if my plot hit.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Tavern.*

COLONEL FEIGNWELL *is discovered in an Egyptian dress, with* SACKBUT.

Sack. A lucky beginning, Colonel; you have got the old beau's consent.

Col. F. Ay, he's a reasonable creature; but the other three will require some pains. Shall I pass upon him, think you! Egad, in my mind, I look as antique as if I had been preserved in the ark.

Sack. Pass upon him! ay, ay, if you have assurance enough.

Col. F. I have no apprehension from that quarter; assurance is the cockade of a soldier.

Sack. Ay, but the assurance of a soldier differs much from that of a traveller. Can you lie with a good grace?

Col. F. As heartily, when my mistress is the prize, as I would meet the foe when my country called and king commanded; so don't you fear that part: if he don't know me again, I am safe. I hope he'll come.

Sack. I wish all my debts would come as sure: I told him you had been a great traveller, had many valuable curiosities, and was a person of most singular taste: he seemed transported, and begged me to keep you till he came.

Col. F. Ay, ay, he need not fear my running away. Let's have a bottle of sack, landlord; our ancestors drank sack.

Sack. You shall have it.

Col. F. And whereabouts is the trap-door you mentioned?

Sack. There's the conveyance, sir. [*Exit.*

Col. F. Now, if I should cheat all these roguish guardians, and carry off my mistress in triumph, it would be what the French call a grand *coup d'éclat.* Odso! here comes Periwinkle. Ah! deuce take this beard; pray Jupiter it does not give me the slip and spoil all.

Enter SACKBUT, *with wine, and* PERIWINKLE *following.*

Sack. Sir, this gentleman hearing you have been a great traveller, and a person of fine speculation, begs leave to take a glass with you; he is a man of a curious taste himself.

Col. F. The gentleman has it in his face and garb. Sir, you are welcome.

Per. Sir, I honour a traveller and men of your inquiring disposition; the oddness of your habit pleases me extremely; 'tis very antique, and for that I like it.

Col. F. 'Tis very antique, sir. This habit once belonged to the famous Claudius Ptolemeus, who lived in the year one hundred and thirty-five.

Sack. If he keeps up to the sample, he shall lie with the devil for a bean-stack, and win it every straw. (*Aside.*)

Per. A hundred and thirty-five! why, that's prodigious now! Well, certainly 'tis the finest thing in the world to be a traveller.

Col. F. For my part, I value none of the modern fashions a fig-leaf.

Per. No more don't I, sir; I had rather be the jest of a fool than his favourite. I am laughed at here for my singularity. This coat, you must know, sir, was formerly worn by that ingenious and very learned person, Mr. John Tradescant, of Lambeth.

Col. F. John Tradescant! Let me embrace you, sir. John Tradescant was my uncle, by my mother's side; and I thank you for the honour you do his memory: he was a very curious man indeed.

Per. Your uncle, sir! Nay, then 'tis no wonder that your taste is so refined; why you have it in your blood. My humble service to you, sir: to the immortal memory of John Tradescant, your never-to-be-forgotten uncle. (*Drinks.*)

Col. F. Give me a glass, landlord.

Per. I find you are primitive, even in your wine. Canary was the drink of our wise forefathers; 'tis balsamic, and saves the charge of apothecaries' cordials. Oh! that I had lived in your uncle's days! or rather, that he were now alive! Oh! how proud he'd be of such a nephew! A person of your curiosity must have collected many rarities.

Col. F. I have some, sir, which are not yet come ashore; as an Egyptian idol.

Per. Pray what may that be?

Col. F. It is, sir, a kind of an ape, which they formerly worshiped in that country; I took it from the breast of a female mummy.

Per. Ha, ha! our women retain part of their idolatry to this day; for many an ape lies on a lady's breast. Ha, ha!—

Sack. A smart, old thief. (*Aside.*)

Col. F. Two tusks of an hippopotamus, two pair of Chinese nut-crackers, and one Egyptian mummy.

Per. Pray, sir, have you never a crocodile?

Col. F. Humph! the boatswain brought one with a design to shew it; but touching at Rotterdam, and hearing it was no rarity in England, he sold it to a Dutch poet. Lookye, sir, do you see this little phial?

Per. Pray you what is it.

Col. F. This is called poluflosboio.

Per. Poluflosboio! It has a rumbling sound.

Col. F. Right, sir; it proceeds from a rumbling nature. This water was part of those waves which bore Cleopatra's vessel when she sailed to meet Antony.

Per. Well, of all that travelled, none had a taste like you.

Col. F. But here's the wonder of the world. This, sir, is called zona, or moros musphonon; the virtues of this are inestimable.

Per. Moros musphonon! What in the name of wisdom can that be? To me it seems a plain belt.

Col. F. This girdle has carried me all the world over.

Per. You have carried it, you mean.

Col. F. I mean as I say, sir. Whenever I am girded with this, I am invisible! and by turning this little screw, can be in the court of the great Mogul, the grand Signior, and king George, in as little time as your cook can poach an egg.

Per. You must pardon me, sir; I can't believe it.

Col. F. If my landlord pleases, he shall try the experiment immediately.

Sack. I thank you kindly, sir; but I have no inclination to ride post to the devil.

Col. F. No, no, you shan't stir a foot; I'll only make you invisible.

Sack. But if you could not make me visible again.

Per. Come, try it upon me, sir; I am not afraid of the devil nor all his tricks. 'Sbud, I'll stand 'em all.

Col. F. There, sir, put it on. Come, landlord, you and I must face the east. (*They turn about.*) Is it on, sir?

Per. 'Tis on. (*They turn about again.*)

Sack. Heaven protect me! where is he?

Per. Why here, just where I was.

Sack. Where, where, in the name of virtue? Ah, poor Mr. Periwinkle! Egad, look to't, you had best, sir; and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burnt for a wizard.

Col. F. Have patience, good landlord.

Per. But really don't you see me now?

Sack. No more than I see my grandmother, that died forty years ago,

Per. Are you sure you don't lie? Methinks I stand just where I did, and see you as plain as I did before.

Sack. Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

Col. F. Take off the girdle, sir. (*He takes it off.*)

Sack. Ah! sir, I am glad to see you with all my heart. (*Embraces him.*)

Per. This is very odd; certainly there must be some trick in't. Pray, sir, will you do me the favour to put it on yourself?

Col. F. With all my heart.

Per. But first I'll secure the door.

Col. F. You know how to turn the screw, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. Yes, yes. Come, Mr. Periwinkle, we must turn full east. (*They turn; the Colonel sinks through the trap-door.*)

Col. F. 'Tis done; now turn. (*They turn.*)

Per. Ha! mercy upon me; my flesh creeps upon my bones. This must be a conjurer, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. He's the devil, I think.

Per. Oh! Mr. Sackbut, why do you name the devil, when perhaps he may be at your elbow?

Sack. At my elbow! Marry, heaven forbid!

Col. F. Are you satisfied? (*From under the stage.*)

Per. Yes, sir, yes. How hollow his voice sounds!

Sack. Your's seemed just the same. 'Faith, I wish this girdle were mine, I'd sell wine no more. Harkye! Mr. Periwinkle, (*takes him aside till the Colonel rises again.*) if he would sell this girdle, you might travel with great expedition.

Col. F. But it is not to be parted with for money.

Per. I am sorry for't, sir; because I think it the greatest curiosity I ever heard of.

Col. F. By the advice of a learned physiognomist in Grand Cairo, who consulted the lines in my face, I returned to England, where he told me I should find a rarity in the keeping of four men, which I was born to possess for the benefit of mankind; and the first of the four that gave me his consent, I should present him with this girdle. Till I have found this jewel, I shall not part with the girdle.

Per. What can this rarity be? Didn't he name it to you?

Col. F. Yes, sir; he call'd it a chaste, beautiful, unaffected woman.

Per. Pish! women are no rarities. Women are the very gewgaws of the creation; playthings for boys, who when they write man they ought to throw aside.

Sack. A fine lecture to be read to a circle of ladies! (*Aside.*)

Per. What woman is there, dressed in all the pride and foppery of the times, can boast of such a foretop as the cockatoo?

Col. F. I must humour him. (*Aside.*) Such a skin as the lizard?

Per. Such a shining breast as the humming-bird?

Col. F. Such a shape as the antelope?

Per. Or, in all the artful mixture of their various dresses, have they half the beauty of one box of butterflies?

Col. F. No; that must be allowed. For my part, if it were not for the benefit of mankind, I'd have nothing to do with them; for they are as indifferent to me as a sparrow, or a flesh-fly.

Per. Pray, sir, what benefit is the world to reap from this lady?

Col. F. Why, sir, she is to bear me a son, who shall revive the art of embalming, and the old Roman manner of burying the dead; and, for the benefit of posterity, he is to discover the longitude, so long sought for in vain.

Per. Od! these are valuable things, Mr. Sackbut!

Sack. He hits it off admirably; and t'other swallows it like sack and sugar. (*Aside.*) Certainly, this lady must be your ward, Mr. Periwinkle, by her being under the care of four persons.

Per. By the description it should. Egad, if I could get that girdle, I'd ride with the sun, and make the tour of the world in four-and-twenty hours. (*Aside.*) And you are to give that girdle to the first of the four guardians that shall give his consent to marry that lady, say you, sir?

Col. F. I am so ordered, when I can find him.

Per. I fancy I know the very woman; her name is Anne Lovely.

Col F. Excellent! He said, indeed, that the first letter of her name was L.

Per. Did he really? Well, that's prodigiously amazing, that a person in Grand Cairo should know anything of my ward?

Col. F. Your ward?

Per. To be plain with you, sir, I am one of those four guardians.

Col. F. Are you indeed, sir? I am transported to find that the very man who is to possess this moros musphonon is a person of so curious a taste. Here is a writing drawn up by that famous Egyptian, which, if you will please to sign, you must turn your face full north, and the girdle is your's.

Per. If I live till the boy is born, I'll be embalmed, and sent to the Royal Society when I die.

Col. F. That you shall, most certainly.

Enter Waiter.

Waiter. Here's Mr. Staytape, the tailor, inquires for you, Colonel.

Col. F. Who do you speak to, you son of a whore?

Per. Ha! Colonel! (*Aside.*)

Col. F. Confound the blundering dog! (*Aside.*)

Waiter. Why to Colonel—

Sack. Get you out, you rascal. (*Kicks him out, and goes after him.*)

Per. What the devil is the matter?

Col. F. This dog has ruined all my schemes, I see by Periwinkle's looks. (*Aside.*)

Per. How finely I should have been choused. Colonel, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your title before. It was pure ignorance, 'faith it was. Pray,—hem,—hem! Pray, Colonel, what post had this learned Egyptian in your regiment?

Col. F. A plague of your sneer. (*Aside.*) I don't understand you, sir.

Per. No, that's strange! I understand you, Colonel. An Egyptian of Grand Cairo! ha, ha, ha! I'm sorry such a well-invented tale should do you no more service. We old fellows can see as far into a millstone as them that pick it. I am not to be tricked out of my trust; mark that.

Col. F. The devil! I must carry it off; I wish I were fairly out. (*Aside.*) Lookye, sir, you may make what jest you please, but the stars will be obeyed, sir; and depend upon't I shall have the

lady, and you none of the girdle. Now for Mr. Freeman's part of the plot. [*Aside and Exit.*

Per. The stars! ha, ha! No star has favoured you, it seems. The girdle! ha, ha, ha! none of your legerdemain tricks can pass upon me. Why, what a pack of trumpery has this rogue picked up. His pagod, poluflosboio, his zonos moros musphonous, and the devil knows what. But I'll take care. Ha! gone? Ay, 'twas time to sneak off. Soho! the house!

Enter SACKBUT.

Where is this trickster? Send for a constable; I'll have this rascal before the lord-mayor; I'll Grand Cairo him, with the plague to him. I believe you had a hand in putting this imposture upon me, Sackbut.

Sack. Who, I, Mr. Periwinkle? I scorn it. I perceived he was a cheat, and left the room on purpose to send for a constable to apprehend him, and endeavoured to stop him when he went out. But the rogue made but one step from the stairs to the door; called a coach, leaped into it, and drove away like the devil, as Mr. Freeman can witness, who is at the bar, and desires to speak with you; he is this minute come to town.

Per. Send him in. [*Exit Sackbut.*] What a scheme this rogue has laid! How I should have been laughed at, had it succeeded!

Enter FREEMAN, *booted and spurred.*

Mr. Freeman, I had like to have been imposed on by the veriest rascal,—

Free. I am sorrow to hear it. The dog flew for't; he had not escaped me, had I been aware of him: Sackbut struck at him, but missed his blow, or he had done his business for him.

Per. I believe you never heard of such a contrivance, Mr. Freeman, as this fellow had found out.

Free. Mr. Sackbut has told me the whole story, Mr. Periwinkle; but now I have something to tell you of much more importance to yourself. I happened to lie one night at Coventry, and knowing your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, I paid him a visit, and, to my great surprise, found him dying.

Per. Dying!

Free. Dying, in all appearance; the servants weeping, the room in darkness; the apothecary, shaking his head, told me the doctors had given him over; and then there are small hopes, you know.

Per. I hope he has made his will; he always told me he would make me his heir.

Free. I have heard you say as much, and therefore resolved to give you notice: I should think it would not be amiss if you went down to-morrow morning.

Per. It is a long journey, and the roads very bad.

Free. But he has a great estate, and the land very good. Think upon that.

Per. Why, that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it. In the meantime, I give you many thanks for your civility, Mr. Freeman, and should be glad of your company to dine with me.

Free. I am obliged to be at Jonathan's coffee-house at two, and now it is half an hour after one; if I despatch my business, I'll wait on you: I know your hour.

Per. You shall be very welcome, Mr. Freeman; and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Re-enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL *and* SACKBUT.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! I have done your business, Colonel; he has swallowed the bait.

Col. F. I overheard all, though I am a little in the dark. I am to personate a highwayman, I suppose; that's a project I am not fond of; for though I may fright him out of his consent, he may fright me out of my life when he discovers me, as he certainly must in the end.

Free. No, no: I have a plot for you without danger; but first we must manage Tradelove. Has the tailor brought your clothes?

Sack. Yes, pox take the thief.

Free. Well, well, no matter; I warrant we have him yet. But now you must put on the Dutch merchant.

Col. F. The deuce of this trading plot! I wish he had been an old soldier, that I might have attacked him in my own way, and heard him fight over all the battles of the late war. But for trade, by Jupiter! I shall never do it.

Sack. Never fear, colonel: Mr. Freeman will instruct you.

Free. You'll see what others do; the coffee-house will instruct you.

Col. F. I must venture, however. But I have a further plot in my head upon Tradelove, which you must assist me in, Freeman. You are in credit with him, I heard you say.

Free. I am, and will scruple nothing to serve you, Colonel.

Col. F. Come along, then. Now for the Dutchman. Honest Ptolemy, by your leave.

Now must bob-wig and business come in play,
A thirty thousand pound girl leads the way.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Jonathan's Coffee-house in 'Change Alley. A crowd of People, with rolls of paper and parchment in their hands; a bar, Waiters, &c.*

Enter TRADELOVE *and Stock-jobbers, with rolls of paper and parchment.*

1 *Stock.* South sea at seven-eighths; who buys?

Trade. Harkye! Gabriel, you'll pay the difference of that stock we transacted for t'other day?

Gab. Ay, Mr. Tradelove; here's a note for the money.

Trade. I would fain bite the spark in the brown coat; he comes very often into the alley, but never employs a broker.

Enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL *and* FREEMAN.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, your servant! Who is that gentleman?

Free. A Dutch merchant just come to England; but, harkye! Mr. Tradelove, I have a piece of news, will get you as much as the French king's death did, if you are expeditious. (*Shewing him a letter.*) Read there: I received it just now from one that belongs to the emperor's minister.

Trade. (*Reads.*) "*Sir,—As I have many obligations to you, I cannot miss any opportunity to shew my gratitude: this moment my lord has received a private express, that the Spaniards have raised their siege from before Cagliari. If this proves of any advantage to you, it will answer both the ends and wishes of, sir, your most obliged humble servant,* HENRICUS DUSSELDORP.—*P. S. In two or three hours the news will be public.*" May one depend upon this, Mr. Freeman? (*Aside to Freeman.*)

Free. You may. I never knew this person send me a false piece of news in my life.

Trade. Sir, I am much obliged to you; egad, 'tis rare news. Who sells South-sea for next week?

Stock. (*All together.*) I sell; I, I, I, I, I sell.

1 *Stock.* I'll sell five thousand, at five-eighths, for the same time.

Trade. Nay, nay; hold, hold! not all together,

gentlemen; I'll be no bull; I'll buy no more than I can take. Will you sell ten thousand pounds at a half, for any day next week, except Saturday?

1 *Stock.* I'll sell it you, Mr. Tradelove. (*Freeman whispers to one of the gentlemen.*)

1 *Gent.* The Spaniards raised the siege of Cagliari! I don't believe one word of it. (*Aside.*)

2 *Gent* Raised the siege! as much as you have raised the Monument.

Free. 'Tis raised, I assure you, sir.

2 *Gent.* What will you lay on't?

Free. What you please.

1 *Gent.* Why, I have a brother upon the spot, in the emperor's service; I am certain, if there were were any such thing, I should have had a letter.

2 *Gent.* I'll hold you fifty pounds 'tis false.

Free. 'Tis done.

2 *Gent.* I'll lay you a brace of hundreds upon the same.

Free. I'll take you.

Trade. I'll lay any man a brace of thousands the siege is raised.

Free. The Dutch merchant is your man to take in. (*Aside to Tradelove.*)

Trade. Does he not know the news?

Free. Not a syllable; if he did, he would bet a hundred thousand pounds as soon as one penny. He's plaguy rich, and a mighty man at wagers. (*To Tradelove.*)

Trade. Say you so? Egad, I'll bite him, if possible. Are you from Holland, sir?

Col. F. Ya, mynheer.

Trade. Had you the news before you came away?

Col. F. What believe you, mynheer?

Trade. What do I believe? Why, I believe that the Spaniards have actually raised the siege of Cagliari.

Col. F. What duyvel's news is dat? 'Tis niet waer, mynheer; 'tis no true, sir.

Trade. 'Tis so true, mynheer, that I'll lay you two thousand pounds on it.

Col. F. Two duysend pound mynheer, 'tis gadaen. Dis gentleman sal hold de gelt. (*Gives Freeman money.*)

Trade. With all my heart; this binds the wager.

Free. You have certainly lost, mynheer; the siege is raised, indeed.

Col. F. Ik geloy't niet, mynheer Freeman, ik sal ye doubled honden, if you please.

Free. I am let into the secret, therefore won't win your money.

Trade. Ha, ha, ha! I have snapped the Dutchman, 'faith; ha, ha! This is no ill day's work. Pray may I crave your name, mynheer?

Col. F. Myn naem, mynheer? Myn naem is Jan Van Timtamtirelereleta Her Van Feignwell.

Trade. Zounds! 'tis a damned long name; I shall never remember it. Myn Heer Van, Tim Tim, Tim—What the devil is it?

Free. Oh! never heed: I know the gentleman, and will pass my word for twice the sum.

Trade. That's enough.

Col. F. You'll hear of me sooner than you wish, old gentleman, I fancy. (*Aside.*) You'll come to Sackbut's, Freeman? (*Aside to Freeman.*)

Free. Immediately. (*Aside to Colonel.*) [*Exit Col.*

Trade. Mr. Freeman, I give you many thanks for your kindness,—

Free. I fear you'll repent when you know all. (*Aside.*)

Trade. Will you dine with me?

Free. I am engaged at Sackbut's: adieu. [*Exit.*

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon Change with my news. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Tavern.*

Enter FREEMAN *and* COLONEL FEIGNWELL.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! The old fellow swallowed the bait as greedily as a gudgeon.

Col. F. I have him, 'faith; ha, ha, ha! His two thousand pounds secure. If he would keep his money, he must part with the lady; ha, ha!

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Joy, joy, Colonel! the luckiest accident in the world.

Col. F. What say'st thou?

Sack. This letter does your business.

Col. F. (*Reads.*) "*To Obadiah Prim, hosier, near the building called the Monument, in London.*"

Free. A letter to Prim! How came you by it?

Sack. Looking over the letters our post-woman brought, as I always do, to see what letters are directed to my house, I spied this directed to Prim; so paid for it among the rest. I have given the old fellow a pint of wine, on purpose to delay time, till you see if the letter be of any service; then I'll seal it up again, and say I took it by mistake. I have read it, and fancy you'll like the project. Read, read, Colonel.

Col. F. (*Reads.*) "*Friend Prim, there is arrived from Pennsylvania, one Simon Pure, a leader of the faithful, who hath sojourned with us eleven days, and hath been of great comfort to the brethren. He intendeth for the quarterly meeting in London; I have recommended him to thy house. I pray thee, treat him kindly, and let thy wife cherish him, for he's of a weakly constitution; he will depart from us the third day; which is all from thy friend in the faith,* AMINADAB HOLDFAST." Ha, ha! excellent! I understand you, landlord: I am to personate this Simon Pure, am I not?

Sack. Don't you like the hint?

Col. F. Admirably well!

Free. 'Tis the best contrivance in the world, if the right Simon gets not there before you.

Col. F. No, no; the quakers never ride post. And suppose, Freeman, you should wait at the Bristol coach, that if you see any such person, you you might contrive to give me notice.

Free. I will. (*Bell rings.*)

Sack. Coming, coming! [*Exit.*

Free. Thou must despatch Periwinkle first. Remember his uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is an old bachelor of seven-five; that he has seven hundred a year, most in abbey-land,—that he was once in love with your mother—shrewdly suspected by some to be your father; that you have been thirty years his steward, and ten years his gentleman: remember to improve these hints.

Col. F. Never fear; let me alone for that. But what's the steward's name?

Free. His name is Pillage.

Col. F. Enough. Now for the country put.

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Zounds! Mr. Freeman, yonder is Tradelove in the d———'st passion in the world. He swears you are in the house: he says you told him you were to dine here.

Free. I did so: ha, ha, ha! he has found himself bit already.

Col. F. The devil! he must not see me.

Sack. I told him I expected you here, but you were not come yet.

Free. Very well; make you haste out, colonel, and let me alone to deal with him. Where is he?

Sack. In the King's-head.

Free. Ay, ay; very well, landlord; let him know I am come in; and now, Mr. Pillage, success attend you. [*Exit Sackbut.*

Col. F. Mr. Protens rather,—

From changing shape, and imitating Jove,
I draw the happy omens of my love.
I'm not the first young brother of the blade,
Who made his fortune in a masquerade. [*Exit.*

Enter Tradelove.

Free. Zounds! Mr. Tradelove, we're bit it seems.

Trade. Bit, do you call it, Mr. Freeman! I'm ruined. Plague on your news.

Free. Plague on the rascal that sent it me.

Trade. Sent it you! Why, Gabriel Skinflint has been at the minister's, and spoke with him; and he has assured him 'tis every syllable false: he received no such express.

Free. I know it; I this minute parted with my friend, who protested he never sent me any such letter. Some rognish stock-jobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my money, that's certain. I wish I knew who he was; I'd make him repent it: I have lost three hundred pounds by it.

Trade. What signifies your three hundred pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand pounds to that Dutchman with a cursed long name, besides the stock I bought; the devil! I must never shew my face upon 'Change more; for, by my soul! I can't pay it.

Free. I am heartily sorry for it! What can I serve you in? Shall I speak to the Dutch merchant, and try to get you time for the payment?

Trade. Time! Ads'heart! I shall never be able to look up again.

Free. I am very much concerned that I was the occasion, and wish I could be an instrument of retrieving your misfortune; for my own, I value it not. Adso! a thought comes into my head, that, well improved, may be of service.

Trade. Ah! there's no thought can be of any service to me, without paying the money or running away.

Free. How do ye know? What do you think of my proposing Miss Lovely to him? He is a single man; and I heard him say he had a mind to marry an English woman; nay, more than that, he said somebody told him you had a pretty ward; he wished you had betted her instead of your money.

Trade. Ay, but he'd be hanged before he'd take her instead of the money: the Dutch are too covetous for that; besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose.

Free. So much the better; you may venture to give him your consent, if he'll forgive you the wager. It is not your business to tell him that your consent will signify nothing.

Trade. That's right, as you say; but will he do it, think you?

Free. I can't tell that; but I'll try what I can do with him. He has promised to meet me here an hour hence; I'll feel his pulse, and let you know: if I find it feasible, I'll send for you; if not, you are at liberty to take what measures you please.

Trade. You must extol her beauty, double her portion, and tell him I have the entire disposal of her, and that she can't marry without my consent; and that I am a covetous rogue, and will never part with her without a valuable consideration.

Free. Ay, ay, let me alone for a lie at a pinch.

Trade. Egad, if you can bring this to bear, Mr. Freeman, I'll make you whole again; I'll pay the three hundred pounds you lost with all my soul.

Free. Well, I'll use my best endeavours.—Where will you be?

Trade. At home. Pray heaven you prosper!—If I were but the sole trustee now, I should not fear it. [*Exit.*

Free. Ha, ha, ha!—he has it. [*Exit.*

Scene III. *Periwinkle's House.*

Enter Periwinkle, *meeting a Footman.*

Foot. A gentleman from Coventry inquires for you, sir.

Per. From my uncle, I warrant you; bring him up. This will save me the trouble, as well as the expense of a journey.

Enter Colonel Feignwell.

Col. F. Is your name Periwinkle, sir?

Per. It is, sir.

Col. F. I am sorry for the message I bring. My old master, whom I served these forty years, claims the sorrow due from a faithful servant to an indulgent master. (*Weeps.*)

Per. By this, I understand, sir, my uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is dead.

Col. F. He is, sir; and has left you heir to seven hundred a year, in as good abbey-land as ever paid Peter-pence to Rome. I wish you long to enjoy it; but my tears will flow when I think of my benefactor. (*Weeps.*) Ah! he was a good man, he has not left many of his fellows; the poor lament him sorely.

Per. I pray, sir, what office bore you?

Col. F. I was his steward, sir.

Per. I have heard him mention you with much respect; your name is,—

Col. F. Pillage, sir.

Per. Ay, Pillage; I do remember he called you Pillage. (*The Colonel sits down.*) Pray, Mr. Pillage, when did my uncle die?

Col. F. Monday last, at four in the morning. About two he signed his will, and gave it into my hands, and strictly charged me to leave Coventry the moment he expired, and deliver it to you with what speed I could; I have obeyed him, sir, and there is the will. (*Gives it to Periwinkle.*)

Per. 'Tis very well; I'll lodge it in the Commons.

Col. F. There are two things which he forgot to insert; but charged me to tell you, that he desired you'd perform them as readily as if you had found them written in the will, which is to remove his corpse, and bury him by his father, at St. Paul's, Covent-garden, and to give all his servants mourning.

Per. That will be a considerable charge. A pox of all modern fashions! (*Aside.*) Well! it shall be done, Mr. Pillage; I will agree with one of death's fashion-monger's, called an undertaker, to go down, and bring up the body.

Col. F. I hope, sir, I shall have the honour to serve you in the same station I did your worthy uncle; I have not many years to stay behind him, and would gladly spend them in the family, where I was brought up. (*Weeps.*) He was a kind and tender master to me.

Per. Pray don't grieve, Mr. Pillage, you shall hold your place, and every thing else which you held under my uncle. You make me weep to see you so concerned. (*Weeps.*) He lived to a good old age, and we are all mortal.

Col. F. We are so, sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign this lease. You'll find Sir Toby has taken particular notice of it in his will; I could not get it time enough from the lawyer, or he had signed it before he died. (*Gives him a paper.*)

Per. A lease! for what?

Col. F. I rented a hundred a-year farm of Sir Toby upon lease, which lease expires at Lady-day next. I desire to renew for twenty years; that's all, sir.

Per. Let me see. (*Looks over the lease.*) Very well. Let me see what he says in his will about it. (*Lays the lease upon the table, and looks on the will.*) Oh! here it is. *The farm lying,—now in possession of Samuel Pillage,—suffer him to renew his lease,—at the same rent.* Very well, Mr. Pillage, I see my uncle does mention it, and I'll perform his will. Give me the lease. (*Colonel gives it him, he looks at it, and lays it upon the table.*) Pray you step to the door, and call for pen and ink, Mr. Pillage.

Col. F. I have a pen and ink in my pocket, sir. (*Pulls out an ink-horn.*) I never go without that.

Per. I think it belongs to your profession. (*He looks upon the pen, while the Colonel changes the lease and lays down the contract.*) I doubt this it is but a sorry pen, though it may serve to write my name. (*Writes.*)

Col. F. Little does he think what he signs. (*Aside.*)

Per. There is your lease, Mr. Pillage. (*Gives him the paper.*) Now, I must desire you to make what haste you can down to Coventry, and take care of every thing, and I'll send down the undertaker for the body; do you attend it up, and whatever charge you are at, I'll repay you.

Col. F. You have paid me already, I thank you, sir. (*Aside.*)

Per. Will you dine with me?

Col. F. I would rather not; there are some of my neighbours which I met as I came along, who leave town this afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad of their company down.

Per. Well, well, I won't detain you. I will give orders about mourning. [*Exit Colonel.*] Seven hundred a-year! I wish he had died seventeen years ago. What a valuable collection of rarities might I have had by this time? I might have travelled over all the known parts of the globe, and made my own closet rival the Vatican at Rome.—Odso! I have a good mind to begin my travels now—let me see—I am but sixty. My father, grandfather, and great grandfather, reached ninety odd; I have almost forty years good. Let me consider! what will seven hundred a-year amount to in———, ay, in thirty years, I say, but thirty: thirty times seven, is seven times thirty; that is, just twenty-one thousand pounds. Tis a great deal of money; I may very well reserve sixteen hundred bf it for a collection of such rarities as will make my name famous to posterity. I would not die like other mortals, forgotten in a year or two, as my uncle will be; no,—

With nature's curious works I'll raise my fame,
That men till doomsday may repeat my name.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A Tavern.*

FREEMAN *and* TRADELOVE *discovered over a bottle.*

Trade. Come, Mr. Freeman, here's Mynheer Jan, Van, Tim, Tam, Tam—I shall never think of that Dutchman's name.

Free. Mynheer Jan Van Timtamtirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell.

Trade. Ay, Heer Van Feignwell; I never heard such a confounded name in my life; here's his health, I say.

Free. With all my heart.

Trade. 'Faith, I never expected to have found so generous a thing in a Dutchman.

Free. As soon as I told him your circumstances, he replied, he would not be the ruin of any man for the world; and immediately made this proposal himself. Let him take what time he will for the payment, said he; or if he'll give me his ward, I'll forgive him the debt.

Trade. Well, Mr. Freeman, I can but thank you. Egad, you have made a man of me again! and if ever I lay a wager more, may I rot in gaol.

Free. I assure you, Mr. Tradelove, I was very much concerned, because I was the occasion, though very innocently, I protest.

Trade. I dare swear you was, Mr. Freeman.

Enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL, *dressed as the Dutch merchant.*

Col. F. Ha, mynheer Tradelove, Ik bin sorry voor your trouble, maer Ik sal you easie maken, Ik will de gelt nie hebben,—

Trade. I shall for ever acknowledge the obligation, sir.

Free. But you understand upon what condition, Mr. Tradelove—Miss Lovely.

Col. F. Ya, de vrow sal al te regt setten, mynheer.

Trade. With all my heart, mynheer; you shall have my consent to marry her freely.

Free. Well, then, as I am a party concerned between you, mynheer Jan Van Timtamtirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell, shall give you a discharge of your wager under his own hand, and you shall give him your consent to marry Miss Lovely under your's; that is the way to avoid all manner of disputes hereafter.

Col. F. Ya, weeragtig.

Trade. Ay, ay, so it is, Mr. Freeman; I'll give it under mine this minute. (*Sits down to write.*)

Col. F. And so Ik sal. (*Does the same.*)

Free. So ho, the house!

Enter Waiter.

Bid your master come up. [*Exit Waiter.*] I'll see there be witnesses enough to the bargain. (*Aside.*)

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Do you call, gentlemen?

Free. Ay, Mr. Sackbut, we shall want your hand here.

Trade. There, mynheer, there's my consent as amply as you can desire; but you must insert your own name, for I know not how to spell it; I have left a blank for it. (*Gives the Colonel a paper.*)

Col. F. Ya Ik sal dat well doen.

Free. Now, Mr. Sackbut, you and I will witness it. (*They write.*)

Col. F. Daer, mynheer Tradelove, is your discharge. (*Gives him a paper.*)

Trade. Be pleased to witness this receipt too, gentlemen. (*Freeman and Sackbut put their hands.*)

Free. Ay, ay, that we will.

Col. F. Well, mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most myn voorsprach to de vrow syn.

Free. He means you must recommend him to the lady.

Trade. That I will, and to the rest of my brother guardians.

Col. F. Wat voor, de duyvel heb you meer guardians?

Trade. Only three, mynheer.

Colonel F. What donder heb ye myn betrocken, mynheer? Had Ik dat gewoeten, Ik soude eaven met you geweest syn.

Sack. But, Mr. Tradelove is the principal; and he can do a great deal with the rest, sir.

Free. And he shall use his interest, I promise you, mynheer.

Trade. I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, mynheer; and if you please, I'll introduce you to the lady.

Col. F. Well, dat is waer. Maer ye must first spreken of myn to de vrow, and to ondere gentlemen.

Free. Ay, that's the best way, and then I and the Heer Van Feignwell will meet you there.

Trade. I will go this moment, upon my honour. Your most obedient humble servant. My speaking will do you little good, mynheer; ha, ha! we have bit you, 'faith: ha, ha! (*Aside.*)

Well, my debt's discharged—and as for Nan,
He has my consent—to get her if he can. (*Aside.*)
[*Exit.*

Col. F. Ha, ha, ha! this was a masterpiece of contrivance, Freeman.

Free. He hugs himself with his supposed good fortune, and little thinks the luck's on our side!

But, come, pursue the fickle goddess, while she's in the mood. Now for the Quaker.

Col. F. That's the hardest task.

Of all the counterfeits perform'd by man,
A soldier makes the simplest puritan.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*An Apartment in Prim's house.*

Enter Mrs. Prim, and Miss Lovely, *in a Quaker's dress.*

Mrs. P. So, now I like thee, Anne; art thou not better without thy monstrous vanities and patches? If heaven should make thee so many black spots upon thy face, would it not fright thee, Anne?

Miss L. If it should turn you inside outward, and shew all the spots of your hypocrisy, 'twould fright me worse!

Mrs. P. My hypocrisy! I scorn thy words, Anne; I lay no baits.

Miss L. If you did, you'd catch no fish.

Mrs. P. Well, well, make thy jests; but I'd have thee to know, Anne, that I could have catched as many fish (as thou callest them,) in my time, as ever thou didst with all thy fool-traps about thee.

Miss L. Is that the reason of your formality, Mrs. Prim? Truth will out; I ever thought, indeed, there was more design than godliness in the pinched cap.

Mrs. P. Go, thou art corrupted with reading lewd plays, and filthy romances. Ah! I wish thou art not already too familiar with the wicked ones.

Miss L. Too familiar with the wicked ones! Pray, no more of these freedoms, madam. I am familiar with none so wicked as yourself; how dare you thus talk to me! you—you—you, unworthy woman, you. (*Bursts into tears.*)

Enter Tradelove.

Trade. What, in tears, Nancy? What have you done to her, Mrs. Prim, to make her weep?

Miss L. Done to me? I admire I keep my senses among you; but I will rid myself of your tyranny, if there be either law or justice to be had. I'll force you to give me up my liberty.

Mrs. P. Thou hast more need to weep for thy sins, Anne; yea, for thy manifold sins.

Miss L. Don't think that I'll be still the fool which you have made me; no; I'll wear what I please—go when, and where I please,—and keep what company I think fit, and not what you shall direct; I will.

Trade. For my part, I do think all this very reasonable, Miss Lovely; 'tis fit you should have your liberty, and for that very purpose I am come.

Enter Periwinkle *and* Obadiah Prim, *with a letter in his hand.*

Per. I have bought some black stockings of your husband, Mrs. Prim; but he tells me the glover's trade belongs to you: therefore, I pray you look me out five or six dozen of mourning gloves, such as are given at funerals, and send them to my house.

Obad. My friend Periwinkle has got a good windfall to-day; seven hundred a-year.

Mrs. P. I wish thee joy of it, neighbour.

Trade. What, is Sir Toby dead then?

Per. He is. You'll take care, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Yea, I will, neighbour.

Obad. This letter recommendeth a speaker: 'tis from Aminadab Holdfast, of Bristol; peradventure he will be here this night; therefore, Sarah, do thou take care for his reception. (*Gives her the letter.*)

Mrs. P. I will obey thee. [*Exit.*

Obad. What art thou in the dumps for, Anne?

Trade. We must marry her, Mr. Prim.

Obad. Why, truly, if we could find a husband worth having, I should be as glad to see her married as thou wouldst, neighbour.

Per. Well said, there are but few worth having.

Trade. I can recommend you a man now, that I think you can none of you have an objection to.

Enter Sir Philip Modelove.

Per. You recommend? Nay, whenever she marries, I'll recommend the husband.

Sir P. What, must it be a whale, or a rhinoceros, Mr. Periwinkle? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. He shall be none of the fops at your end of the town, with mop-heads and empty skulls; nor yet any of our trading gentry, who puzzle the heralds to find arms for their coaches. No; he shall be a man famous for travels, solidity, and curiosity; one who has searched into the profundity of nature: when heaven shall direct such a one, he shall have my consent, because it may turn to the benefit of mankind.

Miss L. The benefit of mankind! What, would you anatomize me?

Sir P. Ay, ay, madam, he would dissect you.

Trade. Or, pore over you through a microscope, to see how your blood circulates from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot;—ha, ha! But I have a husband for you, a man that knows how to improve your fortune; one that trades to the four corners of the globe.

Miss L. And would send me for a venture, perhaps.

Trade. One that will dress you in all the pride of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America: a Dutch merchant, my girl.

Sir P. A Dutchman! ha, ha! there's a husband for a fine lady. Ya frow, will you meet myn slapen, ha, ha! he'll learn you to talk the language of the hogs, madam, ha, ha!

Trade. He'll teach you that one merchant is of more service to a nation than fifty coxcombs. 'Tis the merchant makes the belle. How would the ladies sparkle in the box, without the merchant? The Indian diamond! the French brocade! the Italian fan! the Flanders lace! the fine Dutch holland! How would they vent their scandal over their tea-tables? And where would your beaux have champagne to toast their mistresses, were it not for the merchant?

Obad. Verily, neighbour Tradelove, thou dost waste thy breath about nothing. All that thou hast said tendeth only to debauch youth, and fill their heads with the pride and luxury of this world. The merchant is a very great friend to Satan, and sendeth as many to his dominions as the Pope.

Per. Right; I say, knowledge makes the man.

Obad. Yea, but not thy kind of knowledge; it is the knowledge of truth. Search thou for the light within, and not for baubles, friend.

Miss L. Ah! study your country's good, Mr. Periwinkle, and not her insects. Rid you of your homebred monsters, before you fetch any from abroad. I dare swear, you have maggots enough in your own brain to stock all the virtuosos in Europe with butterflies.

Sir P. By my soul! Miss Nancy's a wit.

Obad. That is more than she can say of thee, friend. Lookye, 'tis in vain to talk; when I meet a man worthy of her, she shall have my leave to marry him.

Miss L. Provided he be of the faithful. Was there ever such a swarm of caterpillars to blast the hopes of a woman! (*Aside.*) Know this, that you contend in vain; I'll have no husband of your choosing, nor shall you lord it over me long. I'll try the power of an English senate. Orphans have

been redressed, and wills set aside, and none did ever deserve their pity more. O, Feignwell! where are thy promises to free me from these vermin? Alas! the task was more difficult than he imagined. (*Aside.*)

A harder task than what the poets tell
Of yore, the fair Andromeda befell;
She but one monster fear'd, I've four to fear,
And see no Perseus, no deliv'rer near. [*Exit.*

Enter Servant, who whispers to OBADIAH PRIM.

Per. The woman is mad. [*Exit.*
Sir P. So are you all, in my opinion. [*Exit.*
Serv. One Simon Pure inquireth for thee. [*Exit.*
Obad. Friend Tradelove, business requireth my presence.
Trade. Oh! I sha'n't trouble you. Plague take him for an unmannerly dog; however, I have kept my word with my Dutchman, and I'll introduce him too, for all you. [*Exit.*

Enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL, *in a Quaker's habit.*

Obad. Friend Pure, thou art welcome. How is it with friend Holdfast, and all friends in Bristol; Timothy Littleworth, John Slenderbrain, and Christopher Keepfaith?
Col. F. A goodly company! (*Aside.*) They are all in health, I thank thee for them.
Obad. Friend Holdfast writes me word, that thou camest lately from Pennsylvania: how do all friends there?
Col. F. What the devil shall I say? I know just as much of Pennsylvania as I do of Bristol. (*Aside.*)
Obad. Do they thrive?
Col. F. Yea, friend, the blessing of their good works fall upon them.

Enter MRS. PRIM *and* MISS LOVELY.

Obad. Sarah, know our friend Pure.
Mrs. P. Thou art welcome. (*He salutes her.*)
Col. F. Here comes the sum of all my wishes. How charming she appears even in that disguise! (*Aside.*)
Obad. Why dost thou consider the maiden so attentively, friend.
Col. F. I will tell thee. About four days ago I saw a vision. This very maiden, but in vain attire, standing on a precipice, and heard a voice which called me by my name, and bid me put forth my hand, and save her from the pit. I did so, and methought the damsel grew unto my side.
Mrs. P. What can that portend?
Obad. The damsel's conversion, I am persuaded.
Miss L. That's false, I'm sure. (*Aside.*)
Obad. Wilt thou use the means, friend Pure?
Col. F. Means! What means? Is she not thy daughter, already one of the faithful?
Mrs. P. No, alas! she's one of the ungodly.
Obad. Pray thee mind what this good man will say unto thee: he will teach thee the way thou should'st walk, Anne.
Miss L. I know my way without his instruction: I hoped to have been quiet when once I had put on your odious formality here.
Col. F. Then thou wearest it out of compulsion, not choice, friend?
Miss L. Thou art in the right of it, friend.
Mrs. P. Art thou not ashamed to mimic the good man? Ah! thou stubborn girl.
Col. F. Mind her not; she hurteth not me. If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few points with her, that may perchance soften her stubbornness, and melt her into compliance.
Obad. Content; I pray thee put it home to her. Come, Sarah, let us leave the good man with her.
Miss L. [*Catching hold of Prim; he breaks loose. Exeunt Obad. and Mrs. P.*] What, do you mean to leave me with this old, enthusiastical canter! Don't think because I complied with your formality, to impose your ridiculous doctrine upon me.
Col. F. I pray thee, young woman, moderate thy passion.
Miss L. I pray thee, walk after thy leader; you will but lose your labour upon me. These wretches will certainly make me mad!
Col. F. I am of another opinion; the spirit telleth me I shall convert thee, Anne.
Miss L. 'Tis a lying spirit; don't believe it.
Col. F. Say'st thou so? Why then thou shalt convert me, my angel. (*Catching her in his arms.*)
Miss L. (*Shrieks.*) Ah! monster, hold off, or I'll tear thy eyes out.
Col. F. Hush! for heaven's sake; dost thou not know me? I am Feignwell!
Miss L. Feignwell!

Re-enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Oh, I'm undone! Prim here! I wish with all my soul I had been dumb.
Obad. What is the matter? Why didst thou shriek out, Anne?
Miss L. Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again, cry murder, thieves, or anything, to drown the noise of that eternal babbler, if you leave me with him any longer.
Obad. Was that all? Fie, fie, Anne!
Col. F. No matter, I'll bring down her stomach, I'll warrant thee. Leave us, I pray thee?
Obad. Fare thee well. Verily, I was afraid the flesh had got the better of the spirit. [*Exit.*
Col. F. My charming, lovely woman! (*Embraces her.*)
Miss L. What meanest thou by this disguise, Feignwell?
Col. F. To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy promise.
Miss L. Make me mistress of my fortune, and make thy own conditions.
Col. F. This night shall answer all my wishes. See here I have the consent of three of thy guardians already, and doubt not but Prim will make the fourth.

Enter OBADIAH PRIM, *who listens.*

Obad. I would gladly hear what arguments the good man useth to bend her. (*Aside.*)
Miss L. Thy words give me new life, methinks.
Obad. What do I hear? (*Aside.*)
Miss L. Thou best of men, heaven meant to bless me sure, when I first saw thee.
Obad. He hath mollified her. O wonderful conversion! (*Aside.*)
Col. F. (*Softly.*) Ha! Prim listening.—No more my love, we are observed: seem to be edified, and give them hopes that thou wilt turn Quaker, and leave the rest to me. (*Aloud.*) I am glad to find that thou art touched with what I said unto thee, Anne: another time I will explain the other article unto thee: in the meanwhile be thou dutiful to our friend Prim.
Miss L. I shall obey thee in every thing. (*Obadiah comes forward.*)
Obad. Oh, what a prodigious change is here! Thou hast wrought a miracle, friend! Anne, how dost thou like the doctrine he hath preached?
Miss L. So well that I could talk to him for ever, methinks. I am ashamed of my former folly, and ask your pardon.
Col. F. Enough, enough, that thou art sorry; he is no pope, Anne.
Obad. True, I am no pope, Anne. Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, friend; will it please

thee to walk into the next room, and refresh thyself? Come, take the maiden by the hand.

Col. F. We will follow thee. (*Going.*)

Enter Servant.

Serv. There is another Simon Pure, inquireth for thee, master.

Col. F. The devil there is. (*Aside.*)

Obad. Another Simon Pure! I do not know him; is he any relation of thine?

Col. F. No, friend I know him not. Plague take him! I wish he were in Pennsylvania, again, with all my soul. (*Aside.*)

Miss L. What shall I do?

Obad. Bring him up. [*Exit Servant.*

Col. F. Humph! then one of us must go down, that's certain. Now, impudence, assist me.

Enter Simon Pure.

Obad. What is thy will with me, friend?

Simon. Didst thou not receive a letter from Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol, concerning one Simon Pure?

Obad. Yea, Simon Pure is already here, friend.

Col. F. And Simon Pure will stay here, friend, if it be possible. (*Aside.*)

Simon. That's an untruth, for I am he.

Col. F. Take thou heed, friend, what thou dost say: I do affirm that I am Simon Pure.

Simon. Thy name may be Pure, friend, but not that Pure.

Col. F. Yea, that Pure which my good friend, Aminadab Holdfast, wrote to my friend Prim about; the same Simon Pure that came from Pennsylvania, and sojourned in Bristol eleven days; thou would'st not take my name from me, would'st thou?—till I have done with it. (*Aside.*)

Simon. Thy name! I am astonished!

Col. F. At what? At thy own assurance? (*Going up to him, Simon Pure starts back.*)

Simon. Avaunt! Satan, approach me not: I defy thee, and all thy works.

Miss L. Oh! he'll out-cant him. Undone, undone for ever. (*Aside.*)

Col. F. Hark thee, friend! thy sham will not take. Don't exert thy voice; thou art too well acquainted with Satan to start at him, thou wicked reprobate. What can thy design be here?

Enter a Servant, who gives Prim a letter.

Obad. One of these must be a counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

Col. F. What can that letter be? (*Aside.*)

Simon. Thou must be the devil, friend, that's certain; for no human power can speak so great a falsehood.

Obad. This letter sayeth that thou art better acquainted with that prince of darkness, than any here. Read that, I pray thee, Simon. (*To Simon. Gives it to the Colonel.*)

Col. F. (*Aside.*) 'Tis Freeman's hand. (*Reads.*) "*There is a design formed to rob your house this night, and cut your throat; and for that purpose there is a man disguised like a quaker, who is to pass for one Simon Pure: the gang, whereof I am one, though now resolved to rob no more, has been at Bristol: one of them came in the coach with the quaker, whose name he hath taken; and from what he hath gathered from him, formed that design, and did not doubt but he should impose so far upon you as to make you turn out the real Simon Pure, and keep him with you. Make the right use of this. Adieu.*" Excellent well! (*Aside.*)

Obad. Dost thou hear this? (*To Simon Pure.*)

Simon. Yea. but it moveth me not; that doubtless is the impostor. (*Pointing to the Colonel.*)

Col. F. Ah! thou wicked one. Now I consider thy face, I remember thou didst come up in the leathern conveniency with me. Thou hadst a black bob-wig on, and a brown camblet coat with brass buttons. Canst thou deny it, eh?

Simon. Yea, I can, and with a safe conscience too, friend.

Obad. Verily, friend, thou art the most impudent villain I ever saw.

Miss L. Nay, then, I'll have a fling at him. (*Aside.*) I remember the face of this fellow at Bath. Ay, this is he that picked my Lady Raffle's pocket in the grove. Don't you remember that the mob pumped upon you, friend? This is the most notorious rogue—

Simon. What does provoke thee to seek my life? Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully?

Obad. She will do thee no hurt; nor thou shalt do me none; therefore get thee about thy business, friend, and leave thy wicked course of life, or thou may'st not come off so favourably everywhere. Simon, I pray thee, put him forth.

Col F. Go, friend, I would advise thee, and tempt thy fate no more.

Simon. Yea, I will go: but it shall be to thy confusion; for I shall clear myself. I will return with some proofs that shall conviuce thee, Obadiah, that thou art highly imposed upon. [*Exit.*

Col. F. Then there will be no staying for me, that's certain. What the devil shall I do? (*Aside.*)

Obad. What monstrous works of iniquity are there in this world, Simon?

Col. F. Yea, the age is full of vice. 'Sdeath, I am so confounded I know not what to say. (*Aside.*)

Obad. Thou art disordered, friend; art thou not well?

Col. F. My spirit is greatly troubled, and something telleth me, that though I have wrought a good work in converting this maiden, this tender maiden, yet my labour will be in vain, for the evil spirit fighteth against her; and I see, yea, I see with the eye of my inward man, that Satan will rebuffet her again, whenever I withdraw myself from her; and she will, yea, this very damsel will return again to that abomination from whence I have retrieved her, as it were; yea, as if it were out of the jaws of the fiend.

Miss L. I must second him. (*Aside.*) What meaneth this struggling within me? I feel the spirit resisteth the vanities of this world; but the flesh is rebellious, yea, the flesh. I greatly fear the flesh and the weakness thereof. Hum.

Obad. The maid is inspired. (*Aside.*) Prodigious! The damsel is filled with the spirit. Sarah!

Enter Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. I am greatly rejoiced to see such a change in our beloved Anne. I came to tell thee that supper stayeth for thee.

Col. F. I am not disposed for thy food; my spirit longeth for more delicious meat! Fain would I redeem this maiden from the tribe of sinners, and break those cords asunder wherewith she is bound. Hum.

Miss L. Something whispers in my ears, methinks, that I must be subject to the will of this good man, and from him only must hope for consolation. Hum. It also telleth me that I am a chosen vessel to raise up seed to the faithful, and that thou must consent that we two be one flesh, according to the word. Hum!

Obad. What a revelation is here! This is certainly part of thy vision, friend; this is the maiden's growing unto thy side. Ah! with what willingness should I give thee my consent, could I give thee her fortune too; but thou wilt never get the consent of the wicked ones.

Col. F. I wish I was sure of your's. (*Aside.*)

Obad. (*To Miss L.*) Thy soul rejoiceth, yea re-

joiceth, I say, to find the spirit within thee; for lo, it moveth thee with natural agitation; yea, with natural agitation; yea, with natural agitation towards this good man; yea, it stirreth, as one may say,—yea, verily I say, it stirreth up thy inclination,—yea, as one would stir a pudding.

All. Hum!

Miss L. I see, I see! the spirit guiding of thy hand, good Obadiah Prim, and now behold thou art signing thy consent; and now I see myself within thy arms, my friend and brother; yea, I am become bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh. (*Embracing Col. F.*) Hum!

Mrs. P. The spirit hath greatly moved them both. Friend Prim, thou must consent; there's no resisting of the spirit.

Obad. Fetch me the pen and ink, Sarah; and my hand shall confess its obedience to the spirit.

[*Exit Mrs. P.*

Col. F. I wish it were over.

Re-enter MRS. PRIM, *with pen and ink,*

Miss L. I tremble lest this quaking rogue should return, and spoil all. (*Aside.*)

Obad. Here, friend, do thou write what the spirit prompteth, and I will sign it. (*Col. F. sits down.*)

Col. F. (*Reads.*) "*This is to certify to all whom it may concern, that I do freely give all my right and title in Anne Lovely to Simon Pure, and my full consent that she shall become his wife, according to the form of marriage. Witness my hand.*"

Obad. That's enough; give me the pen. (*Signs it.*)

Enter BETTY,

Betty. Oh! madam, madam, here's the quaking man again: he has brought a coachman, and two or three more. [*Aside to Miss L. and exit.*

Miss L. Ruined, past redemption! (*Aside to the Colonel.*)

Col. F. No, no; one minute sooner had spoiled all; but now—Here's company coming, friend; give me the paper. (*Going to Prim hastily.*)

Obad. Here it is, Simon; and I wish thee happy with the maiden.

Miss L. 'Tis done; and now, devil, do thy worst.

Enter SIMON PURE, *Coachman, and others.*

Simon. Look thee, friend, I have brought these people to satisfy thee that I am not that impostor which thou didst take me for. This is the man that did drive the leathern conveniency, and brought me from Bristol; and this is,—

Col. F. Lookye, friend, to save the court the trouble of examining witnesses, I plead guilty. Ha, ha!

Obad. How's this? Is not thy name Pure, then?

Col. F. No, really, sir; I only make bold with this gentleman's name; but here I give it up safe and sound: it has done the business I had occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own, which shall be at his service upon the same occasion at any time. Ha, ha, ha!

Simon. Oh! the wickedness of the age!

[*Exit Coachman, &c.*

Obad. I am struck dumb with thy impudence. Anne, thou hast deceived me, and perchance undone thyself.

Mrs. P. Thou art a dissembling baggage, and shame will overtake thee. [*Exit.*

Simon. I am grieved to see thy wife so much troubled; I will follow and console her. [*Exit.*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Thy brother guardians inquire for thee; here is another man with them. [*Exit.*

Miss L. Who can that man be? (*To Col. F.*)

Col. F. 'Tis Freeman; a friend of mine, whom I ordered to bring the rest of the guardians here.

Enter SIR PHILIP MODELOVE, TRADELOVE, PERIWINKLE, *and* FREEMAN.

Free. Is all safe? Did my letter do you service? (*Aside to the Colonel.*)

Col. F. All, all's safe;—ample service. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. Miss Nancy, how dost do, child?

Miss L. Don't call me miss, friend Philip; my name is Anne, thou knowest.

Sir P. What, is the girl metamorphosed?

Miss L. I wish thou wert so metamorphosed. Ah! Philip, throw off that gandy attire, and wear the clothes becoming thy age.

Obad. I am ashamed to see these men. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. My age! the woman is possessed.

Col. F. No; thou art possessed rather, friend.

Trade. Harkye! Miss Lovely, one word with you. (*Takes hold of her hand.*)

Col. F. This maiden is my wife, thanks to my friend Prim, and thou hast no business with her. (*Takes her from him.*)

Trade. His wife! harkye, Mr. Freeman.

Per. Why, you have made a very fine piece of work of it, Mr. Prim.

Sir P. Married to a quaker! thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan truly. There's a husband for a young lady!

Col. F. When I have put on my beau clothes, Sir Philip, you'll like me better.

Sir P. Thou wilt make a very scurvy beau, friend.

Col. F. I believe I can prove it under your hand that you thought me a very fine gentleman in the park t'other day, about thirty-six minutes after eleven. Will you take a pinch, Sir Philip? One of the finest snuff-boxes you ever saw. (*Offers him snuff.*)

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoyed, 'faith I am, if thou be'st the gentleman. I own I did give my consent to the gentleman I brought here to-day; but whether this is he, I can't be positive.

Obad. Canst thou not? Now I think thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan. Thou shallow-brained shuttlecock! he may be a pick-pocket for aught thou dost know.

Per. You would have been two rare fellows to have been entrusted with the sole management of her fortune, would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Tradelove and myself shall take care of her portion.

Trade. Ay, ay, so we will. Didn't you tell me the Dutch merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. Freeman?

Free. I did so, and I am sure he will be here, if you'll have a little patience.

Col. F. What, is Mr. Tradelove impatient? Nay, then, ib ben gereet voor your, he be, Jan Van Timtamtirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell, vergeeten!

Trade. Oh! plague of the name! what have you tricked me too, Mr. Freeman?

Col. F. Tricked, Mr. Tradelove! Did not I give you two thousand pounds for your consent fairly? And now do you tell a gentleman he has tricked you?

Per. So, so! you are a pretty guardian, 'faith, to sell your charge! What, do you look upon her as part of your stock?

Obad. Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy knavery is found out, however; I confess the maiden overreached me, and I had no sinister end at all.

Per. Ay, ay, one thing or other overreached you all; but I'll take care he shall never finger a penny of her money, I warrant you. Overreached, quotha! Why I might have been overreached

too, if I had no more wit: I don't know but this very fellow may be him that was directed to me from Grand Cairo, t'other day. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. F. The very same.

Per. Are you so, sir? But your trick would not pass upon me.

Col. F. No, as you say at that time it did not; that was not my lucky hour. But, harkye! sir, I must let you into one secret. You may keep honest John Tradescant's coat on, for your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is not dead, so the charge of mourning will be saved. Ha, ha, ha! Don't you remember Mr. Pillage, your uncle's steward? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. Not dead! I begin to fear I am tricked too.

Col. F. Don't you remember the signing of a lease, Mr. Periwinkle?

Per. Well, and what signifies that lease, if my uncle is not dead? Ha! I am sure it was a lease I signed.

Col F. Ay, but it was a lease for life, sir; and for this beautiful tenement, I thank you. (*Taking hold of Miss Lovely.*)

All. Ha, ha, ha! neighbour's fare.

Free. So then, I find you are all tricked, ha, ha!

Per. I am certain I read as plain a lease as ever I read in my life.

Col. F. You read a lease I grant you; but you signed this contract. (*Shewing a paper.*)

Per. How durst you put this trick upon me, Mr. Freeman? Didn't you tell me my uncle was dying?

Free. And would tell you twice as much to serve my friend; ha, ha!

Sir P. What, the learned and famous Mr. Periwinkle choused too! ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughing; ha, ha, ha!

Trade. Well, since you have out-witted us all, pray you, what and who are you, sir?

Sir P. Sir, the gentleman is a fine gentleman. I am glad you have got a person, madam, who understands dress and good breeding. I was resolved she should have one of my choosing.

Trade. A beau! nay, then, she is finely helped up.

Miss L. Why, beaus are great encouragers of trade, sir; ha, ha!

Col. F. Lookye, gentlemen: I am the person who can give the best account of myself; and I must beg Sir Philip's pardon, when I tell him, that I have as much aversion to what he calls dress and breeding, as I have to the enemies of my religion. I have had the honour to serve his majesty, and headed a regiment of the bravest fellows that ever pushed bayonet into the throat of an enemy; and notwithstanding the fortune this lady brings me, whenever my country wants my aid, my sword and arm are at her service.

And now, my fair, if thou'lt but deign to smile,
I meet a recompense for all my toil:
Love and religion ne'er admit restraint,
And force makes many sinners, not one saint;
Still free as air the active mind does rove,
And searches proper objects for its love;
But that once fix'd, 'tis past the power of art
To chase the dear idea from the heart:
'Tis liberty of choice that sweetens life,
Makes the glad husband, and the happy wife.

[*Exeunt.*

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY GEORGE FARQUHAR.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

SIR CHARLES FREEMAN	FOIGARD	LADY BOUNTIFUL
AIMWELL	BONIFACE	MRS. SULLEN
ARCHER	GIBBET	DORINDA
SCRUB	BAGSHOT	GIPSEY
SULLEN	HOUNSLOW	CHERRY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Inn.*

Enter BONIFACE, *running*. *Bar-bell rings.*

Bon. Chamberlain, maid, Cherry, daughter Cherry! All asleep, all dead?

Enter CHERRY, *running.*

Cher. Here, here! Why d'ye bawl so, father! D'ye think we have no ears?

Bon. You deserve to have none, you young minx! the company of the Warrington coach has stood in the hall this hour, and nobody to shew them to their chambers.

Cher. And let them wait, father; there's neither red coat in the coach, nor footman behind it.

Bon. But they threaten to go to another inn to-night.

Cher. That they dare not, for fear the coachman should overturn them to-morrow. (*Ringing.*) Coming, coming: here's the London coach arrived.

Enter several People with trunks, bandboxes, and other luggage, who cross the stage.

Bon. Welcome, ladies.

Cher. Very welcome, gentlemen. Chamberlain, shew the Lion and the Rose.

[*Exit with the company.*

Enter AIMWELL, *in a riding-habit, and* ARCHER, *as his Footman, carrying a portmanteau.*

Bon. This way, this way, gentlemen.

Aim. Set down the things; go to the stable, and see my horses well rubbed.

Arch. I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

Aim. You're my landlord, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, I'm old Will Boniface; pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is.

Aim. Oh! Mr. Boniface, your servant.

Bon. Oh, sir! what will your honour please to drink, as the saying is?

Aim. I have heard your town of Lichfield much famed for ale: I think I'll taste that.

Bon. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Staffordshire; 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy, and will be just fourteen years old, the fifth day of next March, old style.

Aim. You are very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

Bon. As punctual, sir, as I am in the age of my children; I'll shew you such ale—here, tapster,

Enter Tapster.

broach number 1706, as the saying is. [*Exit Tapster.*] Sir, you shall taste my *anno domino*. I have lived in Lichfield, man and boy, above eight-and-fifty years, and, I believe, have not consumed eight-and-fifty ounces of meat.

Aim. At a meal you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

Bon. Not in my life, sir; I have fed purely upon ale: I have eat my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon my ale.

Enter Tapster, with a tankard.

Now, sir, you shall see. Your worship's health: ha! delicious! fancy it Burgundy; only fancy it, and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

Aim. (*Drinks.*) 'Tis confounded strong.

Bon. Strong! It must be so, or how would we be strong that drink it?

Aim. And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord?

Bon. Eight-and-fifty years, upon my credit, sir; but it killed my wife, poor woman! as the saying is.

Aim. How came that to pass?

Bon. I don't know how, sir: she would not let the ale take its natural course, sir; she was for qualifying it every now and then with a dram, as the saying is; and an honest gentleman that came this way from Ireland, made her a present of a dozen bottles of usquebaugh; but the poor woman was never well after; however, I was obliged to the gentleman, you know.

Aim. Why, was it the usquebaugh that killed her?

Bon. My Lady Bountiful said so: she, good lady, did what could be done; she cured her of three tympanies, but the fourth carried her off; but she's happy, and I am contented, as the saying is.

Aim. Who's that Lady Bountiful you mentioned?

Bon. Ods my life, sir! we'll drink her health. (*Drinks.*) My Lady Bountiful is one of the best of women: her last husband, Sir Charles Bountiful, left her worth a thousand pounds a year; and I believe she lays out one half on't in charitable uses for the good of her neighbours; in short, she has cured more people in and about Lichfield within ten years, than the doctors have kill'd in twenty, and that's a bold word.

Aim. Has the lady been any other way useful in her generation?

Bon. Yes, sir, she has a daughter, by Sir Charles, the finest woman in all our country, and the greatest fortune; she has a son too, by her first husband, Squire Sullen, who married a fine lady from London t'other day; if you please, sir, we'll drink his health.

Aim. What sort of a man is he?

Bon. Why, sir, the man's well enough; says little, thinks less, and does nothing at all, faith! but he's a man of great estate, and values nobody.

Aim. A sportsman, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, he's a man of pleasure; he plays at whist, and smokes his pipe eight-and-forty hours together sometimes.

Aim. A fine sportsman, truly! and married, you say?

Bon. Ay! and to a curious woman, sir. But he's a—he wants it here, sir. (*Pointing to his forehead.*)

Aim. He has it there, you mean.

Bon. That's none of my business; he's my landlord, and so, a man, you know, would not—but, ecod! he's no better than—sir, my humble service to you. (*Drinks.*) Though I value not a farthing what he can do to me: I pay him his rent at quarter-day; I have a good running trade; I have but one daughter, and I can give her—but no matter for that.

Aim. You are very happy, Mr. Boniface; pray, what other company have you in town?

Bon. A power of fine ladies; and then we have the French officers.

Aim. Oh! that's right; you have a good many of those gentlemen; pray, how do you like their company?

Bon. So well, as the saying is, that I could wish we had as many more of them: they are full of money, and pay double for everything they have; they know, sir, that we pay good round taxes for the taking of them, and so they are willing to reimburse us a little: one of them lodges in my house.

Enter Archer.

Arch. Landlord, there are some French gentlemen below that ask for you.

Bon. I'll wait on them. Does your master stay long in town, as the saying is? (*To Archer.*)

Arch. I can't tell, as the saying is.

Bon. Come from London?

Arch. No.

Bon. Going to London, mayhap.

Arch. No.

Bon. An odd fellow this! (*Bell rings.*) I beg your worship's pardon, I'll wait on you in half a minute. [*Exit.*

Aim. The coast is clear, I see. Now, my dear Archer, welcome to Lichfield.

Arch. I thank thee, my dear brother in iniquity.

Aim. Iniquity! pr'ythee leave canting; you need not change your style with your dress.

Arch. Don't mistake me, Aimwell, for 'tis still my maxim, that there's no scandal like rags, nor any crime so shameful as poverty. Men must not be poor; idleness is the root of all evil; the world's wide enough, let them bustle: fortune has taken the weak under her protection, but men of sense are left to their industry.

Aim. Upon which topic we proceed, and, I think, luckily hitherto. Would not any man swear now, that I am a man of quality, and you my servant; when, if our intrinsic value were known—

Arch. Come, come; we are the men of intrinsic value, who can strike our fortunes out of ourselves, whose worth is independent of accidents in life, or revolutions in government: we have heads to get money, and hearts to spend it.

Aim. As to hearts, I grant ye they are as willing tits as any within twenty degrees; but I can have no great opinion of our heads from the service they have done us hitherto, unless it be that they brought us from London hither to Lichfield, made me a lord, and you my servant.

Arch. That's more than you could expect already. But what money have we left?

Aim But two hundred pounds.

Arch. And our horses, clothes, rings, &c. Why, we have very good fortunes now for moderate people: and let me tell you, that this two hundred pounds, with the experience that we are now masters of, is a better estate than the ten thousand we have spent: our friends, indeed, began to suspect that our pockets were low; but we came off with flying colours, shewed no signs of want either in word or deed.

Aim. Ay! and our going to Brussels was a good pretence enough for our sudden disappearing; and, I warrant you, our friends imagine that we are gone a volunteering.

Arch. Why, faith! if this project fails, it must even come to that. I am for venturing one of the hundreds, if you will, upon this knight-errantry; but in case it should fail, we'll reserve the other to carry us to some counterscarp, where we may die as we lived, in a blaze.

Aim. With all my heart; and we have lived justly, Archer; we can't say that we have spent our fortunes, but that we have enjoyed them.

Arch. Right; so much pleasure for so much money; we have had our pennyworths; and had I millions I would go to the same market again. O, London, London! Well, we have had our share, and let us be thankful: past pleasures, for aught I know, are best, such as we are sure of: those to come may disappoint us. But you command for the day, and so I submit. At Nottingham, you know, I am to be master.

Aim. And at Lincoln, I again.

Arch. Then at Norwich I mount; which, I think, shall be our last stage; for if we fail there, we'll

embark for Holland, bid adieu to Venus, and welcome Mars.

Aim. A match! Mum!

Enter BONIFACE.

Bon. What will your worship please to have for supper?

Aim. What have you got?

Bon. Sir, we have a delicate piece of beef in the pot, and a pig at the fire.

Aim. Good supper meat, I must confess. I can't eat beef, landlord.

Arch. And I hate pig.

Aim. Hold your prating; sirrah! Do you know who you are? (*Aside.*)

Bon. Please to bespeak something else; I have everything in the house.

Aim. Have you any veal?

Bon. Veal, sir! we had a delicate loin of veal on Wednesday last.

Aim. Have you got any fish, or wild fowl?

Bon. As for fish, truly, sir, we are an inland town, and indifferently provided with fish, that's the truth on't; but then, for wild fowl—we have a delicate couple of rabbits.

Aim. Get me the rabbits fricasseed.

Bon. Fricasseed! Lard, sir! they'll eat much better smothered with onions.

Arch. Psha! rot your onions!

Aim. Again, sirrah! Well, landlord, what you please; but, hold, I have a small charge of money, and your house is so full of strangers, that I believe it may be safer in your custody than mine; for when this fellow of mine gets drunk he minds nothing. Here, sirrah, reach me the strong box.

Arch. Yes, sir. This will give us reputation. (*Aside: brings the box.*)

Aim. Here, landlord, the locks are sealed down, both for your security and mine; it holds somewhat above two hundred pounds: if you doubt it, I'll count them to you after supper; but be sure you lay it where I may have it at a minute's warning; for my affairs are a little dubious at present; perhaps I may be gone in half an hour; perhaps I may be your guest till the best part of that be spent; and pray order your ostler to keep my horses ready saddled; but one thing above the rest, I must beg that you will let this fellow have none of your *anno domino*, as you call it; for he's the most insufferable sot—here, sirrah, light me to my chamber.

Arch. Yes, sir. [*Exit, lighted by Archer.*

Bon. Cherry, daughter Cherry!

Enter CHERRY.

Cher. D'ye call, father?

Bon. Ay, child, you must lay by this box for the gentleman, 'tis full of money.

Cher. Money: is all that money? why, sure, father, the gentleman comes to be chosen parliament-man. Who is he?

Bon. I don't know what to make of him; he talks of keeping his horses ready saddled, and of going, perhaps, at a minute's warning, or of staying, perhaps, till the best part of this be spent.

Cher. Ay! ten to one, father, he's a highwayman.

Bon. A highwayman! Upon my life, girl, you have hit it; and this box is some new purchased booty. Now, could we find him out, the money were our's.

Cher. He don't belong to our gang.

Bon. What horses have they?

Cher. The master rides upon a black.

Bon. A black! ten to one the man upon the black mare; and since he don't belong to our fraternity, we may betray him with a safe conscience. I don't think it lawful to harbour any rogues but my own. Lookye, child, as the saying is, we must go cunningly to work; proofs we must have; the gentleman's servant loves drink, I'll ply him that way; and ten to one he loves a wench, you must work him t'other way.

Cher. Father, would you have me give my secret for his?

Bon. Consider, child, there's two hundred pounds to boot. (*Ringing without.*) Coming, coming. Child, mind your business. [*Exit.*

Cher. What a rogue is my father! My father! I deny it. My mother was a good, generous, free-hearted woman, and I can't tell how far her good nature might have extended for the benefit of her children. This landlord of mine, for I think I can call him no more, would betray his guest, and his daughter into the bargain—by a footman, too!

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. What footman, pray, mistress, is so happy as to be the subject of your contemplation?

Cher. Whoever he is, friend, he'll be but little the better for it.

Arch. I hope so, for I am sure you did not think of me.

Cher. Suppose I had.

Arch. Why, then, you're but even with me; for the minute I came in, I was considering in what manner I should make love to you.

Cher. Love to me, friend!

Arch. Yes, child.

Cher. Child! Manners! if you keep a little more distance, friend, it would become you much better.

Arch. Distance! good night, saucebox! (*Going.*)

Cher. A pretty fellow! I like his pride. Sir! pray, sir—you see, sir, (*Archer returns*) I have the credit to be trusted with your master's fortune here, which sets me a degree above his footman. I hope, sir, you a'n't affronted.

Arch. Let me look you full in the face, and I'll tell you whether you can affront me or no. 'Sdeath! child, you have a pair of delicate eyes, and you don't know what to do with them.

Cher. Why, sir, don't I see everybody?

Arch. Ay! but if some women had them they would kill everybody. Pr'ythee, instruct me; I would fain make love to you, but I don't know what to say.

Cher. Why, did you never make love to anybody before?

Arch. Never to a person of your figure, I can assure you, madam; my addresses have always been confined to persons within my own sphere; I never aspired so high before. (*Sings.*)

> *"But you look so bright,*
> *And are dress'd so tight," &c.*

Cher. Will you give me that song, sir?

Arch. Ay, my dear! take it while it is warm. (*Kisses her.*) Death and fire! her lips are honey-combs.

Cher. And I wish there had been a swarm of bees too, to have stung you for your impudence.

Arch. There's a swarm of Cupids, my little Venus, that has done the business much better.

Cher. This fellow is misbegotten as well as I. (*Aside.*) What's your name, sir?

Arch. Name! Egad! I have forgot it. (*Aside.*) Oh! Martin.

Cher. Where was you born?

Arch. In St. Martin's parish.

Cher. What was your father?

Arch. Of—of—St. Martin's parish.

Cher. Then, friend, good night.

Arch. I hope not.

Cher. You may depend upon it.

Arch. Upon what?

Cher. That you are very impudent.

Arch. That you are very handsome.
Cher. That you are a footman.
Arch. That you are an angel.
Cher. I shall be rude.
Arch. So shall I.
Cher. Let go my hand.
Arch. Give me a kiss. (*Kisses her.*)
Bon. (*Without.*) Cherry, Cherry!
Cher. I'm—my father calls: you plaguy devil, how dare you stop my breath so? Offer to follow me one step, if you dare. [*Exit.*
Arch. A fair challenge, by this light! this is a pretty fair opening for an adventure; but we are knights-errant, and so fortune be our guide. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Gallery in Lady Bountiful's house.*

Enter MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA.

Dor. Morrow, my dear sister; are you for church this morning?
Mrs. S. Anywhere to pray; for heaven alone can help me; but I think, Dorinda, there's no form of prayer in the liturgy against bad husbands.
Dor. But there's a form of law at Doctors' Commons; and I swear, sister Sullen, rather than see you thus continually discontented, I would advise you to apply to that; for besides the part that I bear in your vexatious broils, as being sister to the husband, and friend to the wife, your examples give me such an impression of matrimony, that I shall be apt to condemn my person to a long vacation all its life. But supposing, madam, that you brought it to a case of separation, what can you urge against your husband? My brother is, first, the most constant man alive.
Mrs. S. The most constant man, I grant ye.
Dor. He never sleeps from you.
Mrs. S. No; he always sleeps with me.
Dor. He allows you a maintenance suitable to your quality.
Mrs. S. A maintenance! Do you take me, madam, for an hospital-child, that I must sit down and bless my benefactors for meat, drink, and clothes? As I take it, madam, I brought your brother ten thousand pounds, out of which I might expect some pretty things called pleasures.
Dor. You share in all the pleasures the country affords.
Mrs. S. Country pleasures! Racks and torments! Dost think, child, that my limbs were made for leaping of ditches, and clambering over stiles; or, that my parents, wisely foreseeing my future happiness in country pleasures, had early instructed me in rural accomplishments, of drinking fat ale, playing at whist, and smoking tobacco with my husband; or of spreading of plaisters, brewing of diet drinks, and stilling rosemary-water, with the good old gentlewoman, my mother-in-law?
Dor. I am sorry, madam, that it is not more in our power to divert you; I could wish, indeed, that our entertainments were a little more polite, or your taste a little less refined; but pray, madam, how came the poets and philosophers, that laboured so much in hunting after pleasure, to place it last in a country life?
Mrs. S. Because they wanted money, child, to find out the pleasures of the town. Did you ever hear of a poet or philosopher worth ten thousand pounds? If you can shew me such a man, I'll lay you fifty pounds you'll find him somewhere within the weekly bills. Not that I disapprove rural pleasures, as the poets have painted them in their landscapes; every Phillis has her Corydon; every murmuring stream, and every flowery mead, gives fresh alarm to love. Besides, you'll find that the couples were never married. But yonder I see my Corydon, and a sweet swain it is, heaven knows! Come, Dorinda, don't be angry; he is my husband and your brother; and, between both, is he not a sad brute?
Dor. I have nothing to say to your part of him; you are the best judge.
Mrs. S. Oh, sister, sister! if ever you marry, beware of a sullen, silent sot; one that is always musing, but never thinks. There is some diversion in a talking blockhead; and since the woman must wear chains, I would have the pleasure of hearing them rattle a little. Now you shall see: but take this by the way; he came home this morning at his usual hour of four, wakened me out of a sweet dream of something else, by tumbling over the tea-table, which he broke all to pieces. After his man and he had rolled about the room, like sick passengers in a storm, he comes flounce into bed, dead as a salmon into a fishmonger's basket; his feet cold as ice, his breath hot as a furnace. Oh! matrimony, matrimony! He tosses up the clothes with a barbarous swing over his shoulders, disorders the whole economy of my bed, and my whole night's comfort is the tuneable serenade of that wakeful nightingale, his nose. Oh! the pleasure of counting the melancholy clock by a snoring husband! But, now, sister, you shall see how handsomely, being a well-bred man, he will beg my pardon.

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. My head aches consumedly.
Mrs. S. Will you be pleased, my dear, to drink tea with us this morning? it may do your head good.
Sul. No.
Dor. Coffee, brother?
Sul. Psha!
Mrs. S. Will you please dress, and go to church with me? the air may help you.
Sul. Scrub, Scrub!

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. Sir!
Sul. What day of the week is this?
Scrub. Sunday, an't please your worship.
Sul. Sunday! bring me a dram; and, d'ye hear? set out the venison pasty, and a tankard of strong beer upon the hall table; I'll go to breakfast. (*Going.*)
Dor. Stay, stay, brother, you sha'n't get off so; you were very naughty last night, and must make your wife reparation. Come, come, brother, won't you ask pardon?
Sul. For what?
Dor. For being drunk last night.
Sul. I can afford it, can't I?
Mrs. S. But I can't, sir.
Sul. Then you may let it alone.
Mrs. S. But I must tell you, sir, that this is not to be borne.
Sul. I am glad on it.
Mrs. S. What is the reason, sir, that you use me thus inhumanly?
Sul. Scrub!
Scrub. Sir!
Sul. Get the things ready to shave my head. [*Exit.*
Mrs. S. Have a care of coming near his temples, Scrub, for fear you meet something there that may turn the edge of your razor. [*Exit Scrub.*] Inveterate stupidity! Did you ever know so hard, so obstinate a spleen as his? Oh, sister, sister! I shall never have any good of the beast till I get him to town; London, dear London, is the place for managing and breaking a husband.
Dor. And has not a husband the same opportunities there for humbling a wife?
Mrs. S. No, no, child; 'tis a standing maxim in conjugal discipline, that when a man would enslave

his wife, he hurries her into the country; and when a lady would be arbitrary with her husband, she wheedles her booby up to town. A man dare not play the tyrant in London, because there are so many examples to encourage the subject to rebel. Oh, Dorinda, Dorinda! a fine woman may do any thing in London. On my conscience! she may raise an army of forty thousand men.

Dor. I fancy, sister, you have a mind to be trying your power that way here in Lichfield; you have drawn the French count to your colours already.

Mrs. S. The French are a people that can't live without their gallantries.

Dor. And some English that I know, sister, are not averse to such amusements.

Mrs. S. Well, sister, since the truth must out, it may do as well now as hereafter; I think, one way to rouse my lethargic, sottish husband, is to give him a rival; security begets negligence in all people, and men must be alarmed to make them alert in their duty. Women are like pictures, of no value in the hands of a fool, till he hears men of sense bid high for the purchase.

Dor. This might do, sister, if my brother's understanding were to be convinced into a passion for you; but, I believe, there's a natural aversion on his side; and, I fancy, sister, that you don't come much behind him, if you dealt fairly.

Mrs. S. I own it; we are united contradictions, fire and water. But I would be contented, with a great many other wives, to humour the censorious vulgar, and give the world an appearance of living well with my husband, could I bring him to dissemble a little kindness to keep me in countenance.

Dor. But how do you know, sister, but that, instead of rousing your husband, by this artifice, to a counterfeit kindness, he should awake in a real fury?

Mrs. S. Let him. If I can't entice him to the one, I would provoke him to the other.

Dor. But how must I behave myself between ye?

Mrs. S. You must assist me.

Dor. What! against my own brother?

Mrs. S. He is but half a brother, and I am your entire friend. If I go a step beyond the bounds of honour, leave me; till then I expect you should go along with me in everything. The count is to dine here to-day.

Dor. 'Tis a strange thing, sister, that I can't like that man.

Mrs. S. You like nothing; your time is not come. Love and death have their frailties, and strike home one time or other. You'll pay for all one day, I warrant ye. But come, my lady's tea is ready, and 'tis almost church-time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Inn.*

Enter AIMWELL, *dressed, and* ARCHER.

Aim. And was she the daughter of the house?

Arch. The landlord is so blind as to think so; but I dare swear she has better blood in her veins.

Aim. Why dost think so?

Arch. Because the baggage has a pert *je-ne-sçai-quoi;* she reads plays, keeps a monkey, and is troubled with vapours.

Aim. By which discoveries I guess that you know more of her.

Arch. Not yet, faith! The lady gives herself airs, forsooth; nothing under a gentleman.

Aim. Let me take her in hand.

Arch. Say one word more of that, and I'll declare myself—spoil your sport there, and everywhere else. Lookye, Aimwell, every man in his own sphere.

Aim. Right; and, therefore, you must pimp for your master.

Arch. In the usual forms, good sir, after I have served myself. But to our business. You are so well dressed, Tom, and make so handsome a figure, that I fancy you may do execution in a country church.

Aim. There's something in that which may turn to advantage. The appearance of a stranger in a country church, draws as many gazers as a blazing star: no sooner he comes into the cathedral, but a train of whispers run buzzing round the congregation in a moment—"Who is he? Whence comes he? Do you know him?" Then I, sir, give the verger half-a-crown; he pockets the simony, and inducts me into the best pew in the church; I pull out my snuff box, turn myself round, bow to the bishop, or the dean, if he be the commanding officer, single out a beauty, rivet both my eyes on her's, set my nose a bleeding by the strength of imagination, and shew the whole church my concern, by my endeavouring to hide it; after the sermon, the whole town gives me to her for her lover, and by persuading the lady that I am dying for her, the tables are turned, and she, in good earnest, falls in love with me.

Arch. There's nothing in this, Tom, without a precedent; but instead of rivetting your eyes to a beauty, try to fix them upon a fortune: that's our business at present.

Aim. Psha! no woman can be a beauty without a fortune. Let me alone for a marksman.

Arch. Tom.

Aim. Ay!

Arch. When were you at church before, pray?

Aim. Um—I was there at the coronation.

Arch. And how can you expect a blessing by going to church now?

Aim. Blessing! nay, Frank, I ask but for a wife. [*Exit.*

Arch. Truly, the man is not very unreasonable in his demands. [*Exit.*

Enter BONIFACE *and* CHERRY.

Bon. Well, daughter, as the saying is, have you brought Martin to confess?

Cher. Pray, father, don't put me upon getting anything out of a man; I am but young, you know, father, and don't understand wheedling.

Bon. Young! why, you jade, as the saying is, can any woman wheedle that is not young? I tell you his silence confesses it, and his master spends his money so freely, and is so much a gentleman every manner of way, that he must be a highwayman.

Enter GIBBET, *in a cloak.*

Gib. Landlord, landlord, is the coast clear?

Bon. O, Mr. Gibbet, what's the news?

Gib. No matter, ask no questions, all's fair and honourable; here, my dear Cherry, (*gives her a bag*) two hundred sterling pounds, as good as ever hanged or saved a rogue; lay them by with the rest; and here, three wedding, or mourning rings, 'tis much the same, you know. Here, two silver-hilted swords: I took these from fellows that never shew any part of their swords but the hilts. Here is a diamond necklace, which the lady hid in the privatest place in the coach, but I found it out. This gold watch I took from a pawnbroker's wife: it was left in her hands by a person of quality; there's the arms upon the case.

Cher. But who had you the money from?

Gib. Ah! poor woman, I pitied her; from a poor lady just eloped from her husband; she had made up her cargo, and was bound for Ireland as hard as she could drive; she told me of her husband's barbarous usage, and so, faith, I left her half-a-crown. But I had almost forgot, my dear Cherry, I have a present for you.

Cher. What is it?

Gib. A pot of ceruse, my child, that I took out of a lady's under petticoat.

Cher. What, Mr. Gibbet, do you think that I paint?

Gib. Why, you jade, your betters do; I'm sure the lady that I took it from had a coronet upon her handkerchief. Here, take my cloak, and go secure the premises.

Cher. I will secure them. [*Exit.*

Bon. But, harkye, where's Hounslow and Bagshot?

Gib. They'll be here to-night.

Bon. Do you know of any other gentlemen of the pad on this road?

Gib. No.

Bon. I fancy I have two that lodge in the house just now.

Gib. The devil! how do you smoke them?

Bon. Why, one is gone to church.

Gib. To church! That's suspicious, I must confess.

Bon. And the other is now in his master's chamber; he pretends to be a servant to the other; we'll call him out, and pump him a little.

Gib. With all my heart.

Bon. Mr. Martin! Mr. Martin!

Enter ARCHER, *brushing a hat and singing.*

Gib. The roads are consumed deep: I'm as dirty as Old Brentford at Christmas. A good pretty fellow that. Whose servant are you, friend?

Arch. My master's.

Gib. Really!

Arch. Really.

Gib. That's much. That fellow has been at the bar, by his evasions. But pray, sir, what is your master's name?

Arch. Tall, all, dall. (*Sings and brushes the hat.*) This is the most obstinate spot—

Gib. I ask you his name.

Arch. Name, sir! Tall, all, dall. I never asked him his name in my life—Tall, all, dall.

Bon. What think you now?

Gib. Plain, plain; he talks now as if he were before a judge. But pray, friend, which way does your master travel?

Arch. A horseback.

Gib. Very well again! an old offender. (*To Bon.*) Right: but I mean, does he go upwards or downwards? (*To Arch.*)

Arch. Downwards, I fear, sir—Tall, lall.

Gib. I'm afraid thy fate will be the contrary way.

Bon. Ha, ha, ha! Mr. Martin, you're very arch. This gentleman is only travelling towards Chester, and would be glad of your company, that's all. Come, Captain, you'll stay to-night, I suppose; I'll shew you a chamber. Come, Captain,

Gib. Farewell, friend. [*Exeunt.*

Arch. Captain, your servant. Captain! a pretty fellow! 'Sdeath! I wonder that the officers of the army don't conspire to beat all scoundrels in red but their own.

Enter CHERRY.

Cher. Gone, and Martin here! I hope he did not listen; I would have the merit of the discovery all my own, because I would oblige him to love me. (*Aside.*) Mr. Martin, who was that man with my father?

Arch. Some recruiting sergeant, or whipp'd-out trooper, I suppose.

Cher. All's safe, I find. (*Aside.*)

Arch. Come, my dear, have you conned over the catechism I taught you last night?

Cher. Come, question me.

Arch. What is love?

Cher. Love is I know not what, it comes I know not how, goes I know not when.

Arch. Very well; an apt scholar. (*Chucks her under the chin.*) Where does love enter?

Cher. Into the eyes.

Arch. And where go out?

Cher. I won't tell you.

Arch. What are the objects of that passion?

Cher. Youth, beauty, and clean linen.

Arch. The reason?

Cher. The two first are fashionable in nature, and the third at court.

Arch. That's my dear. What are the signs and tokens of that passion?

Cher. A stealing look, a stammering tongue, words improbable, designs impossible, and actions impracticable.

Arch. That's my good child; kiss me. What must a lover do to obtain a mistress?

Cher. He must adore the person that disdains him, he must bribe the chambermaid that betrays him, and court the footman that laughs at him. He must, he must—

Arch. Nay, child, I must whip you, if you don't mind your lesson; he must treat his—

Cher. Oh! ay. He must treat his enemies with respect, his friends with indifference, and all the world with contempt; he must suffer much, and fear more; he must desire much, and hope little; in short, he must embrace his ruin, and throw himself away.

Arch. Had ever man so hopeful a pupil as mine! Come, my dear, why is love called a riddle?

Cher. Because, being blind, he leads those that see; and, though a child, he governs a man.

Arch. Mighty well. And why is love pictured blind?

Cher. Because the painters, out of their weakness, or the privilege of their art, choose to hide those eyes they could not draw.

Arch. That's my dear little scholar; kiss me again. And why should love, that's a child, govern a man?

Cher. Because that a child is the end of love.

Arch. And so ends love's catechism. And now, my dear, we'll go in, and make my master's bed.

Cher. Hold, hold, Mr. Martin; you have taken a great deal of pains to instruct me, and what d'ye think I have learned by it?

Arch. What?

Cher. That your discourse and your habit are contradictions, and it would be nonsense in me to believe you a footman any longer.

Arch. Oons! what a witch it is!

Cher. Depend upon this, sir, nothing in that garb shall ever tempt me: for though I was born to servitude, I hate it. Own your condition, swear you love me, and then—

Arch. And then we shall go make my master's bed?

Cher. Yes.

Arch. You must know, then, that I was born a gentleman, my education was liberal; but I went to London a younger brother, fell into the hands of sharpers, who stript me of my money, my friends disowned me, and now my necessity brings me to what you see.

Cher. Then take my hand; promise to marry me before you sleep, and I will make you master of two thousand pounds.

Arch. How?

Cher. Two thousand pounds that I have this minute in my own custody; so, throw off your livery this instant, and I will go find a parson.

Arch. What said you? a parson?

Cher. What! do you scruple?

Arch. Scruple! no, no; but—two thousand pounds, you say?

Cher. And better.

Arch. 'Sdeath! what shall I do? But harkye, child, what need you make me master of yourself and money, when you may have the same pleasure out of me, and still keep your fortune in your own hands?

Cher. Then you won't marry me?

Arch. I would marry you, but—

Cher. O, sweet sir, I am your humble servant, you are fairly caught. Would you persuade me that any gentleman, who would bear the scandal of wearing a livery, would refuse two thousand pounds, let the condition be what it would? No, no, sir: but I hope you'll pardon the freedom I have taken, since it was only to inform myself of the respect I ought to pay you. (*Going.*)

Arch. Fairly bit, by Jupiter! Hold, hold! and have you actually two thousand pounds?

Cher. Sir, I have my secrets as well as you; when you please to be more open, I shall be more free; and, be assured that I have discoveries that will match yours, be they what they will. In the mean while be satisfied, that no discovery I make shall ever hurt you; but beware of my father. [*Exit.*

Arch. So; we are like to have as many adventures in our inn as Don Quixote had in his. Let me see; two thousand pounds! If the wench would promise to die when the money were spent, egad, one would marry her; but the fortune may go off in a year or two, and the wife may live—Lord knows how long! Then, an innkeeper's daughter! Ay, that's the devil; there my pride brings me off.

For whatsoe'er the sages charge on pride,
The angels' fall, and twenty faults beside;
On earth, I'm sure, 'mong us of mortal calling,
Pride saves man oft', and woman too from falling.
[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Lady Bountiful's House.*

Enter MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA.

Mrs. S. Ha, ha, ha! my dear sister! let me embrace thee; now we are friends, indeed; for I shall have a secret of yours as a pledge for mine.

Dor. But do you think that I am so weak as to fall in love with a fellow at first sight?

Mrs. S. Psha! now you spoil all; why should not we be as free in our friendships as the men? I warrant you, the gentleman has got to his confidant already; has avowed his passion, toasted your health, and called you ten thousand angels.

Dor. Your hand, sister; I a'n't well.

Mrs. S. Shall I send to your mother, child? or shall I send to the gentleman for something for you? Come, unbosom yourself; the man is perfectly a pretty fellow; I saw him when he first came into church.

Dor. I saw him, too, sister; and with an air that shone, methought, like rays about his person.

Mrs. S. Well said; up with it.

Dor. No forward coquette behaviour, no air to set him off, no studied looks, no artful posture; but nature did it all.

Mrs. S. Better and better:—one touch more. Come—

Dor. But, then, his looks! Did you observe his eyes?

Mrs. S. Yes, yes, I did; his eyes! well, what of his eyes?

Dor. Sprightly, but not wandering; they seemed to view, but never gazed on any thing but me: and then his looks so humble were, and yet so noble, that they aimed to tell me, that he could with pride die at my feet, though he scorned slavery any where else.

Mrs. S. The physic works purely. How d'ye find yourself now, my dear?

Dor. Hem! much better, my dear. Oh! here comes our Mercury.

Enter SCRUB.

Dor. Well, Scrub, what news of the gentleman?

Scrub. Madam, I have brought you a whole packet of news.

Dor. Open it quickly; come.

Scrub. In the first place, I inquired who the gentleman was: they told me he was a stranger. Secondly, I asked what the gentleman was: they answered and said, that they never saw him before. Thirdly, I inquired what countryman he was? they replied, 'twas more than they knew. Fourthly, I demanded whence he came: their answer was, they could not tell. And, fifthly, I asked whither he he went: and they replied, they knew nothing of the matter. And this is all I could learn.

Mrs. S. But what do the people say? Can't they guess?

Scrub. Why, some think he's a spy; some guess he's a mountebank; some say one thing, some another; but, for my own part, I believe he's a jesuit.

Dor. A jesuit! why a jesuit?

Scrub. Because he keeps his horses always saddled; and his footman talks French.

Mrs. S. His footman!

Scrub. Ay; he and the Count's footman were jabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a mill-pond; and I believe they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.

Dor. What sort of livery has the footman?

Scrub. Livery! Lord, madam, I took him for a captain, he's so bedizened with lace; and then he has a silver-headed cane dangling at his knuckles; he carries his hands in his pockets, and walks just so. (*Walks with a French air.*) Lord, madam, he's clear another sort of a man than I.

Mrs. S. That may easily be. But what shall we do now, sister?

Dor. I have it. This fellow has a world of simplicity and some cunning: the first hides the latter by abundance. Scrub!

Scrub. Madam! (*Advancing.*)

Dor. We have a great mind to know who this gentleman is, only for our satisfaction.

Scrub. Yes, madam, it would be satisfaction, no doubt.

Dor. You must go and get acquainted with his footman, and invite him hither to drink a bottle of your ale, because you're butler to-day.

Scrub. Yes, madam, I am butler every Sunday.

Mrs. S. O, brave, sister! o'my conscience, you understand the mathematics already. 'Tis the best plot in the world. Your mother, you know, will be gone to church, my spouse will be gone to the alehouse with his scoundrels, and the house will be our own; so we drop in by accident, and ask the fellow some questions ourselves. In the country, you know, any stranger is company; and we're glad to take up with the butler in a country dance, and happy if he will do us the favour.

Scrub. Oh, madam, you wrong me; I never refused your ladyship the favour in my life.

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. Ladies, dinner's upon table. [*Exit.*

Dor. Scrub, we'll excuse your waiting. Go where we ordered you.

Scrub. I shall. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Inn.*

Enter AIMWELL *and* ARCHER.

Arch. Well, Tom, I find you're a marksman.

Aim. A marksman! who so blind could be as not discern a swan among the ravens?

Arch. Well, but harkye, Aimwell.

Aim. Aimwell! call me Oroondates, Cesario, Amadis, all that romance can in a lover paint, and then I'll answer. Oh, Archer! I read her thousands in her looks; she looked like Ceres in her harvest; corn, wine, and oil, milk, honey, gardens, groves, and purling streams, played on her plenteous face.

Arch. Her face! her pocket you mean! the corn, wine, and oil lie there. In short, she has twenty thousand pounds, that's the English on't.

Aim. Her eyes—

Arch. Are demi-cannons, to be sure; so I won't stand their battery. (*Going.*)

Aim. Pray excuse me, my passion must have vent.

Arch. Passion! what a plague, d'ye think these romantic airs will do our business? Were my temper as extravagant as yours, my adventures have something more romantic by half.

Aim. Your adventures!

Arch. Yes.

"*The nymph who with her twice one thousand pounds,*
With brazen engine hot, and coif clear starch'd,
Can fire the guest in warming of the bed—"

There's a touch of sublime Milton for you, and the subject but an innkeeper's daughter. I can play with a girl as an angler does his fish; he keeps it at the end of his line, runs it up the stream, and down the stream, till at last he brings it to hand, tickles the trout, and so whips it into his basket.

Enter Boniface.

Bon. Mr. Martin, as the saying is—yonder's an honest fellow below, my Lady Bountiful's butler, who begs the honour that you would go home with him, and see his cellar.

Arch. Do my baise-mains to the gentleman, and tell him I will do myself the honour to wait on him mediately, as the saying is.

Bon. I shall do your worship's commands, as the saying is. [*Exit, bowing obsequiously.*

Aim. What do I hear? soft Orpheus play, and fair Toftida sing?

Arch. Psha! d—n your raptures! I tell you here's a pump going to be put into the vessel, and the ship will get into harbour, my life on't. You say there's another lady very handsome there?

Aim. Yes, faith.

Arch. I'm in love with her already.

Aim. Can't you give me a bill upon Cherry in the mean time?

Arch. No, no, faith, all her corn, wine, and oil, is engrossed to my market. And once more I warn you to keep your anchorage clear of mine; for if you fall foul of me, by this light, you shall go to the bottom. What! make a prize of my little frigate, while I am upon the cruize for you. You're a pretty fellow, indeed! [*Exit.*

Enter Boniface.

Aim. Well, well, I won't. Landlord, have you any tolerable company in the house? I don't care for dining alone.

Bon. Yes, sir, there's a captain below, as the saying is, that arrived about an hour ago.

Aim. Gentlemen of his coat are welcome every where; will you make a compliment for me, and tell him I should be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. Who shall I tell him, sir, would—

Aim. Ha! that stroke was well thrown in. (*Aside.*) I'm only a traveller, like himself, and would be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. I obey your commands, as the saying is. [*Exit.*

Enter Archer.

Arch. 'Sdeath! I had forgot; what title would you give yourself?

Aim. My brother's, to be sure; he would never give me any thing else, so I'll make bold with his honour this bout. You know the rest of your cue.

Arch. Ay, ay. [*Exit.*

Enter Gibbet.

Gib. Sir, I'm yours.

Aim. 'Tis more than I deserve, sir, for I don't know you.

Gib. I don't wonder at that, sir, for you never saw me before, I hope. (*Aside.*)

Aim. And pray, sir, how came I by the honour of seeing you now?

Gib. Sir, I scorn to intrude upon any gentleman; but my landlord—

Aim. O, sir, I ask your pardon; you're the captain he told me of.

Gib. At your service, sir.

Aim. What regiment, may I be so bold?

Gib. A marching regiment, sir; an old corps.

Aim. Very old, if your coat be regimental. (*Aside.*) You have served abroad, sir?

Gib. Yes, sir, in the plantations; 'twas my lot to be sent into the worst service; I would have quitted it, indeed, but a man of honour, you know—Besides, 'twas for the good of my country that I should be abroad. Any thing for the good of one's country: I'm a Roman for that.

Aim. One of the first, I'll lay my life. (*Aside.*) You found the West Indies very hot, sir?

Gib. Ay, sir, too hot for me.

Aim. And where's your company now, Captain?

Gib. They an't come yet.

Aim. Why, d'ye expect them here?

Gib. They'll be here to-night, sir.

Aim. Which way do they march?

Gib. Across the country. The devil's in't if I ha'n't said enough to encourage him to declare; but I'm afraid he's not right; I must tack about. (*Aside.*)

Aim. Is your company to quarter in Lichfield?

Gib. In this house, sir.

Aim. What! all?

Gib. My company is but thin, ha, ha, ha! we are but three, ha, ha, ha!

Aim. You're merry, sir.

Gib. Ay, sir, you must excuse me. Sir, I understand the world, especially the art of travelling. I don't care for answering questions directly upon the road; for I generally ride with a charge about me.

Aim. Three or four, I believe. (*Aside.*)

Gib. I am credibly informed, that there are highwaymen upon this quarter; not, sir, that I could suspect a gentleman of your figure—But truly, sir, I have got such a way of evasion upon the road, that I don't care for speaking truth to any man.

Aim. Your caution may be necessary. Then, I presume, you're no captain?

Gib. Not I, sir; captain is a good travelling name, and so I take it; it stops a great many foolish inquiries, that are generally made about gentlemen that travel: it gives a man an air of something, and makes the drawers obedient. And thus far I am a captain, and no further.

Aim. And pray, sir, what is your true profession?

Gib. O, sir, you must excuse me; upon my word, I don't think it safe to tell you.

Aim. Ha, ha! upon my word, I commend you,

Enter Boniface.

Well, Mr. Boniface, what's the news?

Bon. There's another gentleman below, as the saying is, that, hearing you were but two, would be glad to make the third man, if you'd give him leave.

Aim. What is he?

Bon. A clergyman, as the saying is.

Aim. A clergyman! Is he really a clergyman? or is it only a travelling name, as my friend, the Captain has it?

Bon. Oh, sir, he's a priest, and chaplain to the French officers in town.

Aim. Is he a Frenchman?

Bon. Yes, sir, born at Brussels.

Gib. A Frenchman, and a priest! I won't be seen in his company, sir; I have a value for my reputation, sir.

Aim. Nay, but, Captain, since we are by ourselves—Can he speak English, landlord?

Bon. Very well, sir: you may know him, as the saying is, to be a foreigner, by his accent, and that's all.

Aim. Then he has been in England before?

Bon. Never, sir; but he's master of languages, as the saying is; he talks Latin; it does one good to hear him talk Latin.

Aim. Then you understand Latin, Mr. Boniface?

Bon. Not I, sir, as the saying is; but he talks it so very fast, that I'm sure it must be good.

Aim. Pray desire him to walk up.

Bon. Here he is, as the saying is.

Enter Foigard.

Foig. Save you gentlemen, bote.

Aim. A Frenchman! sir, your most humble servant.

Foig. Och, dear joy, I am your most faithful shervant, and yours alsho.

Gib. Doctor, you talk very good English, but you have a mighty twang of the foreigner.

Foig. My English is very well for the words; but we foreigners, you know, cannot bring our tongues about the pronouncification so soon.

Aim. A foreigner! a downright teague, by this light! (*Aside.*) Were you born in France, Doctor?

Foig. I was educated in France, but I was borned in Brussels; I am a subject of the King of Spain, joy.

Gib. What King of Spain, sir? Speak.

Foig. Upon my soul, joy, I cannot tell you as yet.

Aim. Nay, Captain, that was too hard upon the Doctor; he's a stranger.

Foig. O, let him alone, dear joy; I'm of a nation that is not easily put out of countenance.

Aim. Come, gentlemen, I'll end the dispute. Here, landlord; is dinner ready?

Bon. Upon the table, as the saying is.

Aim. Gentlemen—pray—that door—

Foig. No, no, fait, the Captain must lead.

Aim. No, Doctor, the church is our guide.

Gib. Ay, ay, so it is. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*A Gallery in Lady Bountiful's House.*

Enter Archer *and* Scrub, *singing; Scrub with a tankard in his hand,* Gipsey *listening at a distance.*

Scrub. Tall, all, dall. Come, my dear boy, let's have that song once more.

Arch. No, no, we shall disturb the family; but will you be sure to keep the secret?

Scrub. Pho! upon my honour, as I'm a gentleman!

Arch. 'Tis enough. You must know, then, that my master is the Lord Viscount Aimwell; he fought a duel t'other day in London, wounded his man so dangerously, that he thinks fit to withdraw till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not; he never was in this part of England before, so he chose to retire to this place, that's all.

Gip. And that's enough for me. [*Exit.*

Scrub. And where were you when your master fought?

Arch. We never know of our masters' quarrels.

Scrub. No! if our masters in the country, here, receive a challenge, the first thing they do, is to tell their wives; the wives tell the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and, in half an hour, you shall have the whole country up in arms.

Arch. To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for. But if you should chance to talk, now, of this business,—

Scrub. Talk! ah, sir, had I not learned the knack of holding my tongue, I had never lived so long in a great family.

Arch. Ay, ay, to be sure; there are secrets in all families.

Scrub. Secrets, O lud! but—but I'll say no more. Come, sit down, we'll make an end of our tankard. Here—

Arch. With all my heart: who knows but you and I may come to be better acquainted, eh! Here's your ladies' health: you have three, I think; and, to be sure, there must be secrets among them.

Scrub. Secrets! Ah! friend, friend! I wish I had a friend.

Arch. Am I not your friend? Come, you and I will be sworn brothers.

Scrub. Shall we?

Arch. From this minute. Give me your hand. And now, brother Scrub.

Scrub. And now, brother Martin, I will tell you a secret that will make your hair stand an end. You must know, that I'm consumedly in love.

Arch. That's a terrible secret, that's the truth on't.

Scrub. That jade, Gipsey, that was with us just now in the cellar, is the arrantest whore that ever wore a petticoat, and I'm dying for love of her.

Arch. Ha, ha, ha! Are you in love with her person, or her virtue, brother Scrub?

Scrub. I should like virtue best, because it's more durable than beauty; for virtue holds good with some women, long and many days after they have lost it.

Arch. In the country, I grant ye, where no woman's virtue is lost, till a bastard be found.

Scrub. Ay, could I bring her to a bastard, I should have her all to myself; the mother of all this mischief is a priest.

Arch. A priest!

Scrub. Ay, a d— son of a w— of Babylon, that came over hither to say grace to the French officers, and eat up our provisions. There's not a day goes over his head without a dinner or supper in this house.

Arch. How came he so familiar in the family?

Scrub. Because he speaks English as if he had lived here all his life, and tells lies as if he had been a traveller from his cradle.

Arch. And this priest, I'm afraid, has converted the affections of your Gipsey.

Scrub. Converted! ay, and perverted, my dear friend, for I'm afraid he has made her a w— and a papist. But this is not all; there's the French count and Mrs. Sullen, they're in confederacy, and for some private end of their own, too, to be sure.

Arch. A very hopeful family, yours, brother Scrub; I suppose the maiden lady has her lover, too?

Scrub. Not that I know: she's the best on them, that's the truth on't; but they take care to prevent

my curiosity, by giving me so much business, that I am a perfect slave. What d'ye think is my place in this family?

Arch. Butler, I suppose.

Scrub. Ah, lord help your silly head! I'll tell you. Of a Monday I drive the coach; of a Tuesday I drive the plough; on Wednesday I follow the hounds; on Thursday I dun the tenants; on Friday I go to market; on Saturday I draw warrants; and on Sunday I draw beer.

Arch. Ha, ha, ha! if variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough on't, my dear brother. But what ladies are those?

Scrub. Ours, ours; that upon the right hand is Mrs. Sullen, and the other is Mrs. Dorinda. Don't mind 'em; sit still, man.

Enter MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA.

Mrs. S. I have heard my brother talk of my Lord Aimwell, but they say that his brother is the finer gentleman.

Dor. That's impossible, sister.

Mrs. S. He's vastly rich, and very close, they say.

Dor. No matter for that; if I can creep into his heart, I'll open his breast, I warrant him: I have heard say, that people may be guessed at by the behaviour of their servants; I could wish that we might talk to that fellow.

Mrs. S. So do I, for I think he's a very pretty fellow. Come this way; I'll throw out a lure for him presently. (*They walk to the opposite side. Mrs. Sullen drops her fan; Archer runs, takes it up, and gives it to her.*)

Arch. Corn, wine, and oil, indeed! But I think the wife has the greatest plenty of flesh and blood; she should be my choice. Ay, ay, say you so? Madam, your ladyship's fan.

Mrs. S. O, sir, I thank you. What a handsome bow the fellow made!

Dor. Bow! Why, I have known several footmen come down from London, set up here for dancing masters, and carry off the best fortunes in the country.

Arch. (*Aside.*) That project for aught I know, had been better than ours. Brother Scrub, why don't you introduce me.

Scrub. Ladies, this is the strange gentleman's servant, that you saw at church to-day; I understand he came from London, and so I invited him to the cellar, that he might shew me the newest flourish in whetting my knives.

Dor. And I hope you have made much of him.

Arch. O, yes, madam; but the strength of your ladyship's liquor is a little too potent for the constitution of your humble servant.

Mrs. S. What! then you don't usually drink ale?

Arch. No, madam; my constant drink is tea, or a little wine and water: 'tis prescribed me by the physicians, for a remedy against the spleen.

Scrub. O la! O la! a footman have the spleen!

Mrs. S. I thought that distemper had been only proper to people of quality.

Arch. Madam, like all other fashions, it wears out, and so descends to their servants; though, in a great many of us, I believe, it proceeds from some melancholy particles in the blood, occasioned by the stagnation of wages.

Dor. How affectedly the fellow talks! How long, pray, have you served your present master?

Arch. Not long; my life has been mostly spent in the service of the ladies.

Mrs. S. And pray, which service do you like best?

Arch. Madam, the ladies pay best; the honour of serving them is sufficient wages; there is a charm in their looks that delivers a pleasure with their commands, and gives our duty the wings of inclination.

Mrs. S. That flight was above the pitch of a livery: and, sir, would you not be satisfied to serve a lady again?

Arch. As groom of the chamber, madam, but not as a footman.

Mrs. S. I suppose you served as footman before.

Arch. For that reason I would not serve in that post again; for my memory is too weak for the load of messages that the ladies lay upon their servants in London. My Lady Howd'ye, the last mistress I served, called me up one morning, and told me, "Martin, go to my Lady Allnight, with my humble service; tell her I was to wait on her ladyship yesterday, and left word with Mrs. Rebecca, that the preliminaries of the affair she knows of are stopt, till we know the concurrence of the person I know of, for which there are circumstances wanting, which we shall accommodate at the old place; but that, in the mean time, there is a person about her ladyship, that, from several hints and surmises, was accessary at a certain time to the disappointments that naturally attend things, that to her knowledge are of more importance—"

Mrs. S. & Dor. Ha, ha! where are you going, sir?

Arch. Why, I hav'n't half done.

Scrub. I should not remember a quarter of it.

Arch. The whole how d'ye was about half an hour long; I happened to misplace two syllables, and was turned off, and rendered incapable—

Dor. The pleasantest fellow, sister, I ever saw. But, friend, if your master be married, I presume you still serve a lady?

Arch. No, madam, I take care never to come into a married family; the commands of the master and mistress are always so contrary, that 'tis impossible to please both.

Dor. There's a main point gained. My lord is not married, I find.

Mrs. S. But I wonder, friend, that in so many good services, you had not a better provision made for you.

Arch. I don't know how, madam: I am very well as I am.

Mrs. S. Something for a pair of gloves. (*Offering him money.*)

Arch. I humbly beg leave to be excused. My master, madam, pays me; nor dare I take money from any other hand, without injuring his honour, and disobeying his commands.

Scrub. Brother Martin! brother Martin!

Arch. What do you say, brother Scrub?

Scrub. Take the money, and give it to me.

[*Exeunt Archer and Scrub.*

Dor. This is surprising. Did you ever see so pretty a well-bred fellow?

Mrs. S. The devil take him for wearing that livery.

Dor. I fancy, sister, he may be some gentleman, a friend of my lord's, that his lordship has pitched upon for his courage, fidelity, and discretion, to bear him company in this dress, and who, ten to one, was his second.

Mrs. S. It is so, it must be so, it shall be so—For I like him.

Dor. What! better than the count?

Mrs. S. The count happened to be the most agreeable man in the place; and so I chose him to serve me in my design upon my husband.

Dor. But now, sister, for an interview with this lord, and this gentleman; but how shall we bring that about?

Mrs. S. Patience! you country ladies give no quarter. Look ye, Dorinda, if my lord Aimwell loves you or deserves you, he'll find a way to see you, and there we must leave it. My business

comes now upon the tapis. Have you prepared your brother?

Dor. Yes, yes.

Mrs. S. And how did he relish it?

Dor. He said little, mumbled something to himself, and promised to be guided by me. But here he comes.

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. What singing was that I heard just now?

Mrs. S. The singing in your head, my dear; you complained of it all day.

Sul. You're impertinent.

Mrs. S. I was ever so, since I became one flesh with you.

Sul. One flesh: rather two carcasses joined unnaturally together.

Mrs. S. Or rather a living soul coupled to a dead body.

Dor. So, this is fine encouragement for me!

Sul. Yes, my wife shews you what you must do.

Mrs. S. And my husband shews you what you must suffer.

Sul. 'Sdeath! why can't you be silent?

Mrs. S. 'Sdeath! why can't you talk?

Sul. Do you talk to any purpose?

Mrs. S. Do you think to any purpose?

Sul. Sister, hark'ye. (*Whispers.*) I shan't be home till it be late. [*Exit.*

Mrs. S. What did he whisper to ye?

Dor. That he would go round the back way, come into the closet, and listen as I directed him. But let me beg once more, dear sister, to drop this project: for as I told you before, instead of awaking him to kindness, you may provoke him to rage; and then who knows how far his brutality may carry him.

Mrs. S. I'm provided to receive him, I warrant you. Away. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter DORINDA, MRS. SULLEN *and* LADY BOUNTIFUL.

Dor. News, dear sister, news!

Enter ARCHER, *running.*

Arch. Where, where is my lady Bountiful? Pray which is the old lady of you three!

Lady B. I am.

Arch. O, madam, the fame of your ladyship's charity, goodness, benevolence, skill, and ability, have drawn me hither to implore your ladyship's help in behalf of my unfortunate master, who is this moment breathing his last.

Lady B. Your master, where is he?

Arch. At your gate, madam: drawn by the appearance of your handsome house to view it nearer, and walking up the avenue, he was taken ill of a sudden, with a sort of I know not what: but down he fell, and there he lies.

Lady B. Here, Scrub, Gipsey, all run, get my easy chair down stairs, put the gentleman in it, and bring him in quickly, quickly.

Arch. Heaven will reward your ladyship for this charitable act.

Lady B. Is your master used to these fits?

Arch. O yes, madam, frequently. I have known him to have five or six of a night.

Lady B. What's his name?

Arch. Lord, madam, he's dying: a minute's care or neglect, may save or destroy his life.

Lady B. Ah, poor gentleman! Come, friend, shew me the way; I'll see him brought in myself. [*Exit, with Archer.*

Dor. O, sister, my heart flutters about strangely; I can hardly forbear from running to his assistance.

Mrs. S. And I'll lay my life he deserves your assistance more than he wants it. Did not I tell you that my lord would find a way to come at you? Love's his distemper, and you must be the physician; put on all your charms, summon all your fire into your eyes, plant the whole artillery of your looks against his breast, and down with them.

Dor. O, Sister, I'm but a young gunner; I shall be afraid to shoot, for fear the piece should recoil, and hurt myself.

Mrs. S. Never fear; you shall see me shoot before you, if you will.

Dor. No, no, dear sister, you have missed your mark so unfortunately, that I shan't care for being instructed by you.

Enter AIMWELL, *in a Chair, carried by* ARCHER *and* SCRUB; LADY BOUNTIFUL *and* GIPSEY; *Aimwell counterfeiting a swoon.*

Lady B. Here, here, let's see the hartshorn drops. Gipsey, a glass of fair water; his fit's very strong. Bless me, how his hands are clench'd!

Arch. For shame, ladies, what d'ye do? Why don't you help us? Pray, madam, (*to Dorinda,*) take his hand, and open it, if you can, whilst I hold his head. (*Dorinda takes his hand.*)

Dor. Poor gentleman! Oh, he has got my hand within his, and squeezes it unmercifully.

Lady B. 'Tis the violence of his convulsion, child.

Arch. O, madam, he's perfectly possessed in these cases. He'll bite you if you don't have a care.

Dor. Oh, my hand! my hand!

Lady B. What's the matter with the foolish girl? I have got his hand open, you see, with a great deal of ease.

Arch. Ay, but madam, your daughter's hand is somewhat warmer than your ladyship's, and the heat of it draws the force of the spirits that way.

Mrs. S. I find, friend, you're very learned in these sort of fits.

Arch. 'Tis no wonder, madam, for I'm often troubled with them myself; I find myself extremely ill at this minute. (*Looking hard at Mrs. Sullen.*)

Mrs. S. (*Aside.*) I fancy I could find a way to cure you.

Lady B. His fit holds him very long.

Arch. Longer than usual, madam.

Lady B. Where did his illness take him first, pray?

Arch. To-day at church, madam.

Lady B. In what manner was he taken?

Arch. Very strangely, my lady. He was of a sudden touched with something in his eyes, which at the first he only felt, but could not tell whether 'twas pain or pleasure.

Lady B. Wind, nothing but wind. Your master should never go without a bottle to smell to. Oh! he recovers; the lavender water; some feathers to burn under his nose; Hungary water to rub his temples. O, he comes to himself. Hem a little, sir, hem. Gipsey bring the cordial water. (*Aimwell seems to awake in amaze.*)

Aim. Where am I? (*Rising.*)
Sure I have passed the gulph of silent death,
And now am landed on the Elysian shore—
Behold the goddess of those happy plains,
Fair Proserpine, let me adore thy bright divinity.
(*Kneels to Dorinda, kisses her hand.*)

Mrs. S. So, so, so, I knew where the fit would end.

Aim. Eurydice, perhaps.
How could thy Orpheus keep his word

And not look back on thee?
No treasure but thyself could sure have brib'd him,
To look one minute off thee.

Lady B. Delirious, poor gentleman!

Arch. Very delirious, madam, very delirious!

Scrub. Very dolorous, indeed.

Aim. Martin's voice, I think.

Arch. Yes, my, lord. How does your lordship?

Lady B. Lord! did you mind that, girls!

Aim. Where am I?

Scrub. In our house, sir.

Arch. In very good hands, sir. You were taken just now with one of your old fits, under the trees, just by this good lady's house; her ladyship had you taken in, and has miraculously brought you to yourself, as you see.

Aim. I am so confounded with shame, madam, that I can now only beg pardon, and refer my acknowledgments for your ladyship's care, till an opportunity offers of making some amends. I dare to be no longer troublesome. Martin, give two guineas to the servants.

Dor. Sir, you may catch cold by going so soon into the air; you don't look, sir, as if you were perfectly recovered. (*Archer talks to Lady Bountiful in dumb shew.*)

Aim. That I shall never be, madam; my present illness is so rooted, that I must expect to carry it to my grave.

Lady B. Come, sir, your servant has been telling me that you are apt to relapse, if you go into the air. Your good manners shan't get the better of ours. You shall sit down again, sir. Come, sir, we don't mind ceremonies in the country. Here, Gipsey, bring the cordial water. You shall taste my water; 'tis a cordial, I can assure you, and of my own making. (*Aimwell drinks.*) Drink it off, sir.—How d'ye find yourself now, sir?

Aim. Somewhat better, though very faint still.

Lady B. Ay, ay, people are always faint after those fits. Come, girls, you shall shew the gentleman the house: 'tis but an old family building, sir; but you had better walk about and cool by degrees, than venture immediately into the air: but you'll find some tolerable pictures. Dorinda, shew the gentleman the way. I must go to the poor woman below. [*Exit.*

Dor. This way, sir.

Aim. Ladies, shall I beg leave for my servant to wait upon you, for he understands pictures very well.

Mrs. S. Sir, we understand originals as well as he does pictures, so he may come along.

[*Exeunt all but Scrub.*

Enter Foigard.

Foig. Save you, master Scrub.

Scrub. Sir, I won't be saved your way. I hate a priest, I abhor the French, and I defy the devil. Sir, I am a bold Briton, and will spill the last drop of my blood to keep out popery and slavery.

Foig. Master Scrub, you would put me down in politics, and so I would be speaking with Mrs. Gipsey.

Scrub. Good Mr. Priest, you can't speak with her; she's sick, sir; she's gone abroad, sir; she's dead two months ago, sir.

Enter Gipsey.

Gip. How now, impudence! How dare you talk so saucily to the doctor? Pray, sir, don't take it ill: for the common people of England are not so civil to strangers, as—

Scrub. You lie, you lie, 'tis the common people, such as you are, that are civilest to strangers.

Gip. Sirrah, I have a good mind to—Get you out, I say.

Scrub. I won't.

Gip. You won't, saucebox? Pray, doctor, what is the captain's name that came to your inn last night?

Scrub. The captain! ah, the devil! there she hampers me again:—the captain has me on one side, and the priest on the t'other: so, between the gown and sword, I have a fine time on't.

Gip. What, sirrah, won't you march?

Scrub. No, my dear, I won't march, but I'll walk; and I'll make bold to listen a little too. (*Goes behind and listens.*)

Gip. Indeed, doctor, the count has been barbarously treated, that's the truth on't.

Foig. Ah, Mrs. Gipsey, upon my soul, now gra, his complainings would mollify the marrow in your bones, and move the bowels of your commiseration; he weeps, and he dances, and he fistles, and he swears, and he laughs, and he stamps, and he sings; in conclusion, joy, he's afflicted, à la Françoise, and a stranger would not know whider to cry or laugh with him.

Gip. What would you have me do, doctor?

Foig. Nothing, joy, but only hide the count in Mrs. Sullen's closet, when it is dark.

Gip. Nothing! Is that nothing? It would be both a sin and a shame, doctor.

Foig. Here are twenty louidores, joy, for your shame; and I will give you an absolution for the shin.

Gip. But won't that money look like a bribe?

Foig. Dat is according as you shall tauk it. If you receive the money beforehand, 'twill be logice, a bribe; but if you stay till afterwards, 'twill be only gratification.

Gip. Well, doctor, I'll take it logice. But what must I do with my conscience, sir?

Foig. Leave that with me, joy; I am your priest, gra; and your conscience is under my hands.

Gip. But should I put the count into the closet—

Foig. Vell, is dere any shin for a man's being in a closhet? One may goe to prayers in a closhet.

Gip. But if the lady should go into her chamber and go to bed?

Foig. Vell, and is dere any shin in going to bed, joy?

Gip. Ay, but if the parties should meet, doctor?

Foig. Vell den, the parties must be responsible. Do you be gone after putting the count into the closhet and leave the shins wid themselves. I will come with the count to instruct you in your chamber.

Gip. Well, doctor, your religion is so pure—Methinks I'm so easy after an absolution, and can sin afresh with so much security, that I'm resolved to die a martyr to it; here's the key of the garden door; come in the back way, when 'tis late; I'll be ready to receive you; but don't so much as whisper, only take hold of my hand; I'll lead you, and do you lead the count and follow me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Scrub.

Scrub. What witchcraft now have these two imps of the devil been a hatching here? There's twenty louidores; I heard that, and saw the purse; but I must give room to my betters. [*Exit Scrub.*

Scene II.—*A Picture Gallery.*

Enter Aimwell *and* Dorinda, *with* Mrs. Sullen *and* Archer.

Mrs. S. Pray, sir, (*To Arch.*) how d'ye like that piece?

Arch. O, 'tis Leda. You find, madam, how Jupiter came disguised to make love.

Mrs. S. Pray, sir, what head is that in the corner there?

Arch. O, madam, 'tis poor Ovid in his exile.

Mrs. S. What was he banished for?

Arch. His ambitious love, madam. (*Bowing.*) His misfortune touches me.

Mrs. S. Was he successful in his amours?

Arch. There he has left us in the dark. He was too much a gentleman to tell.

Mrs. S. If he were secret, I pity him.

Arch. If he were successful, I envy him.

Mrs. S. How d'ye like that Venus over the chimney?

Arch. Venus! I protest, madam, I took it for your picture; but now I look again, 'tis not handsome enough.

Mrs. S. Oh! what a charm is flattery! If you would see my picture, there it is, over the cabinet. How d'ye like it?

Arch. I must admire anything, madam, that has the least resemblance to you. But, methinks, madam—(*He looks at the picture and Mrs. Sullen, three or four times by turns.*) Pray, madam, who drew it?

Mrs. S. A famous hand, sir.

[*Aimwell and Dorinda go off.*

Arch. A famous hand, madam! Your eyes indeed are featured here; but where's the sparkling moisture, and shining fluid, in which they swim? the picture, indeed, has your dimples; but where's the swarm of killing Cupids that should ambush there? the lips too are figured out; but where's the carnation dew, the pouting ripeness, that tempts the taste in the original.

Mrs. S. Had it been my lot to have been matched with such a man! (*Aside.*)

Arch. Your neck too, presumptuous man! what! paint heaven! Apropos, madam, in the very next picture is Salmoneus, that was struck dead with lightning, for offering to imitate Jove's thunder; I hope you served the painter so, madam.

Mrs. S. Had my eyes the power of thunder, they should employ their lightning better.

Arch. There's the finest bed in that room, madam; I suppose 'tis your ladyship's bed chamber.

Mrs. S. And what then, sir?

Arch. I think that the quilt is the richest that I ever saw. I can't at this distance, madam, distinguish the figures of the embroidery. Will you give me leave, madam?

Mrs. S. The devil take his impudence. Sure, if I gave him an opportunity, he durst not be rude. I have a great mind to try. (*Going.—returns.*) 'Sdeath! what am I doing? And alone too! Sister, sister! [*Exit.*

Arch. I'll follow her close.

For where a Frenchman dost attempt to storm,
A Brition sure may well the work perform.

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. Martin! brother Martin!

Arch. O brother, Scrub, I beg your pardon, I was not a going; here's a guinea my master ordered you.

Scrub. A guinea! hi, hi, hi, a guinea! by this light, it is a guinea; but I suppose you expect twenty shillings in change?

Arch. Not at all; I have another for Gipsey.

Scrub. A guinea for her! Fire and faggot for the witch. Sir, give me that guinea; and I'll discover a plot.

Arch. A plot!

Scrub. Ay, sir, a plot, a horrid plot! First it must be a plot, because there's a woman in't; secondly, it must be a plot, because there's a priest in't; thirdly, it must be a plot, because there's French gold in't; and fourthly, it must be a plot, because I don't know what to make on't.

Arch. Nor any body else, I'm afraid, brother Scrub.

Scrub. Truly I'm afraid so too; for where there's a priest and a woman, there's always a mystery and a riddle. This I know, that there has been the doctor with a temptation in one hand, and an absolution in the other, and Gipsey has sold herself to the devil; I saw the price paid down; my eyes shall take their oath on't.

Arch. And is all this bustle about Gipsey?

Scrub. That's not all; I could hear but a word here and there; but I remember they mentioned a count, a closet, a back door, and a key.

Arch. The count? did you hear nothing of Mrs. Sullen?

Scrub. I did hear some word that sounded that way; but whether it was Sullen or Dorinda, I could not distinguish.

Arch. You have told this matter to nobody brother?

Scrub. Told! no, sir, I thank you for that; I'm resolved never to speak one word, pro nor con, till we have a peace.

Arch. You're in the right, brother Scrub. Here's a treaty a foot between the count and the lady. The priest and the chamber maid are plenipotentiaries. It shall go hard, but I'll find a way to be included in the treaty. Where's the doctor, now?

Scrub. He and Gipsey are this moment devouring my lady's marmalade in the closet.

Aim. (*From without.*) Martin, Martin!

Arch. I come, sir, I come.

Scrub. But you forgot the other guinea, brother Martin.

Arch. Here, I give it with all my heart.

Scrub. And I take it with all my soul. [*Exit Archer.*] Ecod, I'll spoil your plotting, Mrs. Gipsey; and if you should set the captain upon me, these two guineas will buy me off. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Room.*

Enter MRS. SULLEN. *Dorinda.*

Mrs. S. Well, sister.

Dor. And well, sister.

Mrs. S. What's become of my lord?

Dor. What's become of his servant?

Mrs. S. Servant! He's a prettier fellow, and a finer gentleman, by fifty degrees, than his master.

Dor. O my conscience, I fancy you could beg that fellow at the gallows' foot.

Mrs. S. O my conscience I could, provided I could put a friend of yours in his room.

Dor. You desired me, sister, to leave you, when you transgressed the bounds of honour.

Mrs. S. Thou dear, censorious, country girl, what dost mean? You can't think of the man without the lover, I find.

Dor. I don't find any thing unnatural in that thought.

Mrs. S. How a little love and conversation improve a woman. Why, child, you begin to live. You never spoke before.

Dor. Because I was never spoken to before; my lord has told me that I have more wit and beauty than any of my sex; and truly I begin to think the man is sincere.

Mrs. S. You're in the right, Dorinda; pride is the life of a woman, and flattery is our daily bread. But I'll lay you a guinea that I had finer things said to me than you had.

Dor. Done. What did your fellow say to you?

Mrs. S. My fellow took the picture of Venus for mine.

Dor. But my lover took me for Venus herself.

Mrs. S. Common cant! Had my spark called me a Venus directly, I should have believed him to be a footman in good earnest.

Dor. But my lover was upon his knees to me.

Mrs. S. And mine was upon his tiptoes to me.

Dor. Mine vowed to die for me.

Mrs. S. Mine swore to die with me.

Dor. Mine kiss'd my hand ten thousand times.

Mrs. S. Mine has all that pleasnre to come.

Dor. Mine spoke the softest moving things.

Mrs. S. Mine had his moving things too.

Dor. Mine offered marriage.

Mrs. S. O lard! D'ye call that a moving thing.

Dor. The sharpest arrow in his qniver, my dear sister. Why, my twenty thousand pounds may lie brooding here these seven years, and hatch nothing at last but some ill-natured clown like yours: whereas, if I marry my lord Aimwell, there will be title, place, and precedence; the park, the play, and the drawing-room; splendour, equipage, noise, and flambeaux. Hey, my lady Aimwell's servants there. Lights, lights, to the stairs, my lady Aimwell's coach, put forward, stand by; make room for her ladyship. Are not these things moving? What, melancholy, of a sudden!

Mrs. S. Happy, happy, sister! Your angel has been watchful for your happiness, whilst mine has slept regardless of his charge. Long smiling years of circling joys for you; but not one hour for me! (*Weeps.*)

Dor. Come, my dear, we'll talk on something else.

Mrs. S. O, Dorinda, I own myself a woman, full of my sex, a gentle, generous soul, easy and yielding to soft desires; a spacious heart, where love and all his train might lodge; and must the fair apartment of my breast be made a stable for a brute to lie in?

Dor. Meaning your husband, I suppose.

Mrs. S. Husband! No, even husband is too soft a name for him. But, come, I expect my brother here to-night or to-morrow; he was abroad when my father married me; perhaps he'll find a way to make me easy.

Dor. Will you promise not to make yourself easy in the mean time with my lord's friend?

Mrs. S. You mistake me, sister. It happens with us as among the men, the greatest talkers are the greatest cowards: and there's a reason for it; those spirits evaporate in prattle, which might do more mischief if they took another course.—Though to confess the truth, I do love that fellow; and if I met him drest as he should be, and I undrest as I should be,—lookye, sister, I have no supernatural gifts; I can't swear I could resist the temptation, though I can safely promise to avoid it; and that's as much as the best of us can do. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.—*The Inn.*

Enter Aimwell *and* Archer, *laughing.*

Arch. And the awkward kindness of the good motherly old gentlewoman—

Aim. And the coming easiness of the young one. 'Sdeath, 'tis a pity to deceive her.

Arch. Nay, if you adhere to those principles, stop where you are.

Aim. I can't stop, for I love her to distraction.

Arch. 'Sdeath, if you love her a hair's breadth beyond discretion, you must go no further.

Aim. Well, well, any thing to deliver us from sauntering away our idle evenings at White's, Tom's, or Will's. But now—

Arch. Ay, now is the time to prevent all this. Strike while the iron is hot. This priest is the luckiest part of our adventure; he shall marry you, and pimp for me.

Aim. But I should not like a woman that can be so fond of a Frenchman.

Arch. Alas, sir, necessity has no law; the lady may be in distress. But if the plot lies as I suspect, I must put on the gentleman. But here comes the doctor. I shall be ready. [*Exit.*

Enter Foigard.

Foig. Save you, noble friend.

Aim. O sir, your servant. Pray, doctor, may I crave your name?

Foig. Fat naame is upon me? My naame is Foigard, joy.

Aim. Foigard! a very good name for a clergyman. Pray, doctor Foigard, were you ever in Ireland?

Foig. Ireland! no joy. Fat sort of a plaace is dat saam Ireland? Dey say, de people are catched dere when dey are young.

Aim. And some of them here, when they are old; as for example (*Takes Foigard by the shoulder.*) Sir, I arrest you as a traitor against the government; you're a subject of England, and this morning shewed me a commission, by which you served as a chaplain in the French army. This is death by our law, and your reverence must hang for it.

Foig. Upon my shoul, noble friend, dis is strange news you tell me; fader Foigard a subject of England! the son of a burgomaster at Brussels, a subject of England! Ubooboo—

Aim. The son of a bogtrotter in Ireland! Sir, your tongue will condemn you before any bench in the kingdom.

Foig. And is my tongue all my evidensh, joy?

Aim. That's enough.

Foig. No, no, joy, for I will never speak English no more.

Aim. Sir, I have other evidence. Here, Martin, you know this fellow.

Enter Archer.

Arch. (*In a Brogue.*) Saave you, my dear, Cussen, how does your health?

Foig. Ah! upon my shoul, dere is my countryman, and his brogue will hang mine. (*Aside.*) Mynhere, Ick wet neal watt hey zacht, ick Universtoen ewe neet, sacramant.

Aim. Altering your language wont do, sir; this fellow knows your person, and will swear to your face.

Foig. Faash! Fey, is dere de brogue upon my faash too?

Arch. Upon my salvation dere ish, joy. But, cussen Mackshane, vill you not put a remembrance upon me?

Foig. Mackshane! by St. Paatrick, dat is my naame shure enough. (*Aside.*)

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have it.

Foig. The devil hang you, joy. By fat acquaintance are you my cussen?

Arch. O, de devil hang yourself, joy; you know we were little boys togeder upon de school, and your foster-moder's son was marry'd upon my nurse's shister, joy, and so we are Irish cussens.

Foig. De devil take de relationship! Vell, joy, and fat school was it?

Arch. I think it was—Ay, 'twas Tipperary.

Foig. Now upon my shoul, joy, it was Kilkenny.

Aim. That's enough for us: Self confession. Come, sir, we must deliver you into the hands of the next magistrate.

Arch. He sends you to gaol, you're tried next assizes, and away you go swinging into purgatory.

Foig. And is it so wid you, cussen?

Arch. It vill be so wid you, cussen, if you don't immediately confess the secret between you and Mrs. Gipsey. Lookye, sir, the gallows, or the secret, take your choice.

Foig. The gallows! Upon my soul, I hate that shame gallows, for it ish a dishease dat is fatal to our family. Vell, den, there is nothing, gentlemen, but Mrs. Sullen would speak wid de count in her chamber at midnight, and dere is no harm, joy, for I am to conduct the count to de plaash myself.

Arch. As I guess'd. Have you communicated the matter to the count?

Foig. I have not sheen him since.

Arch. Right again; why then, doctor, you shall conduct me to the lady instead of the count.

Foig. Fat, my cussen to the lady! Upon my shoul, gra, dat's too much upon the brogue.

Arch. Come, come, doctor, consider we have got a rope about your neck, and if you offer to squeak, we'll stop your windpipe, most certainly; we shall have another job for you in a day or two, I hope.

Aim. Here's company coming this way; let's into my chamber, and there concert our affairs further.

Arch. Come, my dear cussen, come along.

Foig. Arra, the devil take our relationship.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter BONIFACE, HOUNSLOW, BAGSHOT, *and* GIBBET.

Gib. Well, gentlemen, 'tis a fine night for our enterprise.

Houn. Dark as hell.

Bag. And blows like the devil; our landlord here has shewn us the window where we must break in, and tells us the plate stands in the wainscot cupboard in the parlour.

Bon. Ay, ay, Mr. Bagshot, as the saying is, knives and forks, cups and cans, tumblers and tankards. There's one tankard, as the saying is, that's near upon as big as me; it was a present to the squire from his godmother, and smells of nutmeg and toast like an East India Ship.

Houn. Then you say we must divide at the stair head.

Bon. Yes, Mr. Hounslow, as the saying is. At one end of the gallery lies my lady Bountiful and her daughter; and at the other, Mrs. Sullen. As for the squire—

Gib. He's safe enough, I have fairly entered him, and he's more than half-seas over already. But such a parcel of scoundrels are got about him there, that 'egad I was ashamed to be seen in their company.

Bon. 'Tis now twelve as the saying is—Gentlemen, you must set out at one.

Gib. Hounslow, do you and Bagshot see our arms fix'd, and I'll come to you presently.

Houn. and Bag. We will. [*Exeunt.*

Gib. Well, my dear Bonny, you assure me that Scrub is a coward.

Bon. A chicken, as the saying is—you'll have no creature to deal with but the ladies.

Gib. And I can assure you, friend, there's a great deal of address and good manners in robbing a lady; I am the most a gentleman that way that ever travelled the road. But my dear Bonny, this prize will be a galleon, a Vigo business; I warrant you, we shall bring off three or four thousand pounds.

Bon. In plate, jewels, and money, as the saying is, you may.

Gib. Why then, Tyburn, I defy thee; I get up to town, sell off my horse and arms, buy myself some pretty employment in the law, and be as snug and as honest as ever a long gown of them all.

Bon. And what think you then of my daughter Cherry for a wife?

Gib. Lookye, my dear Bonny, Cherry is the goddess I adore, as the song goes; but it is a maxim, that man and wife should never have it in their power to hang one another; for if they should, the Lord have mercy upon them both! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Inn.*

(*Knocking without.*) *Enter* BONIFACE.

Bon. Coming, coming—A coach and six foaming horses at this time of night! Some great man, as the saying is, for he scorns to travel with other people.

Enter SIR CHARLES FREEMAN.

Sir C. What, fellow! a public house, and abed when other people sleep?

Bon. Sir, I an't abed, as the saying is.

Sir C. I see that, as the saying is. Is Mr. Sullen's family abed, thinkye?

Bon. All but the Squire himself, sir, as the saying is; he's in the house.

Sir C. What company has he?

Bon. Why, sir, there's the constable, Mr. Gage the exciseman, the hunchback'd barber, and two or three other gentlemen.

Sir C. I find my sister's letters gave me the true picture of her spouse.

Enter SULLEN, *drunk.*

Bon. Sir, here's the Squire.

Sul. The puppies left me asleep—sir.

Sir C. Well, sir.

Sul. Sir, I am an unfortunate man; I have three thousand pounds a-year, and can't get a man to drink a cup of ale with me.

Sir C. That's very hard.

Sul. Ay, sir, and unless you have pity upon me, and smoke one pipe with me, I must even go home to my wife, and I had rather go to the devil by half.

Sir C. But I presume, sir, you won't see your wife to-night, she'll be gone to bed. You don't use to lie with your wife in that pickle?

Sul. What! not lie with my wife! Why, sir, do you take me for an atheist or a rake?

Sir C. If you hate her, sir, I think you had better lie from her.

Sul. I think so, too, friend; but I am a justice of peace, and must do nothing against the law.

Sir C. Law! as I take it, Mr. Justice, nobody observes law for law's sake, only for the good of those for whom it was made.

Sul. But if the law orders me to send you to gaol, you must lie there, my friend.

Sir C. Not unless I commit a crime to deserve it.

Sul. A crime? Oons, an't I married?

Sir C. Nay, sir, if you call marriage a crime, you must disown it for a law.

Sul. Eh! I must be acquainted with you, sir; but, sir, I should be very glad to know the truth of this matter.

Sir C. Truth sir, is a profound sea, and few there be that wade deep enough to find the bottom on't. Besides, sir, I'm afraid the line of your understanding may'nt be long enough.

Sul. Lookye, sir, I have nothing to say to your sea of truth; but if a good parcel of land can entitle a man to a little truth, I have as much as any he in the country.

Bon. I never heard your worship, as the saying is, talk so much before.

Sul. Because I never met with a man that I liked before.

Bon. Pray, sir, as the saying is, let me ask you one question: Are not man and wife one flesh?

Sir C. You and your wife, Mr. Guts, may be one flesh, because you are nothing else; but rational creatures have minds that must be united.

Sul. Minds!

Sir C. Ay, minds, sir. Don't you think that the mind takes place of the body?

Sul. In some people.

Sir C. Then the interest of the master must be consulted before that of the servant.

Sul. Sir, you shall dine with me to-morrow; Oons, I always thought that we were naturally one.

Sir C. Sir, I know that my two hands are naturally one, because they love one another, kiss one another, help one another in all actions of life; but I could not say so much if they were always at cuffs.

Sul. Then 'tis plain that we are two.

Sir C. Why don't you part with her, sir?

Sul. Will you take her, sir?

Sir C. With all my heart.

Sul. You shall have her to-morrow morning, and a venison pasty into the bargain.

Sir C. You'll let me have her fortune too?

Sul. Fortune! why, sir, I have no quarrel to her fortune, I hate only the woman, sir, and none but the woman shall go.

Sir C. But her fortune, sir—

Sul. Can you play at whist, sir?

Sir C. No, truly, sir.

Sul. Nor at all-fours?

Sir C. Neither.

Sul. Oons! where was this man bred? (*Aside.*) Burn me, sir, I can't go home, 'tis but two o'clock.

Sir C. For half an hour, sir, if you please; but you must consider 'tis late.

Sul. Late! that's the reason I can't go to bed. Come, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Cherry, *who runs across the stage, and knocks at Aimwell's chamber-door. Enter* Aimwell *in his night-cap and gown.*

Aim. What's the matter? You tremble, child; you're frighted.

Cher. No wonder, sir; but in short, sir, this very minute a gang of rogues are gone to rob my lady Bountiful's house.

Aim. How!

Cher. I dogged them to the very door, and left them breaking in.

Aim. Have you alarmed anybody else with the news?

Cher. No, no, sir; I wanted to have discovered the whole plot, and twenty other things, to your man Martin; but I have searched the whole house, and can't find him; where is he?

Aim. No matter, child; will you guide me immediately to the house?

Cher. With all my heart, sir; my Lady Bountiful is my godmother, and I love Miss Dorinda so well—

Aim. Dorinda! the name inspires me, the glory and the danger shall be all my own. Come, my life, let me but get my sword. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Bed-chamber in Lady Bountiful's house.*

Enter Mrs. Sullen *and* Dorinda, *undressed.*

Dor. 'Tis very late, sister; no news of your spouse, yet?

Mrs. S. No, I'm condemned to be alone till towards four, and then, perhaps, I may be executed with his company.

Dor. Well, my dear, I'll leave you to your rest, you'll go directly to bed, I suppose?

Mrs. S. I don't know what to do; heigho!

Dor. That's a desiring sigh, sister.

Mrs. S. This is a languishing hour, sister.

Dor. And might prove a critical minute, if the pretty fellow were here.

Mrs. S. Here! my hated husband abroad, and my lovely fellow at my feet—O, 'gad, sister.

Dor. Thoughts are free, sister, and them I allow you. So, my dear sister, good night. [*Exit.*

Mrs. S. A good rest to my dear Dorinda;—thoughts are free! are they so? Why then, suppose him here, dressed like a youthful, gay, and burning bridegroom, (*Archer steals out of the closet.*) with tongue enchanting, eyes bewitching, knees imploring. (*Turns a little on one side and sees Archer in the posture she describes.*) Ah! (*Shrieks.*) Have my thoughts raised a spirit? What are you, sir, a man or a devil?

Arch. A man, a man, madam. (*Rising.*)

Mrs. S. How shall I be sure of it?

Arch. Madam, I'll give you demonstration this minute. (*Takes her hand.*)

Mrs. S. What, sir! do you intend to be rude?

Arch. Yes, madam, if you please.

Mrs. S. In the name of wonder, whence came ye?

Arch. From the skies, madam; I'm a Jupiter in love, and you shall be my Alcmena.

Mrs. S. How came you in?

Arch. I flew in at the window, madam; your cousin Cupid lent me his wings, and your sister Venus opened the casement.

Mrs. S. I'm struck dumb with wonder.

Arch. How beautiful she looks! the teeming jolly spring smiles in her blooming face, and when she was conceived, her mother smelt to roses, look'd on lilies—

Lilies unfold their white, their fragrant charms,
When the warm sun thus darts into their arms.

(*Runs to her.*)

Mrs. S. Ah! (*Shrieks.*)

Arch. Oons, madam, what do you mean? You'll raise the house.

Mrs. S. Sir, I'll wake the dead before I'll bear this. I'm glad on't. Your impudence has cured me.

Arch. If this be impudence, (*kneels.*) I leave to your partial self; no panting pilgrim, after a tedious painful voyage, ever bowed before his saint with more devotion.

Mrs. S. Rise, thou prostrate engineer: not all thy undermining skill shall reach my heart. Still to convince you that I'm more than woman, I can speak my frailty, confess my weakness even for you; but—

Arch. For me! (*Going to lay hold of her.*)

Mrs. S. Hold, sir, build not upon that, for my most mortal hatred follows, if you disobey what I command you now; leave me this minute. If he denies, I'm lost. (*Aside.*)

Arch. Then you'll promise—

Mrs. S. Anything another time.

Arch. When shall I come?

Mrs. S. To-morrow, when you will.

Arch. Your lips must seal the promise.

Mrs. S. Psha!

Arch. They must, they must. (*Kisses her.*) Raptures and paradise! And why not now, my angel? The time, the place, silence, and secrecy, all conspire; and now the conscious stars have pre-ordained this moment for my happiness. (*Takes her in his arms.*)

Mrs. S. You will not, cannot, sure—

Arch. If the sun rides fast, and disappoints not mortals of to-morrow's dawn, this night shall crown my joy.

Mrs. S. You shall kill me first.

Arch. I'll die with you. (*Carrying her off.*)

Mrs. S. Thieves, thieves! murder!

Enter Scrub, *in his breeches and one shoe.*

Scrub. Thieves, thieves, murder, popery! (*Archer Draws.—Scrub kneels.*) O pray, sir, spare all I have, and take my life.

Mrs. S. (*Holding Archer's hand.*) What does the fellow mean!

Scrub. O madam, down upon your knees, your marrow-bones, he's one of them.

Mrs. S. Of whom?

Scrub. One of the rogues—I beg your pardon, one of the honest gentlemen that just now are broke into the house.

Arch. How?

Mrs. S. I hope you did not come to rob me?

Arch. Indeed I did, madam; but I would have taken nothing but what you might very well have spared; but your crying thieves has wak'd this dreaming fool; and so he takes them for granted.

Scrub. Granted! 'tis granted, sir; take all we have.

Mrs. S. The fellow looks as if he were broke out of Bedlam.

Scrub. Oons, madam, they're broke into the house with fire and sword; I saw them, heard them; they'll be here this minute.

Arch. What, thieves?

Scrub. Under favour sir, I think so.

Mrs. S. What shall we do, sir?

Arch. Madam, I wish your ladyship a good night.

Mrs. S. Will you leave me?

Arch. Leave you! Lord, madam, did you not command me to be gone just now, upon pain of your mortal hatred.

Mrs. S. Nay, but pray, sir—(*Takes hold of him.*)

Arch. Ha, ha, ha! now comes my turn to be ravished. You see, madam, you must use men one way or another; but take this by the way, good madam, that none but a fool will give you the benefit of his courage, unless you'll take his love along with it. How are they arm'd, friend?

Scrub. With sword and pistol, sir.

Arch. Hush! I see a dark lantern coming through the gallery. Madam, be assured I will protect you, or lose my life.

Mrs. S. Your life! No, sir, they can rob me of nothing that I value half so much; therefore, now, sir, let me entreat you to be gone.

Arch. No, madam, I'll consult my own safety for the sake of yours; I'll work by stratagem. Have you courage enough to stand the appearance of them?

Mrs. S. Yes, yes, since I have escaped your hands I can face anything.

Arch. Come hither, brother Scrub: don't you know me?

Scrub. Eh! my dear brother Martin.

Arch. This way—Here—

[*Exit Archer, carrying off Scrub.*

Enter GIBBET, *with a dark lantern in one hand, and a pistol in the other.*

Gib. Ay, ay, this is the chamber, and the lady alone.

Mrs. S. Who are you, sir? What would you have? D'ye come to rob me?

Gib. Rob you! Alack-a-day, madam, I'm only a younger brother, madam; and so, madam, if you make a noise, I'll shoot you through the head. But don't be afraid, madam. (*Laying his lantern and pistol upon the table.*) These rings, madam; don't be concerned, madam; I have a profound respect for you, madam; your keys, madam; don't be frighted, madam; I'm the most of a gentleman. (*Searching her pockets.*) This necklace, madam; I never was rude to any lady. I have a veneration —for this necklace—(*Here Archer having come round and seized the pistol, takes Gibbet by the collar, trips up his heels, and claps the pistol to his breast.*)

Arch. Hold, profane villain, and take the reward of thy sacrilege.

Gib. O, pray sir, don't kill me; I an't prepared.

Arch. How many are there of them, Scrub?

Scrub. Five-and-forty, sir.

Arch. Then I must kill the villain, to have him out of the way.

Gib. Hold! hold, sir! we are but three, upon my honour.

Arch. Scrub, will you undertake to secure him?

Scrub. Not I, sir; kill him, kill him.

Arch. Run to Gipsey's chamber, there you'll find the doctor; bring him hither presently. [*Exit Scrub, running.*] Come, rogue, if you have a short prayer, say it.

Gib. Sir, I have no prayer at all; the government has provided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions.

Mrs. S. Pray, sir, don't kill him; you fright me as much as him.

Arch. The dog shall die, madam, for being the occasion of my disappointment—Sirrah, this moment is your last.

Gib. Sir, I'll give you two hundred pounds to spare my life.

Arch. Have you no more, rascal?

Gib. Yes, sir, I can command four hundred; but I must reserve two of 'em to save my life at the sessions.

Enter SCRUB *and* FOIGARD.

Arch. Here, doctor; I suppose Scrub and you, between you, may manage him. Lay hold of him. (*Foigard lays hold of Gibbet.*)

Gib. What! turn'd over to the priest already. Lookye, doctor, you come before your time; I an't condemn'd yet, I thank ye.

Foig. Come, my dear joy, I vil secure your body and your shoul too; I vil make you a good catholic, and give you an absolution.

Gib. Absolution! Can you procure me a pardon, doctor?

Foig. No, joy.

Gib. Then you and your absolution may go to the devil.

Arch. Convey him into the cellar; there bind him; take the pistol, and if he offers to resist, shoot him through the head, and come back to us with all the speed you can.

Scrub. Ay, ay; come, doctor, do you hold him fast, and I'll guard him. [*Exeunt.*

Mrs. S. But how came the doctor,—

Arch. In short, madam—(*Shrieking without.*)—'Sdeath! the rogues are at work with the other ladies; I'm vexed I parted with the pistol; but I must fly to their assistance. Will you stay here, madam, or venture yourself with me?

Mrs. S. Oh, dear sir, with you.

[*Takes him by the arm, and exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Apartment in the house.*

Enter HOUNSLOW, *dragging in* LADY BOUNTIFUL; *and* BAGSHOT *hauling in* DORINDA.

Houn. Come, come, your jewels, mistress.

Bag. Your keys, your keys, old gentlewoman.

Enter AIMWELL.

Aim. Turn this way, villains! I durst engage an army in such a cause. (*He engages them both.*)

Enter ARCHER *and* MRS. SULLEN.

Arch. Hold, hold! my lord; every man his bird, pray. (*They engage, man to man; Hounslow and Bagshot are thrown down and disarmed.*)

Arch. Shall we kill the rogues?

Aim. No, no, we'll bind them.

Arch. Ay, ay; here, madam, lend me your garter. (*To Mrs. Sullen.*)

Mrs. S. The devil's in this fellow; he fights, loves, and banters, all in a breath. Here's a cord that the rogues brought with them I suppose.

Arch. Right, right, the rogue's destiny, a rope to hang himself. Come, my lord; this is but a scandalous sort of an office. (*Binding Houn. and Bag. together.*) If our adventures should end in this sort of hangman's-work; but I hope there is something in prospect that—

Enter Scrub.

Well, Scrub, have you secured your tartar?

Scrub. Yes, sir, I left the priest and him disputing about religion.

Aim. And pray carry these gentlemen to reap the benefit of the controversy. (*Delivers the prisoners to Scrub, who leads them out.*)

Mrs. S. Pray, sister, how came my lord here?

Dor. And pray, how came the gentleman here?

Mrs. S. I'll tell you the greatest piece of villany. (*They talk apart.*)

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have been more successful in your adventures than the housebreakers.

Arch. No matter for my adventure, yours is the principal; press her this minute to marry you; now, while she's hurried between the palpitation of her fear and the joy of her deliverance; now, while the tide of her spirits is at high flood, throw yourself at her feet; speak some romantic nonsense or other; confound her senses, bear down her reason, and away with her; the priest is now in the cellar, and dares not refuse to do the work.

Aim. But how shall I get off without being observed?

Arch. You a lover! and not find a way to get off.—Let me see.

Aim. You bleed, Archer.

Arch. 'Sdeath, I'm glad on't; this wound will do the business. I'll amuse the old lady and Mrs. Sullen about dressing my wound, while you carry off Dorinda.

Enter Lady Bountiful.

Lady B. Gentlemen, could we understand how you would be gratified for the services—

Arch. Come, come, my lady, this is no time for compliments; I'm wounded, madam.

Lady B. and Mrs. S. How, wounded!

Dor. I hope, sir, you have received no hurt? (*To Aimwell.*)

Aim. None but what you may cure. (*Makes love in dumb shew.*)

Lady B. Let me see your arm, sir; I must have some powder sugar to stop the blood.—O me!—an ugly gash; upon my word, sir, you must go to bed.

Arch. Ay, my lady, a bed would do very well. Madam, (*to Mrs. Sullen*) will you do me the favour to conduct me to a chamber.

Lady B. Do, do, daughter; while I get the lint, and the probe, and the plaister ready.

[*Runs out; Aim. carries off Dor.*

Arch. Come, madam, why don't you obey your mother's commands?

Mrs. S. How can you, after what is past, have the confidence to ask me?

Arch. And if you go to that, how can you, after what is past, have the confidence to deny me? Was not this blood shed in your defence, and my life exposed for your protection? Lookye, madam, I'm none of your romantic fools that fight giants and monsters for nothing; my valour is downright Swiss; I am a soldier of fortune, and must be paid.

Mrs. S. 'Tis ungenerous in you, sir, to upbraid me with your services.

Arch. 'Tis ungenerous in you, madam, not to reward them.

Mrs. S. How! at the expense of honour?

Arch. Honour! can honour consist with ingratitude. If you would deal like a woman of honour, do like a man of honour. D'ye think I would deny you in such a case?

Enter Gipsey.

Gip. Madam, my lady has ordered me to tell you that your brother is below, at the gate.

Mrs. S. My brother! heaven be praised! Sir, he shall thank you for your services; he has it in his power.

Arch. Who is your brother, madam?

Mrs. S. Sir Charles Freeman. You'll excuse me, I must go and receive him. [*Exit.*

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman! 'Sdeath and hell! my old acquaintance. Now, unless Aimwell has made good use of his time, all our fair machine goes souse into the sea like the Eddystone. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*A Gallery in the same house.*

Enter Aimwell *and* Dorinda.

Dor. Well, well, my lord, you have conquered. Your late generous action will, I hope, plead for my easy yielding; though I must own your lordship had a friend in the fort before.

Aim. The sweets of Hybla dwell upon her tongue,—here, doctor.

Enter Foigard, *with a book.*

Foig. Are you prepared, bote?

Dor. I'm ready; but first, my lord, one word—I have a frightful example of a hasty marriage in my own family; when I reflect upon't, it shocks me. Pray, my lord, consider a little.

Aim. Consider! Do you doubt my honour or my love?

Dor. Neither. I do believe you equally just as brave; and were your whole sex drawn out for me to choose, I should not cast a look upon the multitude, if you were absent; but my lord, I'm a woman; colours, concealments may hide a thousand faults in me; therefore, know me better first. I hardly dare affirm I know myself in anything except my love.

Aim. Such goodness who could injure? I find myself unequal to the task of villain. She has gained my soul, and made it honest like her own—I cannot hurt her, (*Aside.*) Doctor, retire. [*Exit Foig.*] Madam, behold your lover and your proselyte, and judge of my passion by my conversion, I'm all a lie, nor dare I give a fiction to your arms; I'm all a counterfeit, except my passion.

Dor. Forbid it heaven! a counterfeit!

Aim. I am no lord, but a poor, needy man, come with a mean and scandalous design, to prey upon your fortune; but the beauties of your mind and person have so won me from myself, that, like a trusty servant, I prefer the interest of my mistress to my own.

Dor. Pray, sir, who are you?

Aim. Brother to the man whose title I usurped, but stranger to his honour or fortune.

Dor. Matchless honesty! Once I was proud, sir, of your wealth and title, but now am prouder that you want it. Now I can shew my regard was justly levelled, and had no aim but love. Doctor, come in.

Enter Foigard *and* Gipsey, *who whispers Dorinda.*

Your pardon, sir, we sha'n't want you now, sir. You must excuse me;—I'll wait on you presently. [*Exit.*

Foig. Upon my shoul, now dis is foolish. [*Exit.*

Aim. Gone! and bid the priest depart; it has an ominous look.

Enter Archer.

Arch. Courage, Tom! Shall I wish you joy?

Aim. No.

Arch. Oons! man, what have you been doing?

Aim. O, Archer, my honesty, I fear, has ruined me.

Arch. How?

Aim. I have discovered myself.

Arch. Discovered! and without my consent! What, have I embarked my small remains in the

same bottom with yours, and you dispose of all without my partnership?

Aim. O, Archer, I own my fault.

Arch. After conviction, 'tis then too late for pardon. You may remember, Mr. Aimwell, that you proposed this folly; as you begun, so end it. Henceforth, I'll hunt my fortune singly, so farewell.

Aim. Stay, my dear Archer, but a minute.

Arch. Stay! what to be despised, exposed, and laughed at! No, I would sooner change conditions with the worst of the rogues we just now bound, than bear one scornful smile from the proud knight that once I treated as my equal.

Aim. What knight?

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman, brother to the lady that I had almost—But no matter for that; 'tis a cursed night's work, and so I leave you to make the best on't.

Aim. Freemao!—one word, Archer. Still I have hopes; methought she received my confession with pleasure.

Arch. 'Sdeath, who doubts it?

Aim. She consented after to the match; and still I dare believe she will be just.

Arch. To herself, I warrant her, as you should have been.

Aim. By all my hopes, she comes, and smiling comes.

Enter Dorinda, *gaily.*

Dor. Come, my dear lord—I fly with impatience to your arms—The minutes of my absence were a tedious year. Where's the priest?

Enter Foigard.

Arch. Oons, a brave girl!

Dor. I suppose, my lord, this gentleman is privy to our affairs?

Arch. Yes, yes, madam, I'm to be your father.

Dor. Come, priest, do your office.

Arch. Make haste, make haste, couple them any way. (*Takes Aimwell's hand.*) Come, madam, I'm to give you—

Dor. My mind's altered; I won't.

Arch. Eh!—

Aim. I'm confounded.

Foig. Upon my shoul, and so is myshelf.

Arch. What's the matter now, madam?

Dor. Lookye, sir, one generous action deserves another; this gentleman's honour obliged him to hide nothing from me; my justice engages me to conceal nothing from him; in short, sir, you are the person that you thought you counterfeited; you are the true lord viscount Aimwell, and I wish your lordship joy. Now, priest, you may be gone; if my lord is now pleas'd with the match, let his lordship marry me in the face of the world.

Aim. Archer, what does she mean?

Dor. Here's a witness for my truth.

Enter Sir Charles, *and* Mrs. Sullen.

Sir C. My dear lord Aimwell, I wish you joy.

Aim. Of what?

Sir C. Of your honour and estate. Your brother died the day before I left London; and all your friends have writ after you to Brussels; among the rest, I did myself the honour.

Arch. Harkye, sir knight, don't you banter now?

Sir C. 'Tis truth, upon my honour.

Aim. Thanks to the pregnant stars that form'd this accident.

Arch. Thanks to the womb of time that brought it forth; away with it.

Aim. Thanks to my guardian angel that led me to the prize. (*Taking Dorinda's hand.*)

Arch. And double thanks to the noble Sir Charles Freeman. My lord, I wish you joy. My lady, I wish you joy. Egad, Sir Charles, you're the honestest fellow living; 'sdeath, I'm grown strangely airy upon this matter. My lord, how d'ye do? A word, my lord. Don't you remember something of a previous agreement, that entitles me to the moiety of this lady's fortune, which I think will amount to ten thousand pounds?

Aim. Not a penny, Archer. You would have cut my throat just now, because I would not deceive this lady.

Arch. Ay, and I'll cut your throat still, if you should deceive her now.

Aim. That's what I expect; and to end the dispute, the lady's fortune is twenty thousand pounds; we'll divide stakes; take the twenty thousand pounds, or the lady.

Dor. How! Is your lordship so indifferent?

Arch. No, no, no, madam, his lordship knows very well that I'll take the money; I leave you to his lordship, and so we're both provided for.

Enter Foigard.

Foig. Arrah fait, de people do say you be all robbed, joy.

Aim. The ladies have been in some danger, sir, as you saw.

Foig. Upon my shoul our inn be robbed too.

Aim. Our inn! by whom?

Foig. Upon my shalvation, our landlord has robbed himself, and run away vid de money.

Arch. Robbed himself?

Foig. Ay fait and me too of a hundred pounds.

Arch. Robbed you of a hundred pounds?

Foig. Yes, fait honey, that I did owe to him.

Aim. Our money's gone, Frank.

Arch. Rot the money, my wench is gone—*Scavez vous quelque chose de mademoiselle Cherry?*

Sir C. This good company meets opportunely in favour of a design I have in behalf of my unfortunate sister. I intend to part her from her husband; gentlemen, will you assist me?

Arch. Assist you! 'Sdeath, who would not?

Foig. Ay, upon my shoul, we'll all ashist.

Enter Sullen.

Sul. What's all this? They tell me, spouse, that you had like to have been robbed.

Mrs. S. Truly, spouse, I was pretty near it, had not these two gentlemen interposed.

Sul. How came these gentlemen here?

Mrs. S. That's his way of returning thanks, you must know.

Foig. Ay, but upon my conscience, de question be apropos for all dat.

Sir C. You promised last night, sir, that you would deliver your lady to me this morning.

Sul. Humph!

Arch. Humph! What do you mean by humph? Sir, you shall deliver her; in short, sir, we have saved you and your family; and if you are not civil, we'll unbind the rogues, join with them, and set fire to your house. What does the man mean? not part with his wife!

Foig. Arrah, not part wid your wife! Upon my shoul, de man dosh not understand common shivility.

Mrs. S. Hold, gentlemen, all things here must move by consent. Compulsion would spoil us. Let my dear and I talk the matter over, and you shall judge it between us.

Sul. Let me know first, who are to be our judges. Pray, sir, who are you?

Sir C. I am Sir Charles Freeman, come to take away your wife.

Sul. And you, good sir?

Aim. Thomas Viscount Aimwell, come to take away your sister.

Sul. And you, pray, sir?

Arch. Francis Archer, esq. come—

Sul. To take away my mother, I hope—Gentlemen you're heartily welcome. I never met with three more obliging people since I was born; and now, my dear, if you please you shall have the first word.

Arch. And the last for five pounds. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. S. Spouse.

Sul. Rib.

Mrs. S. How long have you been married?

Sul. By the almanack, fourteen months; but by my account, fourteen years.

Mrs. S. 'Tis thereabout by my reckoning.

Foig. Upon my conscience deir accounts vil agree.

Mrs. S. Pray, spouse, what did you marry for?

Sul. To get an heir to my estate.

Sir C. And have you succeeded?

Sul. No.

Arch. The condition fails on his side. Pray, madam, what did you marry for?

Mrs. S. To support the weakness of my sex by the strength of his, and to enjoy the pleasures of an agreeable society.

Sir. C. Are your expectations answered?

Mrs. S. No.

Foig. Arrah, honeys, a clear caase, a clear caase!

Sir C. What are the bars to your mutual contentment?

Mrs. S. In the first place I can't drink ale with him.

Sul. Nor can I drink tea with her.

Mrs. S. I can't hunt with you.

Sul. Nor can I dance with you.

Mrs. S. I hate cocking and racing.

Sul. I abhor ombre and picquet.

Mrs. S. Your silence is intolerable.

Sul. Your prating is worse.

Mrs. S. Is there on earth a thing we can agree in?

Sul. Yes—to part.

Mrs. S. With all my heart.

Sul. Your hand.

Mrs. S. Here.

Sul. These hands joined us, these shall part us. Away—

Mrs. S. East.

Sul. West.

Mrs. S. North.

Sul. South; as far as the poles asunder.

Foig. Amen! Upon my shoul, a very pretty sheremony.

Sir C. Now, Mr. Sullen, there wants only my sister's fortune to make us easy.

Sul. Sir Charles, you love your sister, and I love her fortune; every one to his fancy.

Arch. Then you won't refund?

Sul. Not a stiver.

Arch. What is her portion?

Sir C. Twenty thousand pounds, sir.

Arch. I'll pay it. My lord, I thank him, has enabled me. This night's adventure has proved strangely lucky to us all, for Captain Gibbet in his walk has made bold, Mr. Sullen, with your study and escritoir, and has taken out all the writings of your estate, all the articles of marriage with your lady, bills, bonds, leases, and receipts, to an infinite value; I took 'em from him, and will deliver them to Sir Charles. (*Gives him a parcel of papers and parchments.*)

Sul. How, my writings! My head aches consumedly. Well, gentlemen, you shall have her fortune, but I can't talk. If you have a mind, Sir Charles, to be merry and celebrate my sister's wedding, and my divorce, you may command my house; but my head aches consumedly.—Scrub, bring me a dram. [*Exit.*

Foig. And, Scrub, put a little drop on the top for me. [*Exit.*

Arch. 'Twould be hard to guess which of these parties are the better pleased, the couple joined, or the couple parted: the one rejoicing in hopes of an untasted happiness, and the other in their deliverance from an experienced misery.

Both happy in their several states we find;
These parted by consent, and those conjoin'd:
Consent, if mutual, saves the lawyer's fee;
Consent is law enough to set you free.

[*Exeunt.*

THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY MRS. COWLEY.



Act V. Scene 2

CHARACTERS.

SIR GEORGE TOUCHWOOD	VILLERS	MRS. RACKET
DORICOURT	COURTALL	LETITIA HARDY
HARDY	SILVERTONGUE	MISS OGLE
FLUTTER	MOUNTEBANK	KITTY WILLIS
SAVILLE	LADY FRANCES	LADY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Lincoln's Inn.*

Enter SAVILLE, *followed by a Servant.*

Sav. Lincoln's Inn! Well, but where to find him, now I am in Lincoln's Inn? Where did he say his master was?

Serv. He only said in Lincoln's Inn, sir.

Sav. That's pretty! And your wisdom never inquired at whose chambers?

Serv. Sir, you spoke to the servant yourself.

Sav. If I was too impatient to ask questions, you ought to have taken directions, blockhead!

Enter COURTALL, *singing.*

Ha, Courtall! Bid him keep the horses in motion, and then inquire at all the chambers round. [*Exit Servant.*] What the devil brings you to this part of the town? Have any of the long robes handsome wives, sisters, or chambermaids?

Court. Perhaps they have; but I came on a different errand; and had thy good fortune brought thee here half-an-hour sooner, I'd have given thee such a treat. Ha, ha, ha!

Sav. I'm sorry I missed it: what was it?

Court. I was informed a few days since, that my cousins Fallow were come to town, and desired earnestly to see me at their lodgings in Warwick-Court, Holborn. Away drove I, painting them all the way as so many Hebes. They came from the furthest part of Northumberland, had never been in town; and, in course, were made up of rusticity, innocence, and beauty.

Sav. Well?

Court. After waiting thirty minutes, during which there was a violent bustle, in bounced five sallow damsels,—four of them maypoles; the fifth, nature, by way of variety, had bent the Æsop style. But they all opened at once, like hounds on a fresh scent:—"Oh, cousin Courtall! How do you do, cousin Courtall? Lord! cousin, I am glad you are come! We want you to go with us to the Park, and the plays, and the opera, and Almack's, and all the fine places!" The devil, thought I, my dears, may attend you, for I am sure I won't. However, I heroically stayed an hour with them, and discovered the virgins were all come to town with the hope of leaving it wives: their heads full of knight-baronights, fops, and adventures.

Sav. Well, how did you get off?

Court. Oh! pleaded a million engagements. However, conscience twitched me; so I breakfasted with them this morning, and afterwards 'squired them to the gardens here, as the most private place in town; and then took a sorrowful leave, complaining of my hard, hard fortune, that obliged me to get off immediately for Dorsetshire. Ha, ha, ha!

Sav. I congratulate your escape! Courtall at Almack's, with five awkward country cousins! Ha, ha, ha! Why, your existence, as a man of gallantry, could never have survived it.

Court. Death and fire! had they come to town,

like the rustics of the last age, to see St. Paul's, the lions, and the wax-work—at their service; but the cousins of our days come up ladies; and, with the knowledge they glean from magazines and pocket-books, fine ladies; laugh at the bashfulness of their grandmothers, and boldly demand their *entrées* in the first circles.

Sav. Come give me some news. I have been at war with woodcooks and partridges these two months, and am a stranger to all that has passed out of their region.

Court. Oh! enough for three gazettes. The ladies are going to petition for a bill, that, during the war, every man may be allowed two wives.

Sav. 'Tis impossible they should succeed, for the majority of both houses know what it is to have one.

Court. But pr'ythee, Saville, how came you to town?

Sav. I came to meet my friend Doricourt; who, you know, is lately arrived from Rome.

Court. Arrived! Yes, faith, and has cut us all out. His carriage, his liveries, his dress, himself, are the rage of the day. His first appearance set the whole *ton* in a ferment; and his valet is besieged by levees of tailors, habit-makers, and other ministers of fashion, to gratify the impatience of their customers for becoming *à-la-mode de Doricourt*. Nay, the beautiful Lady Frolic, t'other night, with two sister countesses, insisted upon his waistcoat for muffs; and their snowy arms now bear it in triumph about town, to the heart-rending affliction of all our *beaux garçons*.

Sav. Indeed! Well, those little gallaotries will soon be over; he's on the point of marriage.

Court. Marriage! Doricourt on the point of marriage! 'Tis the happiest tidings you could have given, next to his being hanged. Who is the bride elect?

Sav. I never saw her; but 'tis Miss Hardy, the rich heiress. The match was made by the parents, and the courtship began on their nurses' knees. Master used to crow at miss, and miss used to chuckle at master.

Court. Oh! then by this time, they care no more for each other, than I do for my country cousins.

Sav. I don't know that; they have never met since thus high; and so, probably, have some regard for each other.

Court. Never met! Odd!

Sav. A whim of Mr. Hardy's; he thought his daughter's charms would make a more forcible impression, if her lover remained in ignorance of them till his return from the continent.

Enter SAVILLE'S *Servant.*

Serv. Mr. Doricourt, sir, has been at Counsellor Pleadwell's, and gone about five minutes. [*Exit.*

Sav. Five minutes! Zounds! I have been five minutes too late all my life-time! Good morrow, Courtall; I must pursue him. (*Going.*)

Court. Promise to dine with me to-day; I have some honest fellows. (*Going off.*)

Sav. Can't promise; perhaps I may. See there! there's a bevy of female Patagonians coming down upon us!

Court. By the lord! then, it must be my strapping cousins. I dare not look behind me. Run, man, run! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment at Doricourt's.*

Enter DORICOURT.

Doric. (*Speaking to a Servant behind.*) I shall be too late for St. James's; bid him come immediately.

Enter SAVILLE.

Doric. Most fortunate! My dear Saville, let the warmth of this embrace speak the pleasure of my heart.

Sav. Well, this is some comfort, after the scurvy reception I met with in your hall. I prepared my mind, as I came up stairs, for a *bon jour*, a grimace, and an adieu.

Doric. Why so?

Sav. Judging of the master from the rest of the family. What the devil is the meaning of that flock of foreigners below, with their parchment faces and snuffy whiskers? What! can't an Englishman stand behind your carriage, buckle your shoe, or brush your coat?

Doric. Stale, my dear Saville, stale! Englishmen make the best soldiers, citizens, artizans, and philosophers in the world; but the very worst footmen. I keep French fellows and Germans as the Romans kept slaves—because their own countrymen had minds too enlarged and haughty to descend with a grace to the duties of such a station.

Sav. A good excuse for a bad practice.

Doric. On my honour, experience will convince you of its truth. A Frenchman neither hears, sees, nor breathes, but as his master directs; and his whole system of conduct is comprised in one short word—obedience! An Englishman reasons, forms opinions, cogitates, and disputes; one is the mere creature of your will: the other, a being conscious of equal importance in the universal scale with yourself, and is therefore your judge, whilst he wears your livery, and decides on your actions with the freedom of a censor.

Sav. And this in defence of a custom I have heard you execrate, together with all the adventitious manners imported by our travelled gentry. Now to start a subject which must please you. When do you expect Miss Hardy?

Doric. Oh! the hour of expectation is past. She is arrived, and I this morning had the honour of an interview at Pleadwell's. The writings were ready; and, in obedience to the will of Mr. Hardy, we met to sign and seal.

Sav. Has the event answered? Did your heart leap or sink, when you beheld your mistress?

Doric. 'Faith, neither one nor t'other. She's a fine girl, as far as mere flesh and blood goes; but—

Sav. But what?

Doric. Why, she's only a fine girl; complexion, shape, and features; nothing more.

Sav. Is not that enough?

Doric. No! she should have spirit! fire! *l'air enjoüé!* that something, that nothing, which every body feels, and which nobody can describe, in the resistless charmers of Italy and France.

Sav. Thanks to the parsimony of my father, that kept me from travel! I would not have lost my relish for true, unaffected English beauty, to have been quarrelled for by all the belles of Versailles and Florence.

Doric. Pho! thou hast no taste. English beauty! 'tis insipidity; it wants the zest—it wants poignancy, Frank! Why, I have known a Frenchwoman, indebted to nature for no one thing but a pair of decent eyes, reckon in her suite as many counts, marquesses, and petits-maitres, as would satisfy three dozen of our first-rate toasts. I have known an Italian marquizina make ten conquests in stepping from her carriage; and carry her slaves from one city to another, whose real, intrinsic beauty would have yielded to half the little grisettes that pace your Mall on a Sunday.

Sav. And has Miss Hardy nothing of this?

Doric. If she has, she was pleased to keep it to herself. I was in the room half-an-hour before I could catch the colour of her eyes; and every attempt to draw her into conversation, occasioned so cruel an embarrassment, that I was reduced to the

necessity of news, French fleets, and Spanish captures with her father.

Sav. So, Miss Hardy, with only beauty, modesty, and merit, is doomed to the arms of a husband who will despise her.

Doric. You are unjust. Though she has not inspired me with violent passion, my honour secures her felicity.

Sav. Come, come, Doricourt; you know very well, that when the honour of a husband is *locum-tenens* for his heart, his wife must be as indifferent as himself, if she is not unhappy.

Doric. Pho! never moralize without spectacles. But as we are upon the tender subject, how did you bear Touchwood's carrying off Lady Frances?

Sav. You know I never looked up to her with hope; and Sir George is every way worthy of her.

Doric. A-la-mode Angloise; a philosopher, even in love.

Sav. Come, I detain you; you seem dressed at all points, and of course have an engagement.

Doric. To St. James's. I dine at Hardy's, and accompany them to the masquerade in the evening. But breakfast with me to-morrow, and we'll talk of our old companions; for I swear to you, Saville, the air of the continent has not effaced one youthful prejudice or attachment.

Sav. With an exception to the case of ladies and servants.

Doric. True! there I plead guilty. But I have never yet found any man, whom I could cordially take to my heart and call friend, who was not born beneath a British sky, and whose heart and manners were not truly English. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*An Apartment in Mr. Hardy's house.* Villers *seated on a sofa, reading.*

Enter Flutter.

Flut. Ha! Villers, have you seen Mrs. Rackett? Miss Hardy, I find, is out.

Vil. I have not seen her yet. I have made a voyage to Lapland since I came in. (*Flinging away the book.*) A lady at her toilette is as difficult to be moved as a Quaker. (*Yawning.*) What events have happened in the world since yesterday? have you heard?

Flut. Oh, yes! I stopped at Tattersall's as I came by, and there I found Lord James Jessamy, Sir William Wilding, and Mr.—But, now I think on't, you sha'n't know a syllable of the matter; for I have been informed you never believe above one half of what I say.

Vil. My dear fellow, somebody has imposed upon you most egregiously! Half! why, I never believe one-tenth part of what you say: that is according to the plain and literal expression; but, as I understand you, your intelligence is amusing.

Flut. That's very hard now, very hard. I never related a falsity in my life, unless I stumbled on it by mistake; and if it were otherwise, your dull, matter-of-fact people are infinitely obliged to those warm imaginations which soar into fiction to amuse you; for, positively, the common events of this little dirty world are not worth talking about, unless you embellish them. Ha! here comes Mrs. Racket. Adieu to weeds, I see! All life!

Enter Mrs. Racket.

Enter, madam, in all your charms! Villers has been abusing your toilette, for keeping you so long; but I think we are much obliged to it, and so are you.

Mrs. R. How so, pray? Good morning t'ye both. Here, here's a hand a piece for you. (*They kiss her hands.*)

Flut. How so? because it has given you so many beauties.

Mrs. R. Delightful compliment! What do you think of that, Villers?

Vil. That he and his compliments are alike—showy, but won't bear examining. So you brought Miss Hardy to town last night?

Mrs. R. Yes; I should have brought her before, but I had a fall from my horse, that confined me a week. I suppose in her heart she wished me hanged a dozen times an hour.

Flut. Why?

Mrs. R. Had she not an expecting lover in town all the time? She meets him this morning at the lawyer's. I hope she'll charm him; she's the sweetest girl in the world.

Vil. Vanity, like murder, will out. You have convinced me you think yourself more charming.

Mrs. R. How can that be?

Vil. No woman ever praises another, unless she thinks herself superior in the very perfections she allows.

Flut. Nor no man ever rails at the sex, unless he is conscious he deserves their hatred.

Mrs. R. Thank ye, Flutter; I'll owe ye a bouquet for that. I am going to visit the new married Lady Frances Touchwood. Who knows her husband?

Flut. Every body.

Mrs. R. Is there not something odd in the character?

Vil. Nothing, but that he is passionately fond of his wife; and so petulant in his love, that he opened the cage of a favourite bullfinch, and set it to catch butterflies, because she rewarded its song with her kisses.

Mrs. R. Intolerable monster! Such a brute deserves—

Vil. Nay, nay, nay, nay; this is your sex now. Give a woman but one stroke of character, off she goes like a ball from a racket; sees the whole man, marks him down for an angel or a devil, and so exhibits him to her acquaintance. This monster! this brute! is one of the worthiest fellows upon earth: sound sense and a liberal mind; but doats on his wife to such excess, that he quarrels with every thing she admires, and is jealous of her tippet and nosegay.

Mrs. R. Oh! less love for me, kind Cupid! I can see no difference between the torment of such an affection, and hatred.

Flut. Oh! pardon me, inconceivable difference, inconceivable; I see it as clearly as your bracelet. In the one case, the husband would say, as Mr. Snapper said t'other day, "Zounds! madam, do you suppose that my table, and my house, and my pictures"—*Apropos, des Bottes:* there was the divinest Plague of Athens sold yesterday at Langford's! The dead figures so natural; you would have sworn they had been alive. Lord Primrose bid five hundred; six, said Lady Carmine; a thousand, said Ingot the nabob. Down went the hammer. A rouleau for your bargain, said Sir Jeremy Jingle. And what answer do you think Ingot made him?

Mrs. R. Why, took the offer.

Flut. "Sir, I would oblige you, but I buy this picture to place in the nursery; the children have already got Whittington and his Cat! 'tis just this size, and they'll make good companions."

Mrs. R. Ha, ha, ha! Well, I protest that's just the way now; the nabobs and their wives outbid one at every sale, and the creatures have no more taste—

Vil. There again! You forget this story is told by Flutter, who always remembers every thing but the circumstances and the person he talks about. 'Twas Ingot who offered a rouleau for the bargain, and Sir Jeremy Jingle who made the reply.

Flut. Egad! I believe you are right. Well, the

story is as good one way as t'other, you know. Good morning. I am going to Mrs. Crotchet's.

Vil. I'll venture every figure in your tailor's-bill you make some blunder there.

Flut. (*Turning back.*) Done! my tailor's-bill has not been paid these two years; and I'll open my mouth with as much care as Mrs. Bridget Button, who wears cork plumpers in each cheek, and never hazards more than six words for fear of shewing them. [*Exit.*

Mrs. R. 'Tis a good-natured, insignificant creature! let in every where, and cared for no where. There's Miss Hardy returned from Lincoln's Inn: she seems rather chagrined.

Vil. Then I leave you to your communications.

Enter LETITIA, *followed by her Maid.*

Adieu! I am rejoiced to see you so well, madam; but I must tear myself away.

Let. Don't vanish in a moment.

Vil. Oh, inhuman! you are two of the most dangerous women in town. Staying here to be cannonaded by four such eyes, is equal to a rencontre with Paul Jones, or a midnight march to Omoa! They'll swallow the nonsense for the sake of the compliment. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Let. (*Gives her cloak to the maid.*) Order Du Quesne never more to come again; he shall positively dress my hair no more. [*Exit Maid.*] And this odious silk, how unbecoming it is! I was bewitched to choose it. (*Throwing herself on a chair, and looking in a pocket-glass; Mrs. Racket staring at her.*) Did you ever see such a fright as I am to day?

Mrs. R. Yes, I have seen you look much worse.

Let. How can you be so provoking? If I do not look this morning worse than ever I looked in my life, I am naturally a fright. You shall have it which way you will.

Mrs. R. Just as you please; but pray what is the meaning of all this?

Let. (*Rising.*) Men are all dissemblers, flatterers, deceivers! Have I not heard a thousand times of my hair, my eyes, my shape—all made for victory! and to day, when I bent my whole heart on one poor conquest, I have proved that all those imputed charms amount to nothing; for Doricourt saw them unmoved. A husband of fifteen months could not have examined me with more cutting indifference.

Mrs. R. Then you return it like a wife of fifteen months, and be as indifferent as he.

Let. Ay, there's the sting! the blooming boy that left his image in my young heart, is at four-and-twenty, improved in every grace that fixed him there. It is the same face that my memory and my dreams constantly painted to me; but its graces are finished, and every beauty heightened. How mortifying to feel myself at the same moment his slave, and an object of perfect indifference to him!

Mrs. R. How are you certain that was the case? Did you expect him to kneel down before the lawyer, his clerks, and your father, to make oath of your beauty?

Let. No; but he should have looked as if a sudden ray had pierced him; he should have been breathless, speechless! for, oh! Caroline, all this was I!

Mrs. R. I am sorry you was such a fool. Can you expect a man, who has courted and been courted by half the fine women in Europe, to feel like a girl from a boarding-school? He is the prettiest fellow you have seen, and in course, bewilders your imagination; but he has seen a million of pretty women, child, before he saw you; and his first feelings have been over long ago.

Let. Your raillery distresses me; but I will touch his heart, or never be his wife.

Mrs. R. Absurd and romantic! If you have no reason to believe his heart pre-engaged, be satisfied; if he is a man of honour, you'll have nothing to complain of.

Let. Nothing to complain of? Heavens! shall I marry the man I adore with such an expectation as that?

Mrs. R. And when you have fretted yourself pale, my dear, you'll have mended your expectation greatly.

Let. (*Pausing.*) Yet I have one hope. If there is any power whose peculiar care is faithful love, that power I invoke to aid me.

Enter MR. HARDY.

Har. Well, now, wasn't I right? Ay, Letty! ay, cousin Rackett! wasn't I right? I knew 'twould be so. He was all agog to see her before he went abroad; and if he had, he'd have thought no more of her face, may be, than his own.

Mrs. R. May be not half so much.

Har. Ay, may be so; but I see into things; exactly as I foresaw, to day he fell desperately in love with the wench. He, he, he!

Let. Indeed, sir! How did you perceive it?

Har. That's a pretty question! How do I perceive every thing? How did I foresee the fall of corn, and the rise of taxes? How did I know that if we quarrelled with America, Norway deals would be dearer? How did I foretell that a war would sink the funds? How did I forewarn parson Homily, that if he didn't some way or the other contrive to get more votes than Rubric, he'd lose the lectureship? How did I—But what the devil makes you so dull, Letitia? I thought to have found you popping about as brisk as the jacks of your harpsichord.

Let. Surely, sir, 'tis a very serious occasion.

Har. Pho, pho! girls should never be grave before marriage. How did you feel, cousin, beforehand, eh?

Mrs. R. Feel! why exceedingly full of cares.

Har. Did you?

Mrs. R. I could not sleep for thinking of my coach, my liveries, and my chairmen. The taste of clothes I should be presented in, distracted me for a week; and whether I should be married in white or lilac, gave me the most cruel anxiety.

Let. And is it possible that you felt no other care?

Har. And, pray, of what sort may your cares be, Mrs. Letitia? I begin to foresee now that you have taken a dislike to Doricourt.

Let. Indeed, sir, I have not.

Har. Then what's all this melancholy about? A'n't you a going to be married? and what's more, to a sensible man; and what's more to a young girl, to a handsome man? And what's all this melancholy for, I say?

Mrs. R. Why, because he is handsome and sensible, and because she's over head and ears in love with him; all which, it seems, your foreknowledge had not told you a word of.

Let. Fie, Caroline!

Har. Well, come, do you tell me what's the matter then. If you don't like him, hang the signing and sealing, he sh'an't have you; and yet I can't say that neither; for you know that estate, that cost his father and me upwards of fourscore thousand pounds, must go all to him if you won't have him: if he won't have you, indeed, 'twill be all your's. All that's clear; engrossed upon parchment, and the poor dear man set his hand to it whilst he was a-dying. "Ah!" said I, "I foresee you'll never live to see them come together; but their first son shall be christened Jeremiah, after you, that I promise you." But come, I say, what is the matter? Don't you like him?

Let. I fear, sir—if I must speak—I fear I was

less agreeable in Mr. Doricourt's eyes, than he appeared in mine.

Har. There you are mistaken; for I asked him, and he told me he liked you vastly. Don't you think he must have taken a fancy to her? (*To Mrs. R.*)

Mrs. R. Why, really I think so; as I was not by—

Let. My dear sir, I am convinced he has not; but if there is spirit or invention in woman, he shall.

Har. Right, girl! go to your toilette.

Let. It is not my toilette that can serve me: but a plan has struck me, if you will not oppose it, which flatters me with brilliant success.

Har. Oppose it! not I indeed! What is it?

Let. Why, sir—it may seem a little paradoxical—but as he does not like me enough, I want him to like me still less; and will, at our next interview, endeavour to heighten his indifference into dislike.

Har. Who the devil could have foreseen that?

Mrs. R. Heaven and earth! Letitia, are you serious?

Let. As serious as the most important business of my life demands.

Mrs. R. Why endeavour to make him dislike you?

Let. Because 'tis much easier to convert a sentiment into its opposite, than to transform indifference into tender passion.

Mrs. R. That may be good philosophy, but I'm afraid you'll find it a bad maxim.

Let. I have the strongest confidence in it. I am inspired with unusual spirits; and, on this hazard, willingly stake my chance for happiness. I am impatient to begin my measures. [*Exit.*

Har. Can you foresee the end of this, cousin?

Mrs. R. No, sir; nothing less than your penetration can do that, I am sure; and I can't stay now to consider it. I am going to call on the Ogles, and then to Lady Frances Touchwood's, and then to an auction, and then—I don't know where; but I shall be at home time enough to witness this extraordinary interview. Good b'ye. [*Exit.*

Har. Well, 'tis an odd thing; I can't understand it; but I foresee Letty will have her way, and so I sha'n't give myself the trouble to dispute it. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*Sir George Touchwood's House.*

Enter Doricourt *and* Sir George Touchwood.

Doric. Married! Ha, ha, ha! You, whom I heard in Paris say such things of the sex, are in London a married man.

Sir G. The sex is still what it has ever been since *la petite morale* banished substantial virtues; and rather than have given my name to one of your high-bred, fashionable dames, I'd have crossed the line in a fire-ship, and married a Japanese.

Doric. Yet you have married an English beauty; yea, and a beauty born in high life.

Sir G. True; but she has a simplicity of heart and manners, that would have become the fair Hebrew damsels toasted by the patriarchs.

Doric. Ha, ha! Why, thou art a downright matrimonial Quixote. My life on't, she becomes as mere a town lady in six months, as though she had been bred to the trade.

Sir G. Common—common—(*Contemptuously.*) No, sir; Lady Frances despises high life so much from the ideas I have given her, that she'll live in it like a salamander in fire.

Doric. I'll send thee off to St. Evrenx this night, drawn at full length, and coloured after nature.

Sir G. Tell him, then, to add to the ridicule, that Touchwood glories in the name of husband; that he has found in one Englishwoman more beauty than Frenchmen ever saw, and more goodness than Frenchwomen can conceive.

Doric. Well; enough of description. Introduce me to this phœnix; I came on purpose.

Sir G. Introduce!—oh! ay, to be sure! I believe Lady Frances is engaged just now; but another time. How handsome the dog looks today! (*Aside.*)

Doric. Another time! but I have no other time. 'Sdeath! this is the only hour I can command this fortnight.

Sir G. I am glad to hear it, with all my soul. (*Aside.*) So, then, you can't dine with us to-day? That's very unlucky.

Doric. Oh! yes, as to dinner; yes, I can, I believe, contrive to dine with you to-day.

Sir G. Psha! I didn't think on what I was saying; I meant supper. You can't sup with us?

Doric. Why, supper will be rather more convenient than dinner. But you are fortunate; if you had asked me any other night, I could not have come.

Sir G. To-night! 'Gad, now I recollect, we are particularly engaged to-night. But to-morrow night—

Doric. Why, lookye, Sir George, 'tis very plain your have no inclination to let me see your wife at all; so here I sit. (*Throws himself on the sofa.*) There's my hat, and here are my legs. Now I sha'n't stir till I have seen her; and I have no engagements; I'll breakfast, dine, and sup with you, every day this week.

Sir G. Was there ever such a provoking wretch! (*Aside.*) But to be plain with you, Doricourt, I and my house are at your service. But you are a d—d agreeable fellow; and the women, I observe, always simper when you appear. For these reasons, I had rather, when Lady Frances and I are together, that you should forget that we are acquainted, further than a nod, or a smile, or how d'ye.

Doric. Very well.

Sir G. It is not merely yourself, *in propriâ personâ*, that I object to; but if you are intimate here, you'll make my house still more the fashion than it is; and it is already so much so, that my doors are of no use to me. I married Lady Frances to engross her to myself; yet, such is the blessed freedom of modern manners, that in spite of me, her eyes, thoughts, and conversation, are continually divided amongst all the flirts and coxcombs of fashion.

Doric. To be sure, I confess that kind of freedom is carried rather too far. 'Tis hard one can't have a jewel in one's cabinet, but the whole town must be gratified with its lustre. He sha'n't preach me out of seeing his wife, though. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Well, now, that's reasonable. When you take time to reflect, Doricourt, I always observe you decide right; and, therefore, I hope—

Enter Gibson.

Gib. Sir, my lady desires—

Sir G. I am particularly engaged.

Doric. Oh, lord! that shall be no excuse in the world. (*Leaping from the sofa.*) Lead the way, John. I'll attend your lady.

[*Exit, following Gibson.*

Sir G. What devil possessed me to talk about her! Here, Doricourt! (*Running after him.*) Doricourt!

Enter Mrs. Racket *and* Miss Ogle, *followed by a Servant.*

Mrs. R. Acquaint your lady that Mrs. Racket and Miss Ogle are here. [*Exit Servant.*

Miss O. I shall hardly know Lady Frances, 'tis so long since I was in Shropshire.

Mrs. R. And I'll be sworn you never saw her

out of Shropshire. Her father kept her locked up with his caterpillars and shells; and loved her beyond anything but a blue butterfly and a petrified frog.

Miss O. Ha, ha, ha! Well, 'twas a cheap way of breeding her. You know he was very poor, though a lord; and very high spirited, though a virtuoso. In town, her pantheons, operas, and robes de cour, would have swallowed his sea-weeds, moths, and monsters, in six weeks. Sir George, I find, thinks his wife a most extraordinary creature: he has taught her to despise every thing like fashionable life, and boasts that example will have no effect on her.

Mrs. R. There's a great degree of impertinence in all that. I'll try to make her a fine lady, to humble him.

Miss O. That's just the thing I wish.

Enter Lady Frances Touchwood.

Lady F. I beg ten thousand pardons, my dear Mrs. Racket. Miss Ogle, I rejoice to see you: I should have come to you sooner, but I was detained in conversation by Mr. Doricourt.

Mrs. R. Pray make no apology; I am quite happy that we have your ladyship in town at last. What stay do you make?

Lady F. A short one. Sir George talks with regret of the scenes we have left; and, as the ceremony of presentation is over, will, I believe, soon return.

Miss O. Sure he can't be so cruel. Does your ladyship wish to return so soon?

Lady F. I have not the habit of consulting my own wishes; but I think, if they decide, we shall not return immediately. I have yet hardly formed an idea of London.

Mrs. R. I shall quarrel with your lord and master, if he dare to think of depriving us of you so soon. How do you dispose of yourself to-day?

Lady F. Sir George is going with me this morning to the mercer's, to choose a silk; and then—

Mrs. R. Choose a silk for you! Ha, ha, ha! Sir George chooses your laces, too, I hope; your gloves, and your pincushions!

Lady F. Madam!

Mrs. R. I am glad to see you blush, my dear Lady Frances. These are strange, homespun ways; if you do these things, pray keep them secret. Lord bless us! If the town should know your husband chooses your gowns!

Miss O. You are very young, my lady, and have been brought up in solitude. The maxims you learnt among wood-nymphs, in Shropshire, won't pass current here, I assure you.

Mrs. R. Why, my dear creature, you look quite frightened. Come, you shall go with us to an exhibition and an auction; afterwards, we'll take a turn in the Park, and then drive to Kensington; so we shall be at home by four to dress; and, in the evening, I'll attend you to Lady Brilliant's masquerade.

Lady F. I shall be very happy to be of your party, if Sir George has no engagements.

Mrs. R. What! do you stand so low in your own opinion, that you dare not trust yourself without Sir George? If you choose to play Darby and Joan, my dear, you should have staid in the country; 'tis an exhibition not calculated for London, I assure you.

Miss O. What! I suppose, my lady, you and Sir George will be seen pacing it comfortably round the canal, arm in arm, and then go lovingly into the same carriage; dine *tête-à-tête*, spend the evening at piquet, and so go soberly to bed at eleven! Such a snug plan may do for an attorney and his wife; but, for Lady Frances Touchwood, 'tis as unsuitable as linsey-wolsey, or a black bonnet at the opera!

Lady F. These are rather new doctrines to me: but, my dear Mrs. Rackett, you and Miss Ogle must judge of these things better than I can. As you observe, I am but young, and may have caught absurd opinions. Here is Sir George!

Re-enter Sir George Touchwood.

Sir G. 'Sdeath! another room full! (*Aside.*)

Lady F. My love, Mrs. Rackett, and Miss Ogle.

Mrs. R. 'Give you joy, Sir George. We came to rob you of Lady Frances for a few hours.

Sir G. A few hours!

Lady F. Oh! yes, I am going to an exhibition, and an auction, and the Park, and Kensington, and a thousand places! It is quite ridiculous, I find, for married people to be always together. We shall be laughed at.

Sir G. I am astonished! Mrs. Racket, what does the dear creature mean?

Mrs. R. Mean, Sir George? what she says, I imagine.

Miss O. Why, you know, sir, as Lady Frances had the misfortune to be bred entirely in the country, she cannot be supposed to be versed in fashionable life.

Sir G. No; heaven forbid she should! If she had, madam, she would never have been my wife.

Mrs. R. Are you serious?

Sir G. Perfectly so: I should never had the courage to have married a well-bred, fine lady.

Miss O. Pray, sir, what do you take a fine lady to be, that you express such fear of her? (*Sneeringly.*)

Sir G. A being easily described, madam, as she is seen everywhere but in her own house. She sleeps at home, but she lives all over the town. In her mind, every sentiment gives place to the lust of conquest, and the vanity of being particular. The feelings of wife and mother are lost in the whirl of dissipation. If she continues virtuous, 'tis by chance; and, if she preserves her husband from ruin, 'tis by her dexterity at the card-table. Such a woman I take to be a perfect, fine lady.

Mrs. R. And you I take to be a slanderous cynic of two-and-thirty. Twenty years hence, one might have forgiven such a libel. Now, sir, hear my definition of a fine lady: she is a creature for whom nature has done much, and education more; she has taste, elegance, spirit, understanding. In her manner she is free, in her morals nice. Her behaviour is undistinguishingly polite to her husband, and all mankind: her sentiments are for their hours of retirement. In a word, a fine lady is the life of conversation, the spirit of society, the joy of the public. Pleasure follows, wherever she appears; and the kindest wishes attend her slumbers. Make haste, then, my dear Lady Frances; commence fine lady, and force your husband to acknowledge the justness of my picture.

Lady F. I am sure 'tis a delightful one. How can you (*looks at him*) dislike it, Sir George? You painted fashionable life in colours so disgusting, that I thought I hated it; but, on a nearer view, it seems charming. I have hitherto lived in obscurity; 'tis time that I should be a woman of the world. I long to begin; my heart pants with expectation and delight.

Mrs. R. Come, then, let us begin directly. I am impatient to introduce you to that society, which you were born to ornament and charm.

Lady F. Adieu, my love! We shall meet again at dinner. (*Going.*)

Sir G. Sure, I am in a dream. Fanny!

Lady F. (*Returning.*) Sir George!

Sir G. Will you go without me?

Mrs. R. Will you go without me! Ha, ha, ha! what a pathetic address! Why, sure you would not always be seen side by side, like two beaus

upon a stalk. Are you afraid to trust Lady Frances with me, sir?

Sir G. Heaven and earth! with whom can a man trust his wife, in the present state of society? Formerly, there were distinctions of character amongst ye; every class of females had its particular description: grandmothers were pious, aunts discreet, old maids censorious: but now, aunts, grandmothers, girls, and maiden gentlewomen, are all the same creature; a wrinkle, more or less, is the sole difference between ye.

Mrs. R. That maiden gentlewomen have lost their censoriousness is surely not in your catalogue of grievances.

Sir G. Indeed it is; and ranked amongst the most serious grievances. Things went well, madam, when the tongues of three or four old virgins kept all the wives and daughters of a parish in awe. They were the dragons that guarded the Hesperian fruit; and I wonder they have not been obliged by act of parliament to resume their function.

Mrs. R. Ha, ha, ha! and pensioned, I suppose, for making strict inquiries into the lives and conversations of their neighbours.

Sir G. With all my heart; and empowered to oblige every woman to conform her conduct to her real situation. You, for instance, are a widow; your air should be sedate, your dress grave, your deportment matronly; and, in all things, an example to the young women growing up about you; instead of which, you are drest for conquest, think of nothing but ensnaring hearts; are a coquette, a wit, and a fine lady.

Mrs. R. Bear witness to what he says! A coquette, a wit, and a fine lady! Who would have expected an eulogy from such an ill-natured mortal? Valour to a soldier, wisdom to a judge, or glory to a prince, is not more than such a character to a woman.

Miss O. Sir George, I see, languishes for the charming society of a century and a half ago; when a grave 'squire, and a still graver dame, surrounded by a sober family, formed a stiff group, in a monldy, old house, in the corner of a park.

Mrs. R. Delightful serenity! Undisturbed by any noise but the cawing of rooks, and the quarterly rumbling of an old family coach on a state visit; with the happy intervention of a friendly call from the parish apothecary, or the curate's wife.

Sir G. And what is the society of which you boast? a mere chaos, in which all distinction of rank is lost in a ridiculous affectation of ease. In the same select party, you will often find the wife of a bishop and a sharper, of an earl and a fiddler. In short, 'tis one universal masquerade, all disguised in the same habits and manners.

Enter Gibson.

Gib. Mr. Flutter. [*Exit.*

Sir G. Here comes an illustration. Now I defy you to tell, from his appearance, whether Flutter is a privy-counsellor or a mercer, a lawyer or a grocer's 'prentice.

Enter Flutter.

Flut. Oh! just which you please, Sir George; so you don't make me a lord mayor. Ah, Mrs. Racket! Lady Frances, your most obedient! you look—now, hang me, if that's not provoking! had your gown been of another colour, I should have said the prettiest thing you ever heard in your life.

Miss O. Pray give it us.

Flut. I was yesterday at Mrs. Bloomer's. She was dressed all in green; no other colour to be seen but that of her face and bosom. "So," says I, "my dear Mrs. Bloomer, you look like a carnation just bursting from its pod." Wasn't that pretty?

Sir G. And what said her husband?

Flut. Her husband! why, her husband laughed, and said, "a cucumber would have been a better simile."

Sir G. But there are husbands, sir, who would rather have corrected than amended your comparison; I, for instance, should consider a man's complimenting my wife as an impertinence.

Flut. Why, what harm can there be in compliments? sure, they are not infectious; and, if they were, you, Sir George, of all people breathing, have reason to be satisfied about your lady's attachment; every body talks of it: that little bird there, that she killed out of jealousy, the most extraordinary instance of affection that ever was given.

Lady F. I kill a bird through jealousy! Heavens! Mr. Flutter, how can you impute such a cruelty to me?

Sir G. I could have forgiven you, if you had.

Flut. Oh! what a blundering fool! No, no; now I remember; 'twas your bird, Lady Frances—that's it; your bullfinch, which Sir George, in one of the refinements of his passion, sent into the wide world to seek its fortune. He took it for a knight in disguise.

Lady F. Is it possible? Oh! Sir George, could I have imagined it was you who deprived me of a creature I was so fond of?

Sir G. Mr. Flutter, you are one of those busy, idle, meddling people, who, from mere vacuity of mind, are the most dangerous inmates in a family. You have neither feelings nor opinions of your own; but, like a glass in a tavern, bear about those of every blockhead who gives you his; and, because you mean no harm, think yourselves excused; though broken friendships, discords, and murders, are the consequences of your indiscretions.

Flut. (*Taking out his tablets.*) Vacuity of mind! What was next? I'll write down this sermon; 'tis the first I have heard since my grandmother's funeral.

Miss O. Come, Lady Frances, you see what a cruel creature your loving husband can be: so let us leave him.

Sir G. Madam, Lady Frances shall not go.

Lady F. Shall not, Sir George! This is the first time such an expression—(*Weeping.*)

Sir G. My love! my life!

Lady F. Don't imagine I'll be treated like a child! denied what I wish, and then pacified with sweet words.

Miss O. (*Apart.*) The bullfinch! that's an excellent subject; never let it down.

Lady F. I see plainly you would deprive me of every pleasure, as well as of my sweet bird—out of pure love! Barbarous man!

Sir G. 'Tis well, madam; your resentment of that circumstance proves to me, what I did not before suspect, that you are deficient both in tenderness and understanding. Tremble to think the hour approaches, in which you would give worlds for such a proof of my love. Go, madam; give yourself to the public: abandon your heart to dissipation, and see if, in the scenes of gaiety and folly that await you, you can find a recompense for the lost affection of a doating husband. [*Exit.*

Flut. Lord! what a fine thing it is to have the gift of speech! I suppose Sir George practises at Coach-makers'-hall, or the Black-horse in Bond-street.

Lady F. He is really angry; I cannot go.

Mrs. R. Not go! foolish creature! you are arrived at the moment which, sometime or other, was sure to happen, and every thing depends on the use you make of it.

Miss O. Come, Lady Frances, don't hesitate; the minutes are precious.

Lady F. I could find in my heart—and yet I won't give up, neither. If I should in this instance, he'll expect it for ever. [*Exit with Mrs. Racket.*

Miss O. Now you act like a woman of spirit! [*Exit.*

Flut. A fair tug, by Jupiter! between duty and pleasure! Pleasure beats, and off we go. *Iö triumphe!* [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*An Auction-room: busts, pictures, &c.* Silvertongue *discovered, with Company, Puffers, &c.*

Enter Lady Frances Touchwood, Mrs. Racket, *and* Miss Ogle.

Sil. Yes, sir, this is to be the first lot: the model of a city, in wax.

2 *Gent.* The model of a city! What city?

Sil. That I have not been able to discover; but call it Rome, Pekin, or London, 'tis still a city; you'll find in it the same virtues, and the same vices, whatever the name.

Lady F. I wish Sir George was here. This man follows me about, and stares at me in such a way, that I am quite uneasy. (*Lady Frances and Miss Ogle come forward, followed by Courtall.*)

Miss O. He has travelled, and is heir to an immense estate; so he is impertinent by patent.

Court. You are very cruel, ladies. Miss Ogle, you will not let me speak to you. As to this little, scornful beauty, she has frowned me dead fifty times.

Lady F. Sir, I am a married woman. (*Confused.*)

Court. A married woman! a good hint. (*Aside.*) 'Twould be a shame if such a charming woman was not married. But I see you are a Daphne, just come from your sheep and your meadows, your crook and your waterfalls. Pray, now, who is the happy Damon, to whom you have vowed eternal truth and constancy?

Miss O. 'Tis Lady Frances Touchwood, Mr. Courtall, to whom you are speaking.

Court. Lady Frances! By heaven! that's Saville's old flame. (*Aside.*) I beg your ladyship's pardon. I ought to have believed, that such beauty could belong only to your name; a name I have long been enamoured of, because I knew it to be that of the finest woman in the world. (*Mrs. Racket comes forward.*)

Lady F. (*Apart.*) My dear Mrs. Racket, I am so frightened! Here's a man making love to me, though he knows I am married.

Mrs. O. Oh! the sooner for that, my dear; don't mind him. Was you at the Cassino last night, Mr. Courtall?

Court. I looked in—'Twas impossible to stay—Nobody there but antiques. You'll be at Lady Brilliant's to-night, doubtless?

Mrs. R. Yes; I go with Lady Frances.

Lady F. Bless me! I did not know this gentleman was acquainted with Mrs. Racket. I behaved so rude to him! (*To Miss Ogle.*)

Mrs. R. Come, ma'am; (*looking at her watch*) 'tis past one. I protest, if we don't fly to Kensington, we sha'n't find a soul there.

Lady F. Won't this gentleman go with us?

Court. (*Looking surprised.*) To be sure: you make me happy, madam, beyond description.

Mrs. R. Oh! never mind him; he'll follow.

[*Exeunt Lady Frances, Mrs. Racket, and Miss Ogle.*

Court. Lady Touchwood, with a vengeance! But 'tis always so; your reserved ladies are like ice, egad! no sooner begin to soften than they melt. [*Following.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Mr. Hardy's.*

Enter Mrs. Racket *and* Letitia.

Mrs. R. Come, prepare, prepare; your lover is coming.

Let. My lover! confess, now, that my absence at dinner was a severe mortification to him.

Mrs. R. I can't absolutely swear it spoiled his appetite; he ate as if he was hungry, and drank his wine as though he liked it.

Let. What was the apology?

Mrs. R. That you were ill; but I gave him a hint, that your extreme bashfulness could not support his eye.

Let. If I comprehend him, awkwardness and bashfulness are the last faults he can pardon in a woman; so expect to see me transformed into the veriest mawkin.

Mrs. R. You persevere, then?

Let. Certainly. I know the design is a rash one, and the event important; it either makes Doricourt mine, by all the tenderest ties of passion, or deprives me of him for ever; and never to be his wife will afflict me less than to be his wife, and not be beloved.

Mrs. R. So you won't trust to the good old maxim,—Marry first, and love will follow.

Let. As readily as I will venture my last guinea, that good fortune might follow. The woman that has not touched the heart of a man, before he leads her to the altar, has scarcely a chance to charm it, when possession and security turn their powerful arms against her. But, here he comes; I'll disappear for a moment. Don't spare me. [*Exit.*

Enter Doricourt, *not seeing Mrs. Racket.*

Doric. So! (*Looking at a picture.*) This is my mistress, I presume. *Ma foi!* the painter has hit her off. The downcast eye, the blushing cheek; timid—apprehensive—bashful: a tear, and a prayer-book, would have made her *La Bella Magdalena.*

Give me a woman, in whose touching mien
A mind, a soul, a polished art, is seen;
Whose motion speaks, whose poignant air can move;
Such are the darts to wound with endless love.

Mrs. R. Is that an impromptu?

Doric. (*Starting.*) Madam! Finely caught! (*Aside.*) Not absolutely: it struck me during the dessert, as a motto for your picture.

Mrs. R. Gallantly turned: I perceive, however, Miss Hardy's charms have made no violent impression on you. And who can wonder? the poor girl's defects are so obvious.

Doric. Defects!

Mrs. R. Merely those of education: her father's indulgence ruined her. *Mauvaise honte*, conceit, and ignorance, all unite in the lady you are to marry.

Doric. Marry! I marry such a woman! Your picture, I hope, is overcharged. I marry *mauvaise honte*, pertness, and ignorance!

Mrs. R. Thank your stars, that ugliness and ill-temper are not added to the list. You must think her handsome.

Doric. Half her personal beauty would content me; but could the Medicean Venus be animated for me, and endowed with a vulgar soul, I should become the statue, and my heart transformed to marble. [then!

Mrs. R. Bless us! we are in a hopeful way,

Doric. There must be some envy in this. I see she is a coquette. (*Aside.*) Ha, ha, ha! and you imagine I am persuaded of the truth of your character. Ha, ha, ha! Miss Hardy, I have been assured, madam, is elegant and accomplished; but one must allow for a lady's painting.

Mrs. R. I'll be even with him for that. (*Aside.*) Ha, ha, ha! and so you have found me out! Well, I protest, I meant no harm; 'twas only to increase the *éclat* of her appearance, that I threw a veil over her charms. Here comes the lady: her elegance and accomplishments will announce themselves.

Enter LETITIA, *running.*

Let. La! cousin, do you know that our John—Oh, dear heart! I didn't see you, sir. (*Hanging down her head, and dropping behind Mrs. R.*)

Mrs. R. Fie, Letitia! Mr. Doricourt thinks you a woman of elegant manners. Stand forward, and confirm his opinion.

Let. No, no; keep before me. He's my sweetheart; and 'tis impudent to look one's sweetheart in the face, you know.

Mrs. R. You'll allow in future for a lady's painting, sir. Ha, ha, ha!

Doric. I am astonished!

Let. Well, hang it! I'll take heart. Why, he is but a man, you know, cousin; and I'll let him see, I wasn't born in a wood to be scared by an owl. (*Half apart; advances, and looks at him through her fingers.*) He, he, he! (*Goes up to him, and makes a very stiff, formal courtesy; he bows.*) You have been a great traveller, sir, I hear. I wish you'd tell us about the fine sights you saw when you went over sea: I have read in a book, that there are some other countries, where the men and women are all horses. Did you see any of them?

Mrs. R. Mr. Doricourt is not prepared, my dear, for these inquiries; he is reflecting on the importance of the question, and will answer you—when he can.

Let. When he can! Why, he's as slow in speech as aunt Margery, when she's reading Thomas Aquinas; and stands gaping like mumchance.

Mrs. R. Have a little discretion.

Let. Hold your tongue! Sure, I may say what I please before I am married, if I can't afterwards. D'ye think a body does not know how to talk to a sweetheart? He is not the first I have had.

Doric. Indeed!

Let. Oh! lud, he speaks! Why, if you must know, there was the curate at home. When papa was a hunting, he used to come a suitoring, and make speeches to me out of books. Nobody knows what a mort of fine things he used to say to me; and call me Venis, and Jubah, and Dinah.

Doric. And pray, fair lady, how did you answer him?

Let. Why, I used to say, "Look you, Mr. Curate; don't think to come over me with your flim-flams, for a better man than ever trod in your shoes is coming over-sea to marry me." But, 'ifags, I begin to think I was out. Parson Dobbins was the sprightfuller man of the two.

Doric. Surely this cannot be Miss Hardy?

Let. Laws! why don't you know me? You saw me to-day; but I was daunted before my father, and the lawyer, and all them; and did not care to speak out; so, may be, you thought I couldn't; but I can talk as fast as anybody, when I know folks a little. And now I have shewn my parts, I hope you'll like me better.

Enter HARDY.

Har. I foresee this won't do. Mr. Doricourt, may be, you take my daughter for a fool; but you are mistaken, she's as sensible a girl as any in England.

Doric. I am convinced she has a very uncommon understanding, sir. I did not think he had been such an ass! (*Aside.*)

Let. My father will undo the whole. (*Aside.*) Laws, papa, how can you think he can take me for a fool; when every body knows, I beat the apothecary at conundrums, last Christmas-time? And didn't I make a string of names, all in riddles, for the Lady's Diary? There was a little river and a great house, that was Newcastle. There was what a lamb says, and three letters, that was ba, and k-e-r, ker—baker. There was—

Har. Don't stand baaing there; you'll make me mad in a moment. I tell you, sir, that for all that, she's dev'lish sensible.

Doric. Sir, I give all possible credit to your assertions.

Let. Laws! papa, do come along. If you stand watching, how can my sweetheart break his mind, and tell me how he admires me?

Doric. That would be difficult, indeed, madam.

Har. I tell you, Letty, I'll have no more of this. I see well enough—

Let. Laws! don't snub me before my husband, that is to be. You'll teach him to snub me too; and, I believe, by his looks, he'd like to begin now. So let us go, cousin. You may tell the gentleman what a genus I have; how I can cut watch-papers, and work catgut, make quadrille baskets with pins, and take profiles in shade; ay, as well as the lady at No. 62, South Moulton-street, Grosvenor-square. [*Exeunt Har. and Let.*

Mrs. R. What think you of my painting now?

Doric. Oh! mere water-colours, madam. The lady has caricatured your picture.

Mrs. R. And how does she strike you on the whole?

Doric. Like a good design, spoiled by the incapacity of the artist. Her faults are evidently the result of her father's weak indulgence. I observed an expression in her eye, that seemed to satirize the folly of her lips.

Mrs. R. But at her age, when education is fixed, and manner becomes nature, hopes of improvement—

Doric. Would be absurd. Besides, I can't turn schoolmaster! Doricourt's wife must be incapable of improvement; but it must be, because she's got beyond it.

Mrs. R. I am pleased your misfortune sits no heavier.

Doric. Your pardon, madam. So mercurial was the hour in which I was born, that misfortunes always go plump to the bottom of my heart, like a pebble in water, and leave the surface unruffled. I shall certainly set off for Bath, or the other world, to-night; but whether I shall use a chaise with four swift coursers, or go off in a tangent, from the aperture of a pistol, deserves consideration; so I make my adieux. (*Going.*)

Mrs. R. Oh! but I entreat you, postpone your journey till to-morrow; determine on which you will, you must be this night at the masquerade.

Doric. Masquerade!

Mrs. R. Why not? If you resolve to visit the other world, you may as well take one night's pleasure first in this, you know.

Doric. Faith, that's very true. Ladies are the best philosophers after all! Expect me at the masquerade. [*Exit.*

Mrs. R. He's a charming fellow; I think Letitia sha'n't have him. (*Going.*)

Enter HARDY.

Har. What, is he gone?

Mrs. R. Yes; and I am glad he is. You would have ruined us. Now I beg, Mr. Hardy, you won't interfere in this business; it is a little out of your way. [*Exit.*

Har. Hang me if I don't, though! I foresee very clearly what will be the end of it, if I leave you to yourselves; so I'll e'en follow him to the masquerade, and tell him all about it. Let me see; what shall my dress be? A great mogul? No. A grenadier? No, no; that, I foresee, would make a laugh. Hang me! if I don't send to my favourite little Quick, and borrow his Jew Isaac's dress. I know the dog likes a glass of good wine; so I'll give him a bottle of my forty-eight, and he shall teach me. Ay, that's it; I'll be cunning little Isaac. If they complain of my want of wit, I'll

tell them, the cursed Duenna wears the breeches, and has spoiled my parts. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Courtall's.*

Enter COURTALL, SAVILLE, *and three Gentlemen. The last three tipsy.*

Court. You sha'n't go yet! Another catch, and another bottle.

1 *Gent.* May I be a bottle, and an empty bottle, if you catch me at that! Why, I am going to the masquerade. Jack ——, you know who I mean, is to meet me, and we are to have a leap at the new lustres.

2 *Gent.* And I am going to—a pilgrim. (*Hiccups.*) Am not I in a pretty pickle for a pilgrim? And Tony, here, he is going in the disguise—in the disguise—of a gentleman.

1 *Gent.* We are all very disguised, so bid them draw up. Dy'e hear? [*Exeunt the three Gentlemen.*

Sav. Thy skull, Courtall, is a lady's thimble: no, an egg-shell.

Court. Nay, then you are gone too: you never aspire to similes, but in your cups.

Sav. No, no; I am steady enough, but the fumes of the wine pass directly through thy egg-shell, and leave thy brain as cool as—Eh! I am quite sober; my similes fail me.

Court. Then we'll sit down here, and have one sober bottle.

Enter DICK.

Bring a bottle and glasses. [*Exit Dick.*

Sav. I'll not swallow another drop; no, though the juice should be the true Falernian.

Court. By the bright eyes of her you love, you shall drink her health.

Re-enter DICK, *with bottle and glasses.*

Sav. Ah! (*Sitting down.*) Her I loved is gone. (*Sighing.*) She's married! [*Exit Dick.*

Court. Then bless your stars you are not her husband! I would be husband to no woman in Europe, who was not devilish rich, and devilish ugly.

Sav. Wherefore ugly?

Court. Because she could not have the conscience to exact those attentions that a pretty wife expects; or if she should, her resentments would be perfectly easy to me, nobody would undertake to revenge her cause.

Sav. Thou art a most licentious fellow.

Court. I should hate my own wife, that's certain; but I have a warm heart for those of other people; and so here's to the prettiest wife in England, Lady Frances Touchwood.

Sav. Lady Frances Touchwood! I rise to drink her. (*Drinks.*) How the devil came Lady Frances in your head? I never knew you give a woman of chastity before.

Court. That's odd; for you have heard me give half the women of fashion in England. But, pray now, what do you take a woman of chastity to be?

Sav. Such a woman as Lady Frances Touchwood, sir?

Court. Oh! you are grave, sir; I remember you was an adorer of her's. Why didn't you marry her?

Sav. I had not the arrogance to look so high. Had my fortune been worthy of her, she should not have been ignorant of my admiration.

Court. Precious fellow! What! I suppose you would not dare tell her now that you admire her?

Sav. No, nor you.

Court. By the lord, I have told her so.

Sav. Have? Impossible!

Court. Ha, ha, ha! Is it so?

Sav. How did she receive the declaration?

Court. Why, in the old way; blushed and frowned, and said she was married.

Sav. What amazing things thou art capable of! I could more easily have taken the Pope by the beard, than profaned her ears with such a declaration.

Court. I shall meet her at Lady Brilliant's to-night, where I shall repeat it; and I'd lay my life, under a mask, she'll hear it all without a blush or a frown.

Sav. (*Rising.*) 'Tis false, sir! She won't.

Court. She will! (*Rising.*) Nay, I'll venture to lay a round sum that I prevail on her to go out with me; only to taste the fresh air, I mean.

Sav. Preposterous vanity! from this moment I suspect that half the victories you have boasted are as false and slanderous as your pretended influence with Lady Frances.

Court. Pretended! How should such a fellow as you now, who never soared beyond a cherry-cheeked daughter of a ploughman in Norfolk, judge of the influence of a man of my figure and habits? I could shew thee a list, in which there are names to shake thy faith in the whole sex; and, to that list I have no doubt of adding the name of Lady—

Sav. Hold, sir! My ears cannot bear the profanation; you cannot, dare not approach her. For your soul, you dare not mention love to her: Her look would freeze the word, whilst it hovered on thy licentious lips.

Court. Whu! whu! Well, we shall see: this evening, by Jupiter! the trial shall be made. If I fail, I fail.

Sav. I think thou darest not! But my life, my honour, on her purity. [*Exit.*

Court. Hot-headed fool! But since he has brought it to this point, by gad, I'll try what can be done with her ladyship. (*Rings.*) She's frost-work, and the prejudices of education yet strong: ergo, passionate professions will only inflame her pride, and put her on her guard. For other arts then!

Enter DICK.

Dick, do you know any of the servants at Sir George Touchwood's?

Dick. Yes, sir, I knows the groom, and one of the housemaids; for the matter o'that, she's my own cousin; and it was my mother that helped her to the place.

Court. Do you know Lady Frances's maid?

Dick. I can't say as how I know she.

Court. Do you know Sir George's valet?

Dick. No, sir; but Sally is very thick with Mr. Gibson, Sir George's gentleman.

Court. Then go there directly, and employ Sally to discover whether her master goes to Lady Brilliant's this evening; and if he does, the name of the shop that sold his habit.

Dick. Yes, sir.

Court. Be exact in your intelligence, and come to me at Boodle's. [*Exit Dick.*] If I cannot otherwise succeed, I'll beguile her as Jove did Alcmena, in the shape of her husband. The possession of so fine a woman, the triumph over Saville, are each a sufficient motive; and united, they shall be resistless. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter SAVILLE.

Sav. The air has recovered me. What have I been doing? Perhaps my petulance may be the cause of her ruin, whose honour I asserted: his vanity is piqued; and where women are concerned, Courtall can be a villain.

Enter DICK, *bows, and passes hastily.*

Ha! That's his servant. Dick!

Dick. (*Returning.*) Sir!

Sav. Where are you going, Dick?

Dick. Going! I am going, sir, where my master sent me.

Sav. Well answered! But I have a particular reason for my inquiry, and you must tell me.

Dick. Why, then, sir, I am going to call upon a cousin of mine, that lives at Sir George Touchwood's.

Sav. Very well. There, (*gives him money,*) you must make your cousin drink my health. What are you going about?

Dick. Why, sir, I believe 'tis no harm, or elseways I am sure I would not blab; I am only going to ax if Sir George goes to the masquerade to-night, and what dress he wears.

Sav. Enough. Now, Dick, if you will call at my lodgings in your way back, and acquaint me with your cousin's intelligence, I'll double the trifle I have given you.

Dick. Bless your honour; I'll call, never fear. [*Exit.*

Sav. Surely the occasion may justify the means; 'tis doubly my duty to be Lady Frances's protector. Courtall, I see, is planning an artful scheme: but Saville shall out-plot him. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*Sir George Touchwood's.*

Enter Sir George *and* Villers.

Vil. For shame, Sir George! you have left Lady Frances in tears. How can you afflict her?

Sir G. 'Tis I that am afflicted; my dream of happiness is over; Lady Frances and I are disunited.

Vil. The devil! Why, you have been in town but ten days: she can have made no acquaintance for a Commons' affair yet.

Sir G. Pho! 'tis our minds that are disunited: she no longer places her whole delight in me; she has yielded herself up to the world.

Vil. Yielded herself up to the world! Why did you not bring her to town in a cage? Then she might have taken a peep at the world. But, after all, what has the world done? A twelvemonth since, you was the gayest fellow in it. If anybody asked who dresses best? Sir George Touchwood. Who is the most gallant man? Sir George Touchwood. Who is the most wedded to amusement and dissipation? Sir George Touchwood. And now Sir George is metamorphosed into a sour censor; and talks of fashionable life with as much bitterness as the old crabbed fellow in Rome.

Sir G. The moment I became possessed of such a jewel as Lady Frances, every thing wore a different complexion; that society in which I lived, with so much *éclat*, became the object of my terror; and I think of the manners of polite life as I do of the atmosphere of a pest-house. My wife is already infected; she was set upon this morning by maids, widows, and bachelors, who carried her off in triumph, in spite of my displeasure.

Vil. Ay, to be sure; there would have been no triumph in the case, if you had not opposed it: but I have heard the whole story from Mrs. Racket; and I assure you, Lady Frances didn't enjoy the morning at all; she wished for you fifty times.

Sir G. Indeed! Are you sure of that?

Vil. Perfectly sure.

Sir G. I wish I had known it: my uneasiness at dinner was occasioned by very different ideas.

Vil. Here then she comes to receive your apology; but if she is true woman, her displeasure will rise in proportion to your contrition; and till you grow careless about her pardon, she won't grant it: however, I'll leave you. Matrimonial duetts are seldom set in the style I like. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Frances.

Sir G. The sweet sorrow that glitters in these eyes, I cannot bear (*Embracing her.*) Look cheerfully, you rogue.

Lady F. I cannot look otherwise, if you are pleased with me.

Sir G. Well, Fanny, to-day you made your *entrée* in the fashionable world; tell me honestly the impressions you received.

Lady F. Indeed, Sir George, I was so hurried from place to place, that I had not time to find out what my impressions were.

Sir G. That's the very spirit of the life you have chosen.

Lady F. Every body about me seemed happy; but every body seemed in a hurry to be happy somewhere else.

Sir G. And you like this?

Lady F. One must like what the rest of the world likes.

Sir G. Pernicious maxim!

Lady F. But, my dear Sir George, you have not promised to go with me to the masquerade.

Sir G. 'Twould be a shocking indecorum to be seen together, you know.

Lady F. Oh, no; I asked Mrs. Racket, and she told me we might be seen together at the masquerade, without being laughed at.

Sir G. Really!

Lady F. Indeed, to tell you the truth, I could wish it was the fashion for married people to be inseparable: for I have more heart felt satisfaction in fifteen minutes with you at my side, than fifteen days of amusement could give me without you.

Sir G. My sweet creature! How that confession charms me! Let us begin the fashion.

Lady F. O, impossible! we should not gain a single proselyte; and you can't conceive what spiteful things would be said of us. At Kensington, to-day, a lady met us, whom we saw at court; when we were presented; she lifted up her hands in amazement! "Bless me!" said she to her companion, "here's Lady Frances without Sir Hurlo Thrumbo! My dear Mrs. Racket, consider what an important charge you have! For heaven's sake, take her home again, or some enchanter on a flying dragon will descend and carry her off!"—"Oh!" said another, "I dare say Lady Frances has a clue at her heel, like the peerless Rosamond: her tender swain would never have trusted her so far without such a precaution."

Sir G. Heaven and earth! How shall innocence preserve its lustre amidst manners so corrupt? My dear Fanny, I feel a sentiment for thee at this moment, tenderer than love—more animated than passion. I could weep over that purity, exposed to the sullying breath of fashion, and the *ton*, in whose latitudinary vortex chastity herself can scarcely move unspotted.

Enter Gibson.

Gib. Your honour talked, I thought, something about going to the masquerade?

Sir G. Well.

Gib. Isn't it—hasn't your honour—I thought your honour had forgot to order a dress.

Lady F. Well considered, Gibson. Come, will you be Jew, Turk, or heretic; Chinese emperor, or a ballad-singer: a rake, or a watchman?

Sir G. Oh! neither, my love; I can't take the trouble to support a character.

Lady F. You'll wear a domino, then: I saw a pink domino trimmed with blue, at the shop where I bought my habit. Would you like it?

Sir G. Anything, anything.

Lady F. Then go about it directly, Gibson. A pink domino trimmed with blue, and a hat of the same! Come, you have not seen my dress yet; it is most beautiful; I long to have it on. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*A Masquerade.*

A Party dancing cotillions in front; a variety of Characters pass and repass.

Mount. Who'll buy my nostrums? Who'll buy my nostrums?

Mask. What are they? (*They all come round him.*)

Mount. Different sorts, and for different customers. Here's a liquor for ladies; it expels the rage for gaming and gallantry. Here's a pill for members of parliament; good to settle consciences. Here's an eye-water for jealous husbands; it thickens the visual membrane, through which they see too clearly. Here's a decoction for the clergy; it never sits easy, if the patient has more than one living. Here's a draught for lawyers; a great promoter of modesty. Here's a powder for projectors; 'twill rectify the fumes of an empty stomach, and dissipate their airy castles.

Mask. Have you a nostrum that can give patience to young heirs, whose uncles and fathers are stout and healthy?

Mount. Yes; and I have an infusion for creditors; it gives resignation and humility, when fine gentlemen break their promises, or plead their privilege.

Mask. Come along: I'll find you customers for your whole cargo. (*They retire.*)

Enter Hardy, *in the dress of Isaac Mendoza.*

Har. Why, isn't it a shame to see so many stout, well-built young fellows, masquerading, and cutting courantas here at home, instead of making the French cut capers to the tune of your cannon; or sweating the Spaniards with an English fandango? I foresee the end of all this.

Mask. Why, thou little testy Israelite? back to Duke's Place, and preach your tribe into a subscription for the good of the land, on whose milk and honey ye fatten. Where are your Joshuas and your Gideons, eh? What! all dwindled into stockbrokers, pedlars, and rag-men?

Har. No, not all. Some of us turn Christians; and, by degrees, grow into all the privileges of Englishmen. In the second generation, we are patriots, rebels, courtiers, and husbands. (*Puts his fingers to his forehead. Another Mask advances.*)

2 *Mask.* What, my little Isaac! How the devil came you here? Where's your old Margaret?

Har. Oh! I have got rid of her.

2 *Mask.* How?

Har. Why, I persuaded a young Irishman that she was a blooming plump beauty of eighteen; so they made an elopement. Ha, ha, ha! and she is now the toast of Tipperary. Ha! there's cousin Racket and her party; they sha'n't know me. (*Aside. Puts on his Mask.*)

Enter Folly, *on a hobby-horse, with cap and bells.*

Mask. Eh! Tom fool! what business have you here?

Folly. What, sir! affront a prince in his own dominion! (*Struts off.*)

Enter Mrs. Racket, Lady Frances, Sir George, *and* Flutter.

Mrs. R. Look at this dumpling Jew: he must be a Levite by his figure. You have surely practised the flesh-hook a long time, friend, to have raised that goodly presence.

Har. About as long, my brisk widow, as you have been angling for a second husband; but my hook has been better baited than your's. You have only caught gudgeons, I see. (*Pointing to Flutter.*)

Flut. Oh! this is one of the geniuses they hire to entertain the company with their accidental sallies. Let me look at your common-place book, friend. I want a few good things.

Har. I'd oblige you, with all my heart; but you'll spoil them in repeating; or, if you should not, they'll gain you no reputation, for nobody will believe they are your own.

Sir G. He knows you, Flutter! the little gentleman fancies himself a wit, I see.

Har. There's no depending on what you see; the eyes of the jealous are not to be trusted! Look to your lady.

Flut. He knows you, Sir George.

Sir G. What! am I the town-talk? (*Aside.*)

Har. I can neither see Doricourt nor Letty. I must find them out. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Mrs. R. Well, Lady Frances, is not all this charming? Could you have conceived such a brilliant assemblage of objects?

Lady F. Delightful. The days of enchantment are restored; the columns glow with sapphires and rubies; emperors and fairies, beauties and dwarfs, meet me at every step.

Sir G. How lively are first impressions on sensible minds! In four hours, vapidity and languor will take place of that exquisite sense of joy which flutters your little heart.

Mrs. R. What an inhuman creature! Fate has not allowed us these sensations above ten times in our lives, and would you have us shorten them by anticipation? (*Sir G. and Mrs. R. talk apart.*)

Flut. O lord! your wise men are the greatest fools upon earth; they reason about their enjoyments, and analyse their pleasures, whilst the essence escapes. Look, Lady Frances: d'ye see that figure strutting in the dress of an emperor? His father retails oranges in Botolph-Lane. That gipsy is a maid of honour, and that rag-man a physician.

Lady F. Why, you know every body!

Flut. Oh! every creature. A mask is nothing at all to me. I can give you the history of half the people here. In the next apartment, there is a whole family, who, to my knowledge, have lived on water-cresses this month, to make a figure here to-night; but, to make up for that, they'll cram their pockets with cold ducks and chickens for a carnival to-morrow.

Lady F. Oh! I should like to see this provident family.

Flut. Honour me with your arm.

[*Exeunt Flut. and Lady F.*

Mrs. R. (*Advances.*) Come, Sir George, you shall be my beau. We'll make the tour of the rooms, and meet them. Oh! your pardon; you must follow Lady Frances; or the wit and fine parts of Mr. Flutter may drive you out of her head. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Sir G. I was going to follow her, and now I dare not. How can I be such a fool as to be governed by the fear of that ridicule which I despise? [*Exit.*

Enter Doricourt, *meeting a Mask.*

Doric. Ha! my lord; I thought you had been engaged at Westminster on this important night.

Mask. So I am; I slipt out as soon as Lord Trope got upon his legs. I can badiner here an hour or two, and be back again before he is down. There's a fine figure! I'll address her.

Enter Letitia.

Charity, fair lady! Charity for a poor pilgrim.

Let. Charity! If you mean my prayers, heaven grant thee wit, pilgrim.

Mask. That blessing would do from a devotee: from you I ask other charities; such charities as beauty should bestow—soft looks, sweet words, and kind wishes.

Let. Alas! I am bankrupt of these, and forced to turn beggar myself. There he is! how shall I catch his attention? (*Aside.*)

Mask. Will you grant me no favour?

Let. Yes, one; I'll make you my partner—not for life, but through the soft mazes of a minuet. Dare you dance?

Doric. Some spirit in that.

Mask. I dare do anything you command. That, lady, is against my vow; but here comes a man of the world.

Doric. Do you know her, my lord?

Mask. No; such a woman as that would formerly have been known in any disguise; but beauty is now common: Venus seems to have given her cestus to the whole sex.

A Minuet.

Doric. (*During the minuet.*) She dances divinely. (*When ended.*) Somebody must know her! Let us inquire who she is. (*Retires.*)

Enter SAVILLE *and* KITTY WILLIS, *habited like Lady Frances.*

Sav. I have seen Courtall in Sir George's habit, though he endeavoured to keep himself concealed. Go, and seat yourself in the tea-room; and, on no account, discover your face; remember too, Kitty, that the woman you are to personate is a woman of virtue.

Kitty. I am afraid I shall find that a difficult character; indeed I believe it is seldom kept up through a whole masquerade.

Sav. Of that you can be no judge. Follow my directions, and you shall be rewarded. [*Exit Kitty.*

Enter DORICOURT.

Doric. Ha! Saville, did you see a lady dance just now?

Sav. No.

Doric. Very odd. Nobody knows her.

Sav. Where is Miss Hardy?

Doric. Cutting watch-papers, and making conundrums, I suppose.

Sav. What do you mean?

Doric. 'Faith, I hardly know. She's not here, however, Mrs. Racket tells me. I asked no further.

Sav. Your indifference seems increased.

Doric. Quite the reverse; 'tis advanced thirty-two degrees towards hatred.

Sav. You are jesting?

Doric. Then it must be with a very ill grace, my dear Saville; for I never felt so seriously. Do you know, the creature's almost an idiot?

Sav. What!

Doric. An idiot. What the devil shall I do with her? Egad! I think I'll feign myself mad; and then Hardy will propose to cancel the engagements.

Sav. An excellent expedient. I must leave you; you are mysterious, and I can't stay to unravel ye. I came here to watch over innocence and beauty.

Doric. The guardian of innocence and beauty at three-and-twenty! Is there not a cloven foot under that black gown, Saville?

Sav. No, 'faith; Courtall is here on a most detestable design. I found means to get a knowledge of the lady's dress, and have brought a girl to personate her, whose reputation cannot be hurt. You shall know the result to-morrow. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Doric. (*Musing.*) Yes, I think that will do. I'll feign myself mad, fee the doctor to pronounce me incurable, and when the parchments are destroyed—(*Stands in a musing posture.*)

Enter LETITIA.

Let. You have chosen an odd situation for study. Fashion and taste preside in this spot: they throw their spells around you: ten thousand delights spring up at their command; and you, a stoic,—a being without senses,—are wrapt in reflection.

Doric. And you, the most charming being in the world, awaken me to admiration. Did you come from the stars?

Let. Yes, and I shall re-ascend in a moment.

Doric. Pray shew me your face before you go.

Let. Beware of imprudent curiosity; it lost Paradise.

Doric. Eve's curiosity was raised by the devil; 'tis an angel tempts mine. So your allusion is not in point.

Let. But why would you see my face?

Doric. To fall in love with it.

Let. And what then?

Doric. Why, then—Ay, curse it! there's the rub! (*Aside.*)

Let. Your mistress will be angry; but perhaps you have no mistress?

Doric. Yes, yes; and a sweet one it is!

Let. What! is she old?

Doric. No.

Let. Ugly?

Doric. No.

Let. What then?

Doric. Pho! don't talk about her; but shew me your face.

Let. My vanity forbids it; 'twould frighten you.

Doric. Impossible! Your shape is graceful, your air bewitching, your bosom transparent, and your chin would tempt me to kiss it, if I did not see a pouting, red lip above it, that demands—(*Going to kiss.*)

Let. You grow too free.

Doric. Shew me your face then; only half a glance.

Let. Not for worlds!

Doric. What! you will have a little gentle force? (*Attempts to seize her mask.*)

Let. I am gone for ever! [*Exit.*

Doric. 'Tis false—I'll follow to the end. [*Exit.*

Music. *Re-enter* FLUTTER, LADY FRANCES TOUCHWOOD, *and* SAVILLE.

Lady F. How can you be thus interested for a stranger?

Sav. Goodness will have interest: its home is heaven; on earth 'tis but a wanderer. Where is your husband?

Flut. Why, what's that to him?

Lady F. Surely it can't be merely his habit; there's something in him that awes me.

Flut. Pho! 'tis only his grey beard. I know him; he keeps a lottery-office on Cornhill.

Sav. My province as an enchanter lays open every secret to me, lady! There are dangers abroad: beware! [*Exit.*

Lady F. 'Tis very odd; his manner has made me tremble. Let us seek Sir George.

Flut. He is coming towards us.

Enter COURTALL, *habited like Sir George Touchwood.*

Court. There she is! If I can but disengage her from that fool, Flutter, crown me, ye schemers, with immortal wreaths!

Lady F. O, my dear Sir George! I rejoice to meet you. An old conjurer has been frightening me with his prophecies. Where's Mrs. Rackett?

Court. In the dancing-room. I promised to send you to her, Mr. Flutter.

Flut. Ah! she wants me to dance. With all my heart. [*Exit.*

Lady F. Why do you keep on your mask?—'tis too warm.

Court. 'Tis very warm. I want air; let us go.

Lady F. You seem agitated. Sha'n't we bid our company adieu?

Court. No, no; there's no time for forms. I'll just give directions to the carriage, and be with you in a moment. (*Going, steps back.*) Put on your mask! I have a particular reason for it. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Saville, *with* Kitty.

Sav. Now, Kitty, you know your lesson. Lady Frances, (*takes off his mask*) let me lead you to your husband.

Lady F. Heavens! Is Mr. Saville the conjurer? Sir George is just stepped to the door to give directions. We are going home immediately.

Sav. No, madam, you are deceived: Sir George is this way.

Lady F. This is astonishing!

Sav. Be not alarmed: you have escaped a snare, and shall be in safety in a moment.

[*Exeunt Saville and Lady Frances.*

Re-enter Courtall, *who seizes Kitty's hand.*

Court. Now!

Kitty. 'Tis pity to go so soon.

Court. Perhaps I may bring you back, my angel! but go now you must. [*Exeunt Courtall and Kitty.*

Music. Re-enter Doricourt *and* Letitia.

Doric. By heavens! I never was charmed till now. English beauty, French vivacity; wit, elegance. Your name, my angel! tell me your name, though you persist in concealing your face.

Let. My name has a spell in it.

Doric. I thought so; it must be charming.

Let. But if revealed, the charm is broken.

Doric. I'll answer for its force.

Let. Suppose it Harriet, or Charlotte, or Maria; or—

Doric. Hang Harriet, and Charlotte, and Maria! the name your father gave ye!

Let. That can't be worth knowing; 'tis so transient a thing.

Doric. How transient?

Let. Heaven forbid my name should be lasting till I am married!

Doric. Married! the chains of matrimony are too heavy and vulgar for such a spirit as your's. The flowery wreaths of Cupid are the only bands you should wear.

Let. They are the lightest, I believe; but 'tis possible to wear those of marriage gracefully. Throw them loosely round, and twist them in a true-lover's knot for the bosom.

Doric. An angel! But what will you be when a wife?

Let. A woman. If my husband should prove a churl, a fool, or a tyrant, I'd break his heart, ruin his fortune, elope with the first pretty fellow that asked me; and return the contempt of the world with scorn, whilst my feelings preyed upon my life.

Doric. Amazing! (*Aside.*) What if you loved him, and he were worthy of your love?

Let. Why, then, I'd be anything—and all! grave, gay, capricious; the soul of whim, the spirit of variety; live with him in the eye of fashion, or in the shade of retirement; change my country, my sex; feast with him in an Esquimaux hut, or a Persian pavilion; join him in the victorious war-dance on the borders of Lake Ontario, or sleep to the soft breathings of the flute in the cinnamon groves of Ceylon; dig with him in the mines of Golconda, or enter the dangerous precincts of the Mogul's seraglio; cheat him of his wishes, and overturn his empire, to restore the husband of my heart to the blessings of liberty and love.

Doric. Delightful wildness! Oh! to catch thee, and hold thee for ever in this little cage! (*Attempting to clasp her.*)

Let. Hold, sir! Though Cupid must give the bait that tempts me to the snare, 'tis Hymen must spread the net to catch me.

Doric. 'Tis in vain to assume airs of coldness; fate has ordained you mine.

Let. How do you know?

Doric. I feel it here. I never met with a woman so perfectly to my taste; and I won't believe it formed you so, on purpose to tantalise me.

Let. This moment is worth a whole existence! (*Aside.*)

Doric. Come, shew me your face, and rivet my chains.

Let. To-morrow you shall be satisfied.

Doric. To-morrow, and not to-night?

Let. No.

Doric. Where, then, shall I wait on you to-morrow? Where see you?

Let. You shall see me at an hour when you least expect me.

Doric. Why all this mystery?

Let. I like to be mysterious. At present be content to know, that I am a woman of family and fortune.

Doric. Let me see you to your carriage.

Let. As you value knowing me, stir not a step. If I am followed, you never see me more. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Enter Hardy.

Har. Adieu! then I'm come in at the fag end! (*Aside.*)

Doric. Barbarous creature! she's gone! What, and is this really serious? Am I in love? Pho! it can't be.

Enter Flutter.

Or, Flutter! do you know that charming creature?

Flut. What charming creature? I passed a thousand.

Doric. She went out at that door, as you entered.

Flut. Oh! yes; I know her very well.

Doric. Do you, my dear fellow? who?

Flut. She's kept by Lord George Jennet.

Har. Impudent scoundrel! I foresee I shall cut his throat! (*Aside.*)

Doric. Kept!

Flut. Yes; Colonel Gorget had her first; then Mr. Loveill; then, I forget exactly how many; and at last, she's Lord George's. (*Talks to other Masks.*)

Doric. I'll murder Gorget, poison Lord George, and shoot myself.

Har. Now's the time, I see, to clear up the whole. Mr. Doricourt! I say, Flutter was mistaken; I know who you are in love with.

Doric. A strange rencontre! Who?

Har. My Letty.

Doric. Oh! I understand your rebuke; 'tis too soon, sir, to assume the father-in-law.

Har. Zounds! what do you mean by that? I tell you that the lady you admire is Letitia Hardy.

Doric. I am glad you are so well satisfied with the state of my heart. I wish I was! [*Exit.*

Har. Stop a moment. Stop, I say! What, you won't? very well; if I don't play you a trick for this, may I never be a grandfather! I'll plot with Letty now, and not against her; ay, hang me if I don't! There's something in my head, that shall tingle in his heart. He shall have a lecture upon impatience, that I foresee he'll be the better for as long as he lives.

Re-enter Saville, *with Gentlemen.*

Sav. Flutter, come with us; we're going to raise a laugh at Courtall's.

Flut. With all my heart. "Live to live," was

my father's motto: "Live to laugh," is mine. [*Music.—Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Courtall's.*

Enter Kitty *and* Courtall.

Kitty. Where have you brought me, Sir George? This is not our home!

Court. 'Tis my home, beautiful Lady Frances! (*Kneels and takes off his mask.*) Oh! forgive the ardency of my passion, which has compelled me to deceive you!

Kitty. Mr. Courtall! what will become of me?

Court. Oh! say but that you pardon the wretch who adores you. Did you but know the agonizing tortures of my heart, since I had the felicity of conversing with you this morning; or the despair that now—(*Knocks, Courtall rises.*)

Kitty. Oh, I'm undone!

Court. Zounds! my dear Lady Frances, I am not at home! (*Calls to a servant without.*) Rascal! do you hear? Let nobody in; I am not at home!

Serv. (*Without.*) Sir, I told the gentlemen so.

Court. Eternal curses! they are coming up. Step into this room, adorable creature! one moment; I'll throw them out of the window, if they stay three. [*Exit Kitty.*

Enter Saville, Flutter, *and Gentlemen.*

Flut. O gemini! beg the petticoat's pardon. Just saw a corner of it.

1 *Gent.* No wonder admittance was so difficult. I thought you took us for bailiffs.

Court. Upon my soul, I am devilish glad to see you; but you perceive how I am circumstanced. Excuse me at this moment.

2 *Gent.* Tell us who 'tis then.

Court. Oh, fie!

Flut. We won't blab.

Court. I can't, upon honour. Thus far—she's a woman of the first character and rank. Saville, (*taking him aside*) have I influence, or have I not?

Sav. Why, sure, you do not insinuate—

Court. No, not insinuate, but swear, that she's now in my bed-chamber; by gad, I don't deceive you. There's generalship, you rogue! Such an humble, distant, sighing fellow as thou art, at the end of a six months' siege, would have boasted of a kiss from her glove. I only give the signal, and—pop! she's in my arms!

Sav. What, Lady Fran——

Court. Hush! You shall see her name to-morrow morning in red letters at the end of my list. Gentlemen, you must excuse me now. Come and drink chocolate at twelve; but—

Sav. Ay, let us go, out of respect to the lady! 'Tis a person of rank.

Flut. Is it? Then I'll have a peep at her. (*Runs to the door.*)

Court. This is too much. (*Trying to prevent him.*)

1 *Gent.* By Jupiter, we'll have a peep!

Court. Gentlemen, consider—for heaven's sake—a lady of quality. What will be the consequences?

Flut. The consequences! Why, you'll have your throat cut, that's all; but I'll write your elegy. So, now for the door! (*Part open the door, whilst the rest hold Courtall.*) I beg your ladyship's pardon, whoever you are. (*Leads her out.*) Emerge from darkness, like the glorious sun, and bless the wondering circle with your charms. (*Takes off her mask.*)

Sav. Kitty Willis! Ha, ha, ha!

Omnes. Kitty Willis! Ha, ha, ha! Kitty Willis!

1 *Gent.* Why, what a fellow you are, Courtall, to attempt imposing on your friends in this manner! A lady of quality! An earl's daughter! Your ladyship's most obedient. Ha, ha, ha!

Sav. Courtall, have you influence, or have you not?

Flut. The man's moon-struck.

Court. Hell and ten thousand furies seize you all together!

Kitty. What, me too, Mr. Courtall? me, whom you have knelt to, prayed to, and adored?

Flut. That's right, Kitty; give him a little more.

Court. Disappointed and laughed at!

Sav. Laughed at and despised. I have fulfilled my design, which was to expose your villany, and laugh at your presumption. Adieu, sir; remember how you again boast of your influence with women of rank; and when you next want amusement, dare not to look up to the virtuous and to the noble for a companion. [*Exit.*

Flut. And, Courtall, before you carry a lady into your bed-chamber again, look under her mask: d'ye hear? [*Exit, leading Kitty.*

Court. There's no bearing this! I'll set off for Paris directly. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*Hardy's House.*

Enter Hardy *and* Villers.

Vil. Whimsical enough! Dying for her, and hates her! Believes her a fool, and a woman of brilliant understanding!

Har. As true as you are alive, but when I went up to him, last night, at the Pantheon, out of downright good-nature, to explain things, my gentleman whips round upon his heel, and snapped one as short if I had been a beggar woman with six children, and he overseer of the parish.

Vil. Here comes the wonder-worker.

Enter Letitia.

Here comes the enchantress, who can go to masquerades, and sing, and dance, and talk a man out of his wits! But, pray, have we morning masquerades?

Let. Oh! no; but I am so enamoured of this all-conquering habit, that I could not resist putting it on the moment I had breakfasted. I shall wear it on the day I am married, and then lay it by in spices, like the miraculous robes of St. Bridget.

Vil. That's as most brides do. The charms that helped to catch the husband are generally laid by, one after another, till the lady grows a downright wife; and then runs crying to her mother, because she has transformed her lover into a downright husband.

Har. Listen to me. I ha'n't slept to-night for thinking of plots to plague Doricourt; and they drove one another out of my head so quick, that I was as giddy as a goose, and could make nothing of them. I wish to goodness you could contrive something.

Vil. Contrive to plague him? Nothing so easy. Don't undeceive him, madam, till he is your husband. Marry him whilst he possesses the sentiments you laboured to give him of Miss Hardy; and when you are his wife—

Let. O, heavens! I see the whole; that's the very thing. My dear Mr. Villers, you are the divinest man!

Vil. Don't make love to me, hussy.

Enter Mrs. Racket.

Mrs. R. No, pray don't; for I design to have Villers myself in about six years. There's an oddity in him that pleases me. He holds women in contempt; and I should like to have an opportunity of breaking his heart for that.

Vil. And when I am heartily tired of life, I know no woman whom I would with more pleasure make my executioner.

Har. It cannot be. I foresee it will be impossible to bring it about. You know the wedding wasn't to take place this week, or more; and Letty will never be able to play the fool so long.

Vil. The knot shall be tied to-night. I have it all here. (*Pointing to his forehead.*) The license is ready. Feign yourself ill; send for Doricourt, and tell him you can't go out of the world in peace, except you see the ceremony performed.

Har. I feign myself ill! I could as soon feign myself a Roman ambassador. I was never ill in my life, but with the tooth-ache: when Letty's mother was a breeding I had all the qualms.

Vil. Oh! I have no fear for you. But what says Miss Hardy? Are you willing to make the irrevocable vow before night?

Let. Oh, heavens! I—'Tis so exceeding sudden, that really—

Mrs. R. That really she is frightened out of her wits, lest it should be impossible to bring matters about. But I have taken the scheme into my protection, and you shall be Mrs. Doricourt before night. Come, (*to Hardy*) to bed directly: your room shall be crammed with phials, and all the apparatus of death. Then, heigh, presto! for Doricourt.

Vil. You go and put off your conquering dress, (*to Letitia*) and get all your awkward airs ready: and you practise a few groans, (*to Hardy*) and you, if possible, an air of gravity. (*To Mrs. Racket.*) I'll answer for the plot.

Let. Married in jest! 'Tis an odd idea! Well, I'll venture it. [*Exeunt Letitia and Mrs. Racket.*

Vil. Ay, I'll be sworn! (*Looks at his watch.*) 'Tis past three. The budget's to be opened this morning. I'll just step down to the house. Will you go?

Har. What! with a mortal sickness?

Vil. What a blockhead! I believe if half of us were to stay away with mortal sickness, it would be for the health of the nation. Good morning. I'll call and feel your pulse as I come back. [*Exit.*

Har. You won't find them over brisk, I fancy. I foresee some ill happening from this making believe to die before one's time. But hang it—ahem! I am a stout man yet; only fifty-six. What's that? In the last yearly bills there were three lived to above a hundred: Fifty-six! Fiddle-de-dee! I am not afraid, not I. [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*Doricourt's Lodgings.*

Doricourt *discovered in his robe-de-chambre.* *Enter* Saville.

Sav. Undressed so late?

Doric. I didn't go to bed till late. 'Twas late before I slept—late when I rose. Do you know Lord George Jennett?

Sav. Yes.

Doric. Has he a mistress?

Sav. Yes.

Doric. What sort of a creature is she?

Sav. Why, she spends him three thousand a year with the ease of a duchess, and entertains his friends with the grace of a Ninon. Ergo, she is handsome, spirited, and clever. (*Doricourt walks about disordered.*) In the name of caprice, what ails you?

Doric. You have hit it. *Elle est mon caprice.* The mistress of Lord George Jennett is my caprice. Oh, insufferable!

Sav. What, you saw her at the masquerade?

Doric. Saw her, loved her, died for her—without knowing her; and now, the curse is, I can't hate her.

Sav. Ridiculous enough! All this distress about a kept woman, whom any man may have, I dare swear, in a fortnight. They've been jarring some time.

Doric. Have her! The sentiment I have conceived for the witch is so unaccountable, that, in that line, I cannot bear her idea. Were she a woman of honour, for a wife, I could adore her; but I really believe, if she should send me an assignation, I should hate her.

Sav. Heyday! This sounds like love. What becomes of poor Miss Hardy?

Doric. Her name has given me an ague! Dear Saville, how shall I contrive to make old Hardy cancel the engagements! The moiety of the estate, which he will forfeit, shall be his the next moment by deed of gift.

Sav. Let me see: can't you get it insinuated that you are a devilish wild fellow; that you are an infidel, and attached to wenching, gaming, and so forth?

Doric. Ay, such a character might have done some good two centuries back. But who the devil can it frighten now? I believe it must be the mad scheme at last. There, will that do for a grin? (*Affects madness.*)

Sav. Ridiculous! but how are you certain that the woman who has so bewildered you belongs to Lord George?

Doric. Flutter told me so.

Sav. Then fifty to one against the intelligence.

Doric. It must be so. There was a mystery in her manner, for which nothing else can account. *A violent rap.*) Who can this be?

Sav. (*Looks out.*) The proverb is your answer; 'tis Flutter himself. Tip him a scene of the madman, and see how it takes.

Doric. I will; a good way to send it about town. Shall it be for the melancholy kind, or the raving?

Sav. Rant! rant! Here he comes.

Doric. Talk not to me, who can pull comets by the beard, and overset an island!

Enter Flutter.

There! This is he! this is he who hath sent my poor soul, without coat or breeches, to be tossed about in æther like a duck-feather! Villain, give me my soul again! (*Seizes him.*)

Flut. Upon my soul! I hav'n't got it. (*Exceedingly frightened.*)

Sav. Oh! Mr. Flutter, what a melancholy sight! I little thought to have seen my poor friend reduced to this.

Flut. Mercy defend me! What, is he mad?

Sav. You see how it is. A cursed Italian lady—Jealousy—gave him a drug; and every full of the moon—

Doric. Moon! Who dares talk of the moon? The patroness of genius; the rectifier of wits; the—Oh! here she is! I feel her; she tugs at my brain. She has it! she has it! Oh! [*Exit.*

Flut. Well, this is dreadful! exceeding dreadful, I protest. Have you had Monro?

Sav. Not yet. The worthy Miss Hardy—what a misfortune!

Flut. Ay, very true. Do they know it?

Sav. Oh, no! the paroxysm seized him but this morning.

Flut. Adieu; I can't stay. (*Going in great haste.*)

Sav. But you must stay, (*holding him*) and assist me; perhaps he'll return again in a moment; and when he is in this way, his strength is prodigious.

Flut. Can't, indeed; can't, upon my soul. (*Going.*)

Sav. Flutter, don't make a mistake now; remember, 'tis Doricourt that's mad.

Flut. Yes—you mad.

Sav. No, no; Doricourt.

Flut. Egad! I'll say you are both mad, and then I ca'nt mistake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Sir George Touchwood's House.*

Enter SIR GEORGE *and* LADY FRANCES TOUCHWOOD.

Sir G. The bird is escaped; Courtall is gone to France.

Lady F. Heaven and earth! Have you been to seek him?

Sir G. Seek him! Ay.

Lady F. How did you get his name? I should never have told it you.

Sir G. I learned it in the first coffee-house I entered. Every body is full of the story.

Lady F. Thank heaven, he's gone! But I have a story for you: the Hardy family are forming a plot upon your friend Doricourt, and we are expected in the evening to assist.

Sir G. With all my heart, my angel! but I can't stay to hear it unfolded. They told me Mr. Saville would be at home in half an hour, and I am impatient to see him. The adventure of last night—

Lady F. Think of it only with gratitude. The danger I was in has overset a new system of conduct, that perhaps I was too much inclined to adopt. But henceforward, my dear Sir George, you shall be my constant companion and protector; and when they ridicule the unfashionable monsters, the felicity of our hearts will make their satire pointless.

Sir G. Charming angel! You almost reconcile me to Courtall. Hark! here's company. (*Stepping to the door.*) 'Tis your lively widow; I'll step down the back stairs to escape her. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. RACKET.

Mrs. R. Oh, Lady Frances! I am shocked to death. Have you received a card from us?

Lady F. Yes; within these twenty minutes.

Mrs. R. Ay, tis of no consequence. 'Tis all over—Doricourt's mad.

Lady F. Mad!

Mrs. R. My poor Letitia! Just as we were enjoying ourselves with the prospect of a scheme that was planned for their mutual happiness, in came Flutter, breathless, with the intelligence: I flew here to know if you had heard it.

Lady F. No, indeed; and I hope it is one of Mr. Flutter's dreams.

Enter SAVILLE.

Apropos; now we shall be informed. Mr. Saville, I rejoice to see you, though Sir George will be disappointed; he's gone to your lodgings.

Sav. I should have been happy to have prevented Sir George. I hope your ladyship's adventure last night did not disturb your dreams?

Lady F. Not at all; for I never slept a moment. My escape, and the importance of my obligations to you, employed my thoughts. But we have just had shocking intelligence. Is it true that Doricourt is mad?

Sav. So, the business is done. (*Aside.*) Madam, I am sorry to say, that I have just been a melancholy witness of his ravings; he was in the height of a paroxysm.

Mrs. R. Oh, there can be no doubt of it! Flutter told us the whole history. Some Italian princess gave him a drug, in a box of sweetmeats, sent to him by her own page; and it renders him lunatic every month. Poor Miss Hardy! I never felt so much on any occasion in my life.

Sav. To soften your concern, I will inform you, madam, that Miss Hardy is less to be pitied than you imagine.

Mrs. R. Why so, sir?

Sav. 'Tis rather a delicate subject, but he did not love Miss Hardy.

Mrs. R. He did love Miss Hardy, sir; and would have been the happiest of men.

Sav. Pardon me, madam; his heart was not only free from that lady's chains, but absolutely captivated by another.

Mrs. R. No, sir; no. It was Miss Hardy who captivated him. She met him last night at the masquerade, and charmed him in disguise. He professed the most violent passion for her; and a plan was laid this evening to cheat him into happiness.

Sav. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my soul, I must beg your pardon! I have not eaten of the Italian princess's box of sweetmeats, sent by her own page; and yet I am as mad as Doricourt. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. R. So it appears. What can all this mean?

Sav. Why, madam, he is at present in his perfect senses; but he'll lose them in ten minutes through joy. The madness was only a feint, to avoid marrying Miss Hardy. Ha, ha, ha! I'll carry him the intelligence directly. (*Going.*)

Mrs. R. Not for worlds. I owe him revenge now for what he has made us suffer. You must promise not to divulge a syllable I have told you; and when Doricourt is summoned to Mr. Hardy's, prevail on him to come, madness and all.

Lady F. Pray do. I should like to see him shewing off, now I am in the secret.

Sav. You must be obeyed; though 'tis inhuman to conceal his happiness.

Mrs. R. I am going home; so I'll set you down at his lodgings, and acquaint you, by the way, with our whole scheme. Allons!

Sav. I attend you. (*Leading her out.*)

Mrs. R. You won't fail us?

[*Exeunt Mr. Saville and Mrs. Racket.*

Lady F. No; depend on us. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Doricourt's Lodgings.*

DORICOURT *seated, reading.*

Doric. (*Flings away the book.*) What effect can the morals of fourscore have on a mind torn with passion? (*Musing.*) Is it possible such a soul as her's can support itself in so humiliating a situation? A kept woman! (*Rising.*) Well, well; I am glad it is so! I am glad it is so!

Enter SAVILLE.

Sav. What a happy dog you are, Doricourt! I might have been mad, or beggared, or pistoled, myself, without its being mentioned. But you, forsooth, the whole female world is concerned for. I reported the state of your brain to five different women. The lip of the first trembled; the white bosom of the second heaved a sigh; the third ejaculated, and turned her eye to—the glass; the fourth blessed herself; and the fifth said, whilst she pinned a curl, "Well, now perhaps he'll be an amusing companion: his native dulness was intolerable."

Doric. Envy! sheer envy, by the smiles of Hebe! There are not less than forty pair of the brightest eyes in town will drop crystals, when they hear of my misfortune.

Sav. Well! but I have news for you. Poor Hardy is confined to his bed; they say he is going out of the world by the first post, and he wants to give you his blessing.

Doric. Ill! so ill! I am sorry from my soul. He's a worthy little fellow, if he had not the gift of foreseing so strongly.

Sav. Well, you must go and take leave.

Doric. What! to act the lunatic in the dying man's chamber.

Sav. Exactly the thing; and will bring your business to a short issue; for his last commands must be, that you are not to marry his daughter.

Doric. That's true, by Jupiter! and yet, hang it! impose upon a fellow at so serious a moment! I can't do it.

Sav. You must, faith. I am answerable for your appearance, though it should be in a straight waistcoat. He knows your situation, and seems the more desirous of an interview.

Doric. I don't like encountering Racket. She's an arch, little devil, and will discover the cheat.

Sav. There's a fellow! cheated ninety-nine women, and now afraid of the hundredth.

Doric. And with reason, for that hundredth is a widow. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Hardy's.*

Enter MRS. RACKET *and* MISS OGLE.

Miss O. And so, Miss Hardy is actually to be married to-night?

Mrs. R. If her fate does not deceive her. You are apprised of the scheme, and we hope it will succeed.

Miss O. Deuce take her! she's six years younger than I am. (*Aside.*) Is Mr. Doricourt handsome?

Mrs. R. Handsome, generous, young, and rich. There's a husband for ye! Isn't he worth pulling caps for?

Miss O. O'my conscience, the widow speaks as though she'd give cap, ears, and all for him. (*Aside.*) I wonder you didn't try to catch this wonderful man, Mrs. Racket?

Mrs. R. Really, Miss Ogle, I had not time. Besides, when I marry, so many stout young fellows will hang themselves, that, out of regard to society, in these sad times, I shall postpone it for a few years. This will cost her a new lace; I heard it crack. (*Aside.*)

Enter SIR GEORGE *and* LADY FRANCES.

Sir G. Well, here we are. But where's the knight of the woeful countenance?

Mrs. R. Here soon, I hope; for a woeful night it will be without him.

Sir G. Oh, fie! do you condescend to pun?

Mrs. R. Why not? It requires genius to make a good pun; some men of bright parts can't reach it. I know a lawyer who writes them on the back of his briefs; and says they are of great use—in a dry cause.

Enter FLUTTER.

Flut. Here they come! here they come! Their coach stopped as mine drove off.

Sav. (*Without.*) Come, let me guide you! This way, my poor friend! Why are you so furious?

Doric. (*Without.*) The house of death! to the house of death!

Enter DORICOURT *and* SAVILLE.

Ah! this is the spot!

Lady F. How wild and fiery he looks!

Miss O. Now, I think he looks terrified!

Mrs. R. I never saw a madman before. Let me examine him. Will he bite?

Sav. Pray keep out of his reach, ladies. You don't know your danger. He's like a wild cat, if a sudden thought seizes him.

Mrs. R. You talk like a keeper of wild cats. How much do you demand for shewing the monster?

Doric. I don't like this; I must rouse their sensibility. (*Aside.*) There! there she darts through the air in liquid flames. Down again. Now I have her. Oh! she burns! she scorches! Oh! she eats into my very heart!

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Doric. I am laughed at!

Mrs. R. Laughed at! ay, to be sure; why, I could play the madman better than you. There! there she is! Now I have her! Ha, ha, ha!

Doric. I'll leave the house: I'm covered with confusion. (*Going.*)

Sir G. Stay, sir; you must not go. 'Twas poorly done, Mr. Doricourt, to affect madness rather than fulfil your engagements.

Doric. Affect madness? Saville, what can I do?

Sav. Since you are discovered, confess the whole.

Doric. Yes; since my designs have been so unaccountably discovered, I will avow the whole. I cannot love Miss Hardy; and I will never—

Sav. Hold, my dear Doricourt! What will the world say to such—

Doric. D— the world! What will the world give me for the loss of happiness? Must I sacrifice my peace to please the world?

Sir G. Yes, every thing, rather than be branded with dishonour.

Lady F. Though our arguments should fail, there is a pleader, whom you surely cannot withstand; the dying Mr. Hardy supplicates you not to forsake his child.

Sir G. The dying Mr. Hardy!

Flut. The dying Mr. Hardy!

Enter VILLERS.

Vil. The dying Mr. Hardy requests you to grant him a moment's conversation, Mr. Doricourt; though you should persist to send him miserable to the grave. Let me conduct you to his chamber.

Doric. Oh! ay, anywhere; to the antipodes; to the moon. Carry me. Do with me what you will.

Mrs. R. I'll follow, and let you know what passes.

[*Exeunt Vil., Doric., Mrs. R., and Miss O.*

Flut. Ladies, ladies! have the charity to take me with you, that I may make no blunder in repeating the story. [*Exit.*

Lady F. Sir George, you don't know Mr. Saville. [*Exit.*

Sir G. Ten thousand pardons; I have been with the utmost impatience at your door twice to-day.

Sav. I am concerned you had so much trouble, Sir George.

Sir G. Trouble! what a word! I hardly know how to address you; your having preserved Lady Frances in so imminent a danger—Start not, Saville; to protect Lady Frances was my right. You have wrested from me my dearest privilege.

Sav. I hardly know how to answer such a reproach.

Sir G. I do not mean to reproach you. I hardly know what I mean. There is one method by which you may restore peace to me. I have a sister, Saville, who is amiable; and you are worthy of her. You must go with us into Hampshire: and, if you see each other with the eyes I do, our felicity will be complete.

Sav. I will attend you to Hampshire with pleasure; but not on the plan of retirement. Society has claims on Lady Frances that forbid it.

Sir G. Claims, Saville?

Sav. Yes, claims; Lady Frances was born to be the ornament of courts. She is sufficiently alarmed, not to wander beyond the reach of her protector; and, from the British court the most tenderly, anxious husband could not wish to banish his wife. Bid her keep in her eye the bright example who

presides there; the splendour of whose rank yields to the superior lustre of her virtue.

Re-enter Mrs. Racket, Lady Frances, Miss Ogle, *and* Flutter.

Mrs. R. Oh, heavens! do you know—

Flut. Let me tell the story. As soon as Doricourt—

Mrs. R. "I protest you sha'n't," said Mr. Hardy—

Flut. No, 'twas Doricourt spoke first. Says he—No; 'twas the parson, says he—

Mrs. R. Stop his mouth, Sir George; he'll spoil the tale.

Sir G. Never heed circumstances; the result, the result.

Mrs. R. No, no; you shall have it in form. Mr. Hardy performed the sick man like an angel. He sat up in bed, and talked so pathetically, that the tears stood in Doricourt's eyes.

Flut. Ay, stood; they did not drop, but stood. I shall in future be very exact. The parson seized the moment: you know, they never miss an opportunity.

Mrs. R. "Make haste," said Doricourt; "if I have time to reflect, poor Hardy will die unhappy."

Flut. They were got as far as the day of judgment, when we slipped out of the room.

Sir G. Then, by this time they must have reached amazement; which, every body knows, is the end of matrimony.

Mrs. R. Ay; the reverend fathers ended the service with that word, prophetically; to teach the bride what a capricious monster a husband is.

Sir G. I rather think it was sarcastically; to prepare the bridegroom for the unreasonable humours and vagaries of his helpmate.

Lady F. Here comes the bridegroom of to-night.

Re-enter Doricourt *and* Villers. *Villers whispers Saville, who goes out.*

Omnes. Joy! joy! joy!

Miss O. If he's a sample of bridegrooms, keep me single! A younger brother, from the funeral of his father, could not carry a more fretful countenance.

Flut. Oh! now he's melancholy mad, I suppose.

Lady F. You do not consider the importance of the occasion.

Vil. No; nor how shocking a thing it is for a man to be forced to marry one woman, whilst his heart is devoted to another.

Mrs. R. Well, now 'tis over, I confess to you, Mr. Doricourt, I think 'twas a most ridiculous piece of Quixotism, to give up the happiness of a whole life to a man, who, perhaps, has but a few moments to be sensible of the sacrifice.

Flut. So it appeared to me. But, thought I, Mr. Doricourt has travelled; he knows best.

Doric. Zounds! confusion! did ye not all set upon me! Didn't ye all talk to me of honour—compassion—justice?

Sir G. Very true; you have acted according to their dictates, and I hope the utmost felicity of the married state will reward you.

Doric. Never, Sir George! To felicity I bid adieu; but I will endeavour to be content. Where is my—I must speak it—where is my wife?

Enter Letitia, *masked, led by* Saville.

Sav. Mr. Doricourt, this lady was pressing to be introduced to you.

Doric. Oh! (*Starting.*)

Let. I told you last night you should see me at a time when you least expected me, and I have kept my promise.

Vil. Whoever you are, madam, you could not have arrived at a happier moment. Mr. Doricourt is just married.

Let. Married! Impossible! 'Tis but a few hours since he swore to me eternal love: I believed him, gave him up my virgin heart, and now—Ungrateful sex!

Doric. Your virgin heart! No, lady; my fate, thank heaven! yet wants that torture. Nothing, but the conviction that you was another's, could have made me think one moment of marriage, to have saved the lives of half mankind. But this visit, madam, is as barbarous as unexpected. It is now my duty to forget you; which, spite of your situation, I found difficult enough.

Let. Situation! what situation?

Doric. I must apologize for explaining it in this company; but, madam, I am not ignorant that you are the companion of Lord George Jennett; and this is the only circumstance that can give me peace.

Let. I, a companion! ridiculous pretence! No, sir! know, to your confusion, that my heart, my honour, my name, is unspotted as her's you have married; my birth equal to your own; my fortune large. That, and my person, might have been your's. But, sir, farewell! (*Going.*)

Doric. Oh! stay a moment. Rascal! is she not—

Flut. Who, she? O lord! no; 'Twas quite a different person that I meant. I never saw that lady before.

Doric. Then, never shalt thou see her more! (*Shakes Flutter.*)

Mrs. R. Have mercy upon the poor man! Heavens! he'll murder him.

Doric. Murder him! yes; you, myself, and all mankind. Sir George—Saville—Villers—'twas you who pushed me on this precipice; 'tis you who have snatched from me joy, felicity, and life.

Mrs. R. There, now! how well he acts the madman! This is something like! I knew he would do it well enough, when the time came.

Doric. Hard-hearted woman! enjoy my ruin; riot in my wretchedness.

Enter Hardy, *hastily, in his nightcap and gown.*

Har. This is too much. You are now the husband of my daughter; and how dare you shew all this passion about another woman?

Doric. Alive again!

Har. Alive! ay, and merry. Here, wipe off the flour from my face. I was never in better health and spirits in all my life. I foresaw 'twould do. Why, my illness was only a fetch, man, to make you marry Letty.

Doric. It was! base and ungenerous! Well, sir, you shall be gratified. The possession of my heart was no object either with you or your daughter: my fortune and name was all you desired, and these I leave ye. My native England I shall quit; nor ever behold you more. But, lady, that, in my exile, I may have one consolation, grant me the favour you denied last night; let me behold all that mask conceals, that your whole image may be impressed on my heart, and cheer my distant solitary hours.

Let. This is the most awful moment of my life. Oh, Doricourt! the slight action of taking off my mask stamps me the most blest, or miserable of women!

Doric. What can this mean? Reveal your face, I conjure you.

Let. Behold it. (*Unmasks.*)

Doric. Rapture! transport! heaven!

Flut. Now for a touch of the happy madman.

Let. This little stratagem arose from my disappointment in not having made the impression on you I wished. The timidity of the English character threw a veil over me you could not penetrate. You have forced me to emerge in some measure

from my natural reserve, and to throw off the veil that hid me.

Doric. I am yet in a state of intoxication: I cannot answer you. Speak on, sweet angel!

Let. You see I can be anything; choose, then, my character: you shall fix it. Shall I be an English wife? or, breaking through the bonds of nature and education, step forth to the world in all the captivating glare of foreign manners?

Doric. You shall be nothing but yourself: nothing can be captivating that you are not. I will not wrong your penetration, by pretending that you won my heart at the first interview; but you have now my whole soul: your person, your face, your mind, I would not exchange for those of any other woman breathing.

Har. A dog! how well he makes up for past slights! Cousin Racket, I wish you a good husband, with all my heart. Mr. Flutter, I'll believe every word you say this fortnight. Mr. Villers, you and I have managed this to a T. I never was so merry in my life: 'gad, I believe I can dance. (*Footing.*)

Doric. Charming, charming creature!

Let. Congratulate me my dear friends! Can you conceive my happiness?

Har. No; congratulate me, for mine is the greatest.

Flut. No; congratulate me, that I have escaped with life, and give me some sticking-plaster; this wild cat has torn the skin from my throat.

Har. Come into the next room; I have ordered out every drop of my forty-eight; and I'll invite the whole parish of St. George's, but we'll drink it out, except one dozen, which I shall keep under three double locks, for a certain christening, that I foresee will happen within this twelvemonth.

Doric. My charming bride! It was a strange perversion of taste, that led me to consider the delicate timidity of your deportment as the mark of an uninformed mind, or inelegant manners. I feel now, it is to that innate modesty, English husbands owe a felicity, the married men of other nations are strangers to; it is a sacred veil to your own charms; it is the surest bulwark to your husband's honour; and curse on the hour, should it ever arrive, in which British ladies shall sacrifice to foreign graces the grace of modesty! [*Exeunt.*

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY MILES PETER ANDREWS.



I. R. DODD.

Act II.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

SIR CHARLES CHOUSE	LITIGAMUS	DIARY
SAVILLE	GRUMP	MRS. FLURRY
FLURRY	PALLET	AUGUSTA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Breakfasting-room in Saville's house.*

SAVILLE *and Servant discovered.*

Saville. (*Knocking without.*) See who's there; I'm not at home. [*Exit Servant.*] How strange, that though I am sensible of my error, I have not power to correct it! though I feel my ruin, I have not spirit to avoid it! Would I could recall—but 'tis impossible! Last night completed the loss of all my ready money, and if I cannot instantly raise more on my estate—

Diary. (*Without.*) Not at home! don't tell me, I will see him, whether he be at home or no.

Servant. (*Without.*) I tell you my master's not at home: coming here with your strange jumble of names which never met before.

Saville. This can be nobody but Diary, Augusta's woman.

Enter DIARY *and Servant.*

Diary. Not at home, indeed! Why, do you think I, that have read Milton, and Roderick Random, and other historians, am to be deceived by an ignorant—

Saville. Patience, good Diary! I am very happy to see you.

Diary. Sir, I have brought you a letter, sir.

Saville. From Augusta!

Diary. No, sir; from Mr. Flurry.

Saville. From Mr. Flurry!

Diary. (*Taking out a book and giving the letter.*) Yes, here it is, safe enclosed in my dear Pamela; it has been there these two days, I assure you.

Saville. Why, then, not favour me with it before?

Diary. Because I was sadly afraid it would make you melancholy; and they tell me you're already a cup too low, as old Saucer, the poet, calls it.

Saville. Well, Diary, one must learn to brave misfortunes. Let us see what the wise star-gazer chooses to predict. (*Reads.*) "*Mr. Saville,—Though my ward, Augusta, is an heiress, she cannot marry without my consent; and I am resolved she shall never be the wife of a libertine—*"

Diary. (*Reading Pamela to herself.*) That Mr. B. was a wicked wretch, to be sure, though Miss Pamela might wear a check apron.

Saville. (*Reading.*) "*I am sorry on account of your uncle, my friend Grump, and wish you were sorry on your own.*—PAUL FLURRY."

Diary. (*To herself.*) What a sad thing it would have been if he had succeeded!

Saville. How! do you come to mock at my distress, Diary?

Diary. Who, I come to mock! I assure you, Mr. Saville, there's no young woman in England enjoys distress more than I do: I never read a book that ends happily, if I know it.

Saville. So! this is what I dreaded, though no more than I had reason to expect:—by your being the bearer of this letter, I am to suppose your lovely mistress agrees with her guardian.

Diary. Yes, sir, she is quite agreeable, as we say: you have so often promised to reform, and so often broke your promise, that—

Saville. True, Diary; but whatever I may feel, I have still pride enough to applaud her conduct, and condemn my own: tell her so, Diary; and tell her besides, though I have adored her from life's early period, and, whilst I have breath, can never cease to love her, yet—but no matter; 'tis now too late—

Diary. Never too late to mend, sir. Lard! he's a great general, as they said of Sir Isaac Newton. It grieves me to part with him. (*Aside.*) Oh! Mr. Saville, if you knew all—

Saville. Knew what, Diary?

Diary. What I have seen, sir.

Saville. Well, what have you seen?

Diary. Oh! such things, sir! but it is not my business to tell secrets, else I know what I know; and when people talk in their sleep, I guess what they would be at, as Lothario, the Fair Penitent, says. Good b'ye, sir!

Saville. For heaven's sake! explain a little—but, perhaps—farewell, good Diary.

Diary. He's a sweet man, as Juliet says to old Capillaire, in the play. (*Aside.*) Ah! Mr. Saville, if you had been my lover—

Saville. What would you have done, my kind friend?

Diary. Anything you had pleased, as your great old ladies did, Juno and Proserpine, and Jane Shore did. Stand out of the way. (*To the Serv.*) Lard! he's a dear fellow, and if my mistress had ran away with him, we should have all got into a novel together. (*Aside.*)

Enter Sir Charles Chouse.

Your servant, Sir Charles Chouse.

Sir C. Good day, Mrs. Diary; what, still on the same tune, eh?

Diary. Ah! we have played it for the last time, sir. Adieu, Mr. Saville! Out of the way, varlet!

[*Exit, followed by Servant.*

Sir C. What, the happy day is fixed at last, Saville!

Saville. Happy, sir! This is no time for raillery.

Sir C. No, 'faith! marriage is too serious a subject to joke upon; but if it stings you now, what will it do hereafter?

Saville. Oh! Sir Charles, I have lost a treasure.

Sir C. Lost a treasure! When?

Saville. Now, this very moment—the best of women!

Sir C. A woman! thank heaven it's no worse! I thought you had lost the other half of your fortune.

Saville. Fortune! I have lost Augusta; the source—the summit of my hopes. Read that letter.

Sir C. (*Reads.*) Why, how has this happened? you are not more of a libertine than you were.

Saville. But am I not more involved? is not my fortune squandered—gone? am I not discarded by my uncle, the only relation I have that can assist me? without friends—almost without resource?

Sir C. Nay, never droop, man; write to your uncle, promise reformation, talk of prudence and parsimony; get him to raise the wind, and then for another venture: fortune, you know, must wheel about.

Saville. Sir Charles, you revive me. I'll not give way to despondence. I will write to my uncle; though what hopes can I entertain from such an avaricious disposition? meanwhile, I have scarcely a guinea to throw in the way of the blind goddess, were she inclined to favour me.

Sir C. Don't let that distress you; though I have not the means, our new friend will be here in an instant, and he is both liberal and capable.

Saville. Our new friend!

Sir C. Yes, the young hussar officer with the wound in his forehead; who, from his long residence abroad, has been styled the Chevalier. See, here he is, and as gay and lively as ever.

Enter Augusta, *in an hussar dress.*

Augusta. (*Singing.*) "Care flies from the lad that is merry"—How fares it, my heroes? Eh! melancholy, Saville? what's the matter with you?

Sir C. Hush! don't interrupt him; he's thinking.

Augusta. Thinking! Sure, he can't be so unfashionable. What, turned philosopher, Saville?

Saville. No, Chevalier; I wish I could: but every man ruminates on his losses, and mine are irrecoverable.

Augusta. Not if money will replace them. Come, come, my friend, you lost a few thousands last night, I won them, and if the loan will assist you, you may command me.

Saville. Are you serious?

Augusta. Ay, serious as a philosopher. Here, in this pocket-book, are notes for nearly five thousand pounds, take and make the most of them.

Saville. What, without thinking when and how you are to be repaid.

Augusta. Thinking again, Saville! psha! what's the use of thinking? true genius is above it; it always acts by instinct: so, take the money, and if you would oblige me, say no more about it.

Sir C. Harkye! Chevalier, if instinct will prompt you to find another pocket-book, give it to me.

Saville. Why, this is the most extraordinary act, Chevalier—but without you name some mode of re-payment, upon my honour, I cannot accept—

Sir C. Stop! I'll settle the difference. You seem not to want the money, and he seems not to want the security: now I want the money, and have no security to give. So the business is settled at once.

Saville. Well, Chevalier, rather than our friend's archness should have no effect, I will accept your offer on one condition—instantly take my bond, payable in three days; and by that time, if my lawyer has not deceived—ay, my estate will be sold, and I shall be in possession of thrice the sum.

Augusta. Well, if you will have it so—

Saville. Nay, I will have it no other way. I'll go and prepare the bond this instant. Sir Charles, you will be kind enough to—

Sir C. (*Aside to Saville.*) Oh! leave me to manage where anything is to be got. [*Exit Saville.*] Bravo! my dear cousin Augusta, bravo! you play your part excellently! in this disguise it is impossible he should know you: why, I scarcely know you myself. Let me look at you.

Augusta. Hush! this further supply will draw him deeper in the toils; for if he plays again and loses—

Sir C. Which he certainly will. I have secured the loaded dice.

Augusta. And I have secured the lawyer: the very man he has employed to raise him more money, is my particular friend; so, when I can get the deeds, the property, and the estate, into my hands, my purpose is effected.

Sir C. But do you seriously wish to complete his [ruin?

Augusta. Seriously.

Sir C. Why so?

Augusta. Ay, there's the mystery—one day or other you shall know; in the meantime, be assured I love him more than ever.

Sir C. Then why not marry him?

Augusta. What, to prevent the flame from increasing, eh! Mr. Joker? No, no! besides, my guardian will not consent; or, if he would, my heart and fortune would both be squandered away upon a desperate game of chance. With submission, I must have better security for my affection than your loaded dice, Sir Charles.

Sir C. Well, it's not my affair: only remember our agreement—I am to assist you in stripping him; and you are to help me in improving my wardrobe.

Augusta. Without doubt; if through your means I succeed in the enterprise, you shall receive my warmest thanks, and a pocket-book into the bargain.

Sir C. Shall I? then here I swear eternal obedience, and—

Re-enter Saville.

Saville. How, on your knees, Sir Charles?

Sir C. On my knees! I could fall prostrate at the feet of the Chevalier, for his generosity to you.

Saville. Certainly; I owe him every grateful acknowledgment; but I never prostrate myself, except to the ladies.

Augusta. You are right, Saville; I never desire to see you so, but in that capacity. Oh! this is the bond, is it? and now, I hope, your cares are at an end.

Saville. Would they were!

Augusta. Heavens! what a sigh was there! why, sure, you are not in love?

Sir C. Not in love! why, poor fellow, he has just received his *coup-de-grace;* the lady has seen somebody she likes better; perhaps, you, or me, Chevalier.

Augusta. As you say, she may have seen me; and who knows but I may be as likely to please her as anybody else.

Sir C. Very true, upon my honour; the lady is my relation; and if you wish to be acquainted, I'll introduce you whenever you please; indeed, she's a very charming girl.

Augusta. Sir, I have not the least doubt of the lady's perfections.

Saville. The whole world can have but one opinion of Augusta.

Sir C. Nay, she is a perfect angel! Methinks, I see her now before me, with her arch look and roguish leer; such charming talents! such vivacity, with so much feeling!

Augusta. (*Looking in a pocket-glass.*) Egad! you colour so strongly, that I could fancy I saw her too; but that I am sure the picture is too flattering. Will you walk, Sir Charles? Saville, we shall meet at dinner.

Saville. Yes, the club are to dine with me. I shall expect you both. Chevalier, this loan of your's has given me new life.

Sir C. Yes, and it will give the club new life, too. Adieu, Saville! Don't lose your spirits, man.

Augusta. No, none of your woe-begone looks; but put on a cheerful countenance. Zounds! love—I laugh at it. I know no woman I like better than myself. Lookye! I'll stand your friend, Saville: Sir Charles shall introduce me to the cruel fair one; and if I don't laugh her into something, say I am not the Chevalier, that's all, my boy; if I don't make her resume herself, say I'm not the Chevalier. Come along, baronet. [*Exit with Sir C.*

Saville. What a fine, generous, madcap fellow it is! With this temporary relief, I'll try once more to recover; if I succeed, Augusta may still be mine. Who knows what fortune may yet have in store for me? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

FLURRY *discovered looking through a telescope; a great folio book open before him.*

Flurry. Twelve signs of the zodiac! ay, twelve. Let me see: Arus, one; Tarus, two; Gimini, three—

Enter MRS. FLURRY.

Mrs. F. There's my delectable husband, with his head full of nothing but stars and comets, as thick as he's long, yet fancying himself in a decline.

Flurry. Gimini, three; Canker, four; Virago, five—

Mrs. F. Mr. Flurry!

Flurry. Virago, five; there she is—no, she isn't—yes, she is: mercy on me, what a tail!

Mrs. F. He raves! Will you hear me, Mr. Flurry? (*Very loud.*)

Flurry. Oh, dear! my wife's voice! she's so boisterous! Will you never consider my poor nerves? I'm already in a galloping consumption. Where's my sal-volatile?

Mrs. F. Where's your senses, rather say. Will you never leave off these nostrums and nonsense? What's the use of gazing all day after a comet! If it should appear, do you think it will pay you for peeping?

Flurry. Not if I estimate it from you, my dear.

Mrs. F. I have not patience. If I were not the best wife in the world, I should run distracted; I should never survive it.

Flurry. Shouldn't you? What hopes, then, for me, if you were not quite so good a wife as you are.

Mrs. F. Don't distress yourself on that account any longer. I can't see why my youth should be wasted, and my natural endowments lost, where there is neither taste to relish, or anxiety to preserve.

Flurry. You surely can't say that I want anxiety, my life. I have had nothing else since I knew you.

Mrs. F. Then the portion shall be doubled, my life. Do you hear that?

Flurry. Oh, thunder! I fear I shall never hear again.

Mrs. F. Yes, you will; you will hear that your ward, Augusta, is going to throw herself away upon a young rake.

Flurry. So would all your sex, if they had the opportunity. A rake is your delight, and his youth your excuse.

Mrs. F. His youth our excuse! Then I am an exception to the rule; for I have thrown myself away, without any such apology to plead.

Flurry. Well, well; I have no doubt of preventing her flights; and, perhaps, I may be able to remedy your's.

Mrs. F. I scorn your insinuation and your menace; and trust I may enjoy the innocent pleasures of fashionable life, without endangering my reputation.

Flurry. Oh! certainly, wife, certainly; nothing can be so innocent as fashionable life: but though you don't see your danger, I can feel my own. My friend Grump has opened my eyes.

Mrs. F. What, sir, is my character to be canvassed by such a mean, pitiful, old miser as Grump? A wretch, to traduce me, with his covetous whims and short sentences! as careful of his words as of his money.

Grump. (*Without.*) Will come up, I say; will—that's enough.

Enter GRUMP.

Flurry. Welcome, neighbour Grump! You just come in time to stop my wife's mouth.

Grump. Stop a hurricane! Can't be done, old Shake-about. (*Slaps Flurry on the back, and breaks his bottle.*)

Flurry. A hurricane, indeed! I'm shook to shivers.

Grump. What, broke your bottle, Totteration? So much the better—teach you to be wiser—wrap up in whitey-brown—can't break that.

Mrs. F. Very neat, and vastly civil.

Grump. Don't mind civility—only picks a man's pocket. Well, what say you? give Augusta to my nephew? Had a good fortune once—may have again.

Flurry. Can't possibly think of it, neighbour. I sent him my positive refusal. He is such a spendthrift and a rake-shame!

Grump. Take a wife to tame him—nothing else can.

Mrs. F. What, sir, do you judge from yourself? Do you look upon every husband as a brute, to be tamed by his wife?

Grump. Brute! ay, first or last—seldom escapes. Advise Flurry to be careful.

Flurry. Oh, dear! why put a man in mind of his misfortunes? I must take a little daffy. Will you have a taste?

Grump. Physic the dogs! hate an apothecary's shop—coloured brick-dust, and white chalk. What's this?—stare at the sun?

Mrs. F. (*Aside.*) Pray heaven, he may break that to pieces!

Flurry. At the sun, neighbour! No—the comet's tail.

Grump. Tale of a tub—all fudge—got something else to make you stare. Send away madam.

Mrs. F. Indeed I shall not stay to be dismissed; but, like my betters, will take leave to retire. So, Mr. Longhead and Mr. Wronghead, you wise cabinet-counsellors, adieu! [*Exit.*

Grump. Happy riddance! Well, here it is: read your fate, old Tremble; here's a tale for you!

Flurry. What, will it touch us, do you think?

Grump. Touch you! yes, pretty nearly: a kind paragraph in the paper—knew it would get there at last. Listen. (*Reads.*) "*If a certain buxom lady, of a thick, punch, fanciful, water-gruel husband*"—Do you mind that?

Flurry. It quite disorders one's frame. Go on.

Grump. "*Makes assignations with baronets, near an eminent painter's, in Marlborough-street, the exact place of meeting shall be publicly stated.*"

Flurry. Mercy on me! I am quite relaxed. "An eminent painter!" that must mean my friend Pallet. I'll go there this instant: he'll tell me if there's any house of intrigue near him. I'll go there, that I will. (*Going—returns.*) But suppose it should be all a lie?

Grump. Ay, but truth's as cheap as lies; besides, see what a picture they have drawn of you! "thick, punch, fanciful, water-gruel husband!" Must be you—like as two peas.

Enter Litigamus *with parchment and papers.*

Liti. Make bold to intrude—but ask pardon for the offence—Reverend sirs, believe I have never had the superlative honour of spreading parchments for either; but if my information is right, one of you two must be the happy man.

Grump. Think you seem the happiest of the bunch, little parchment-spreader. Who the devil are you?

Liti. A proctor, at your service; write, draw, scrawl, scribble, dash, &c. Can fill a skin with the tightest; a license or a will; all the same to Litigamus: marriage or death—both necessary evils. Permit me to have the honour of setting your name down in the divorce list. (*To Grump.*)

Grump. Can't be set down—have no honour for you—there's the happy man! told you so, old Hornbeam. All the world knows of your good fortune.

Flurry. Gracious! what will become of me? Pray, Mr. Lit—tit—gamus, what brought you to my house?

Liti. My own lucky stars.

Flurry. Stars! Oh! then you come here, perhaps, to tell us about the comet?

Liti. Comet! no, no; that's too remote for my practice; some bright luminaries that blaze close at hand best suit my purpose.

Flurry. Blaze close at hand! Oh, lud! oh, lud!

Liti. Yes, my business is to make discoveries of a nearer kind.

Flurry. Nearer! what, in the moon?

Liti. The moon! no, nor the man in the moon neither; by moonlight sometimes, though my satellites mostly shine in the dark. But here's my almanack, (*taking out a newspaper*) and if I am right, as I said before, you are the happy man.

Grump. (*Reads.*) Yes, just such an almanack as mine; foretells the same event—same bill of fare.

Flurry. Bill of fare! where?

Grump. Where! Horn Tavern, Doctors' Commons.

Liti. Yes, that's the place for action; no time to be lost—such a handsome, good-looking gentleman to be so treated—Doctors' Commons is the place—citation, jactitation, excommunication, &c.

Grump. Botheration, I think, too, Mr. Cetera. What can this handsome, good-looking gentleman do?

Liti. Might I presume to recommend, nameless—I would say—nobody more alert, active, bright; quick at proof, clear in statement, nice in terms: I forbear to expatiate on myself; but only give the cue, in a week you shall be involved, in a fortnight altogether by the ears, thoroughly exposed in less than a month, and a complete happy man in a quarter.

Grump. There's expedition: only give the cue.

Flurry. Mercy on me! I have no cue to give: I know no more of my wife than you do. If we could but consult the stars—

Liti. You had better consult the civilians.

Grump. Yes, stare at a proctor—odd-looking thing enough.

Liti. Thing! Mr. Roughcast, ay, and the best thing a husband has to trust to. We fight his battles, and pepper his adversary without endangering his own noddle.

Grump. No occasion; wife takes care of his head before-hand.

Liti. Let madam do her worst; the stronger the proof, the sooner he becomes a happy man: don't be uneasy, sir, I have not the smallest doubt of your success; facts clear as day, evidence ocular and auricular; the lady totally done up, and yourself the most pitiable object in the world.

Flurry. Oh! my nerves, my poor nerves! I must have something to take; where's my Dalmahoy? Oh, oh, oh!

Liti. (*Taking one arm.*) Take my arm, sweet sir. I'm a specific always at hand.

Grump. (*Seizing the other arm.*) Come, tumble on, old Scarecrow. Here's a coat-of-arms for you; antlers for a crest, and a proctor for one of the supporters. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*Pallet's House; a room with pictures; large whole length portrait of Mrs. Flurry, in a conspicuous situation.*

Pallet *discovered.*

Pallet. A very fine woman, indeed, as I used to say to my wife. I wonder who she can be! my good friend, Sir Charles Chouse, who introduced her here for a touch of my art, has never yet favoured me with her name: wonder at that, too, as I am in most of the baronet's secrets; but great men have their mysteries, and seldom open the budget without a little reserve at bottom.

Sir C. (*Without.*) Your master is quite alone, is he?

Pallet. Oh! here comes the prime-minister himself.

Enter Sir Charles Chouse.

Sir C. Pallet, my old boy, I am glad to see thee. How goes business?

Pallet. Always ready for employment, as I used to say to Mrs. Pallet.

Sir C. Ay, you're a d—d, wicked, good sort of a fellow, that's the truth of it.

Pallet. I rejoice to find you so early abroad; before, as I may say, the sun has risen, or the nobility got up; but, indeed, the morning air makes gentlemen look as if they would live for ever. As a painter, I quite rejoice; as a physician, I should die myself.

Sir C. True, Pallet; I believe I do look tolerably; but thou hast a pretty way of touching up a picture. What think you of my fair friend on your canvas there?

Pallet. A fine subject, indeed, for a brush; exquisite complexion, charming features, beautiful locks, and a rich prospect in the back ground.

Sir C. Take great care, then, that she is not canvassed elsewhere. Mum is the word.

Pallet. Mute as my own pallet: people who talk only betray secrets; and, talking of talking, I know when it's proper not to talk at all.

Sir C. Betwixt ourselves, she is actually a mar-

ried woman, whose husband is as rich as Crœsus; and who knows but, with a little management, I may be able to dip in the same purse. She is confoundedly virtuous at present; but she has a d—d deal of discernment, and that's all in my favour.

Pallet. Yes, she will soon improve in good company; indeed, she begins to appear like a woman of fashion already; for she talks loud, though she has nothing to say; for ever in a bustle, though she has nothing to do; and, beyond all, thinks she excels in painting.

Sir C. So she does; you may see that in her countenance; but the best of the joke is, that though I have been acquainted with her some time, I have never once seen her husband. She tells me he is always sick, and I am not sorry—

Flurry. (*Without.*) Eh!

Sir C. Eh! who have we here? take no notice of me.

Enter FLURRY.

Flurry. Servant, servant, Mr. Pallet. I wanted a little word with you; but I am so heated, I can scarcely speak. I have such a woman upon my hands—eh! who's that?

Pallet. Only a discreet friend of mine: nobody you have occasion to be afraid of.

Flurry. Well, then, as I can rely on you, I want to ask your advice. Pray, do you know of a convenient house hereabouts, where people—you understand me—might meet together if they chose it?

Pallet. A woman upon his hands! convenient house! sure, he don't mean mine; or perhaps he does want such a little, snug retreat. (*Aside.*) Why, sir, there are such places, I believe, to be met with; but you, who are a sober married man, would wish, I presume, to have a curtain drawn over the exhibition.

Flurry. Curtain drawn! Me in an exhibition! you suffocate me; sure, you can't think I want such a place myself.

Pallet. Dear me! I beg pardon. Like to have made a sad mistake. (*Aside.*) But talking of wants, pray, may I ask what it is you do want?

Flurry. Why, I have seen a wicked story in the papers, which I am anxious to have confirmed, about a bad house in your neighbourhood.

Pallet. In my neighbourhood?

Flurry. Yes; near an eminent painter, in Marlborough-street.

Pallet. An eminent painter! that, indeed, can mean only me. 'Gad! very near blowing myself. (*Aside.*) Sir, I can assure you, I know of no bad house at all: this gentleman can vouch for it.

Sir C. I—I—yes, I can vouch for it; it's word for word as he states it. Pray, what were you talking of? I hope I don't interrupt business.

Flurry. No, I wish you did interrupt business. I have some reason to suspect a lady of mine being too partial to a dissipated rake of a baronet. Don't you think it very rascally, sir, in a man of fashion, to attack any gentleman's wife, who is a quiet, peaceable, good sort of man, and attacks nobody?

Sir C. Shocking, indeed, sir! What say you, Pallet?

Pallet. Oh, dreadful! and so sweet, so gentleman-like a gentleman! a gentleman who is incapable of using any other gentleman so.

Sir C. Most shameful! Have you any idea of the gallant?

Flurry. Oh! no; but they tell me it's one of your idle fellows about town, and an ill-looking dog, I hear. But are you sure there is no such house of meeting hereabouts?

Pallet. Nothing of the kind, I can venture to say.

Flurry. Ay, it's all an impudent lie, I suppose: well, that's a cordial, indeed. This is a sweet, pretty house of your's, Mr. Pallet. Some charming pictures, too.

Pallet. Happy in such a connoisseur to commend.

Flurry. You know, I promised you should draw my wife's picture some day or other. Eh! zounds! what the devil's that I see? there she is! why, you've got my wife at full length—oh, heavens! I shall faint—where's my Dalmahoy?

Sir C. The devil! his wife! this is certainly Flurry himself. (*Aside to Pallet.*)

Pallet. To be sure it is. Why would not you mention his name before? (*Aside to Sir C.*)

Sir C. What a discovery! Zounds! exert your ingenuity, make some d—d good lie or other. (*Aside to Pallet.*)

Pallet. I'll try. (*Aside to Sir C.*) Ha, ha, ha! My good friend, Mr. Flurry, so it's like your wife, is it? Ah! poor Mrs. Jenkins! It's rather a flattering likeness, though, I should suppose; but I have a way of making my pictures like everybody.

Sir C. 'Gad! so you have, Pallet—very like poor Mrs. Tomkins, now I observe. I know her at once—

Flurry. Tomkins! Jenkins! What is all this? I may as well take another look: ay, there is some difference, now I perceive; no, it can't be my wife, she could never get here.

Enter MRS. FLURRY.

Mrs. F. My dear Mr. Pallet, have you finished my picture?

Pallet. Hush!

Mrs. F. What is the matter? I tell you, Sir Charles is very impatient; he says it is not half handsome enough. Oh! dear Sir Charles, are you there?

Flurry. (*Advancing.*) Yes, and I am here, and you are here, and Mrs. Jenkins is here, and we are all here. Oh! Mr. Pallet, you are a pretty man; and this discreet friend of your's is, I suppose, the ill-looking dog that I was cautioned against. Yes, now I see it is.

Mrs. F. For heaven's sake! Mr. Flurry, how can you expose yourself before strangers?

Flurry. I believe it is you that expose me, but not before strangers.

Sir C. Now to bring her off. (*Aside.*) Upon my honour, I feel myself extremely chagrined to be the innocent cause of sowing dissensions between so deserving a couple; but wishing to have a portrait of my deceased friend, Mrs. Jenkins—

Flurry. Why, just now you called her Tomkins.

Sir C. No, no; Jenkins.

Pallet. Oh! Jenkins.

Sir C. The late widow Jenkins; and hearing your fair lady resembled her in features, I prevailed on her good-nature to sit for an hour or two; that's the whole affair.

Pallet. Yes, a perfect sketch, drawn by a master.

Mrs. F. I had best pursue the hint. (*Aside.*) Well, if this is to be the consequence of my wish to oblige, Mr. Flurry may break his heart ere he shall find me good-natured again.

Flurry. I don't recollect I ever found you so before.

Sir C. Let me persuade you, sir, not to put wrong constructions on the most harmless—

Pallet. A mere dash of the pencil, effaced in a moment.

Sir C. A circumstance that happens every day.—

Pallet. No sooner seen than blotted out.

Sir C. The first families in town—

Pallet. Flock to my house continually, and no one ever presumed to call it in question.

Enter LITIGAMUS.

Liti. This is the bad house; I've found it out; this is the place of assignation: have had my scouts at work, my client; the parchments are filling, and your exposure will follow immediately. Oh! these,

I suppose, are the parties concerned—an amicable suit, perhaps; quite the same thing to me.

Sir C. Why, who the devil are you, and what is your business here?

Liti. My business is everywhere, never out of my way; if parties are adverse, there am I; if amicable, here stands Liti; a wedding or a divorce, abuse or praise—fill but the parchment—enough for the proctor.

Sir C. Stop his mouth, Pallet. (*Aside to Pallet.*) 'Gad! this friend of your's, Mr. Flurry, is a very facetious fellow. Ha, ha! A very pleasant fellow, indeed.

Flurry. Yes, he came to my house pleasantly, and told me a very pleasant story; advised a pleasant mode of redress, and now seems as pleasant about it as if nothing had happened. Don't you think so, my dear?

Mrs. F. Yes, my dear, a very pleasant business altogether.

Liti. (*To Pallet.*) Sir Charles a generous client, you say?

Pallet. (*To Liti.*) As a prince; besides, he wants nothing of the lady but a little loose cash, perhaps, that he may reward his friends the better.

Liti. Always open to conviction, and love to prevent animosities. (*To Pallet.*) A very whimsical mistake, indeed.

Flurry. What, are you in the mistake, too?

Liti. Oh! yes. Nothing so common in practice. My friend, Mr. Pallet, assures me, there cannot be a more striking likeness, than the one to the other; and dare say, Mr. Flurry is perfectly convinced that Mr. Tomkins, Jenkins—what's his name?—was a most desirable woman; and should my client wish for the picture—

Flurry. Oh! don't mention it; I never desire to see their likeness again; let's be gone.

Liti. Well! *de mortuis nil*—please you, an arm for each. Between man and wife, who so proper to direct the path? lead them right—tread lighty o'er—(*Treads accidentally on Flurry's toe.*)

Flurry. Oh, dear! I shall never tread again; I have no foot left; I shall sink. Oh, oh!

Liti. Ask ten thousand pardons—a little too heavy—Servant, gentlemen! (*sees Sir C. and Mrs. F. ogling each other*) there, you see how it is. All will be well again from top to toe.

[*Exit with Mr. and Mrs. F.*

Sir C. This cursed picture has been very unfortunate!

Pallet. An unlucky stroke, but pretty well varnished over.

Sir C. That quivering fool will never suffer his wife to come here again, and he and his proctor together may so watch her motions, that I despair of getting a separate interview.

Pallet. It's hard upon us artists, that a lady mayn't set where she pleases.

Sir C. Therefore, I'm determined to execute a plan which I have sometime had in my head; will you assist?

Pallet. Doubtless.

Sir C. You have heard of your brother painter, Doctor Hubblebubble?

Pallet. What, the great man who cures by a look?

Sir C. Yes; that makes the dumb to roar a catch, and teaches the gouty to dance a hornpipe.

Pallet. Oh! Sir Charles, he's a most wonderful genius.

Sir C. True! then what do you think of passing for him?

Pallet. I imitate the great man! impossible!

Sir C. Why so? I am sure you are quite as wonderful a fellow. I'll be your assistant. Go and procure us a couple of suitable disguises.

Pallet. Egad! quite new: hitherto, I have only painted others; I must now go and try to paint myself.

Sir C. Lose no time: at present, I have another engagement on my hands. Adieu! I've no doubt of success, as I've such a d—d wicked, good sort of a fellow for an ally. [*Exit.*

Pallet. Yes, I'm up to anything, as I used to say to Mrs. Pallet. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Saville's house.*

Enter AUGUSTA, SAVILLE *following.*

Saville. You shall come back.

Augusta. No, while I have my senses, I'll keep them.

Saville. Keep your senses! psha! don't you wish to be on a footing with the rest of the company?

Augusta. Faith! I am not so ambitious; I hate wine. You forget I have lived abroad, Saville; I can't sit like a dull Englishman, a whole afternoon, grinning at table-jokes, and prosing over politics: my mind is active, all life and fire.

Saville. Come, come, confess you are going to sigh away the evening with some fair incognita.

Augusta. With a woman, Saville? No, hang it! that wouldn't answer my purpose. If Sir Charles does not come soon, the scheme is undone. (*Aside.*)

Saville. Where are you going, then?

Augusta. Oh! perhaps, to judge of the play, by a lounge in the lobby; or enjoy the opera, by a strut in the coffee-room; or else, take a nap in the gallery of the House of Commons, to prove my patriotism; in short, like the bulk of mankind, anywhere to avoid reflection.

Saville. That's just my own case; follow my example; if you would avoid reflection, the best remedy is at hand; to lose sight of care, take a bumper, my boy.

Enter SIR CHARLES CHOUSE.

Sir C. You are wrong there, that's the way to see it double. If the man hates thinking, send him to me: the only reflecting thing in my house is a looking-glass.

Augusta. Well, Saville, as our friend, Sir Charles, is here, I've no objection to return for a few minutes; but remember our agreement—no play for me. A word, Sir Charles: are the false dice ready? are we sure of success? (*Aside to Sir C.*)

Sir C. Yes; my confederates are in the next room; and, my life on't, we strip him of the last shilling. (*Aside to Augusta.*) Come, let's despatch. See, the lads are at it already; the bones are in motion.

Saville. Are they? then flesh and blood can't resist; and now, Chevalier, we'll lose sight of reflection for ever. [*Exit with Sir C. and Augusta.*

Enter GRUMP, *with a letter.*

Grump. Got a letter from my nephew: come to see if it's true. (*Reads.*) "*Dear uncle,—I am sensible of my error—grown quite another being—live with friends as prudent as yourself. Favour me with a little supply, to forward the reformation. Your ever obliged* GEORGE SAVILLE." Prudent as myself! can't be: however, something in it, perhaps; wish to be good-natured—lend him a guinea.

Re-enter AUGUSTA.

Augusta. So, they are already deeply engaged, and I have given them the slip; while he is pigeoned, it's better I should be out of the way. Who have we here?

Grump. One of the prudent set, I suppose; not much like me, though—pump him. Servant!

Augusta. Servant, old Truepenny! what brings you here? warrant in your pocket—arrest, the word, eh?

Grump. Yes, that's the word—don't like it, mayhap? Where's my nephew?

Augusta. His nephew! as I live, old Grump. He is rich, and I may assist Saville without injuring my own designs. (*Aside.*) Oh! sir, I ask ten thou-

sand pardons; your nephew is quite an altered man.

Grump. Hear so; begins to reform.

Augusta. Begins—finished! He has already shunned all his old friends.

Grump. That's right: hate old friends; apt to borrow money. Don't much like new ones.

Augusta. A wise maxim, sir; therefore, I should be happy to borrow a little, as being neither one nor t'other; for, betwixt ourselves, your nephew is grown so close of late—

Grump. Think he is—keeps close in his hole—why not come out?

Augusta. No; I mean close-fisted, penurious, wary. I dare say he outdoes you in everything: you keep no servants, perhaps, and only starve yourself; now he keeps several, and starves them and himself too.

Grump. Starves them, does he? Then you are not one of his keeping, that's certain. However, if he is so miserable, step on—enjoy it with him.

Augusta. Stop, stop! you haven't heard all yet. He is grown excessively fond of study, and is, at this moment, up to the elbows in Blackstone.

Grump. What, law, eh? Don't like it—keep out of the way—interrupt him, perhaps.

Augusta. Yes, you had better come another time. Good day, Mr. Grump! I give you joy, your nephew is grown quite studious. Good b'ye! So studious, so peaceful, so quiet! Your very humble servant!

Grump. Ay, call another time. Paid my visit—saved a guinea. Servant! Glad to find everything so quiet. (*A laugh within.*) Ah! what's all that?

Augusta. Plague take their clamour! (*More noise within.*)

Grump. What, hell broke loose? Blackstone in a passion?

Augusta. Stay, sir, I'll explain the whole affair. The fact is this: men of the first character and learning, who countenance your nephew, are met in the next room, to discuss literary subjects.

Grump. Literati! what, in blue stockings, eh? ay, laugh at their own jokes; never laugh at those of another. Take one peep at the blue-stockings, however.

Augusta. Stop, sir! for heaven's sake! sir, stop. If they see you, they may grow desperate; they may lampoon you—write your life.

Grump. Write my life! so much the better! get into good company; shine in the *tête-à-têtes*. Will take a peep.

Enter SIR CHARLES CHOUSE.

Sir C. Joy! give me joy, Chevalier! I have carried off the golden fleece. I have won everything. Here, here, my friend, here's your cash again, and his notes for as much more.

Augusta. Stop your tongue. Don't you see?

Sir C. See! yes, I do see; and a fine-looking fellow it is; just one of us. Come, take a round, Trusty. 'Slife! you shall enter, and get as drunk as the rest of the party.

Grump. Drunk! what, literati get drunk?

Augusta. No, no; he means intoxicated with science, and flushed with the heat of argument—don't you, Sir Charles?

Sir C. I mean flushed with the juice of the grape, and as drunk as pipers.

Augusta. Why, you've lost your senses.

Grump. Not he: can't lose what he never had. Smoke the whole. Literati, indeed! Button my pockets.

Augusta. Indeed, sir, you misunderstand him: they may have been drinking a little to quicken their fancy, and deciding their controversal subjects by betting. Nothing so common, is it, Charles?

Sir C. You never were more out in your life. Come along with me, old Crabstick, and I'll give you ocular proof, proof positive, my Trojan. There—seven's the main, and nothing's the chance; now are you satisfied?

Grump. Yes; see how they starve themselves! Off while I'm safe.

Sir C. Nay, you must not go thus, my little money-flincher; they are all so mad, you might pick their pockets without being discovered.

Grump. Might I! not a bad halfpenny amongst them, though. Get my own picked; perhaps, hanged into the bargain. No, off while I can. (*Laughs.*) Good b'ye, Literati! [*Exit.*

Augusta. So, you have amused yourself to some purpose. You don't know Saville's uncle, old Grump, when you see him?

Sir C. No; never saw him in my life.

Augusta. Except this instant, that you frightened him away, when I had persuaded him of Saville's reformation. 'Slife! though I have my motives for ruining him, there's no reason why I should not keep his uncle as a *corps de reserve*.

Sir C. Don't be vexed at my talking more than yourself; but step in, and enjoy the victory. Ha! here he comes; I must to my physical scheme on old Flurry. Adieu! my sweet cousin; what you would be at, heaven knows; only two things I am sure of: you love mystery, and I love money; and so, as he has none at present left to lose, fare you well! [*Exit.*

Enter SAVILLE.

Saville. Confusion! Day after day, the same unwearied persecution—never one fortunate hour! You here, sir! As you would not be present while we played, I think you might have avoided witnessing your friend's defeat.

Augusta. Why so? One may hurt less than t'other.

Saville. How, sir! is this a time for mirth?

Augusta. Nay, don't be angry, Saville: when a man has lost his senses, he can't expect to keep his money, you know.

Saville. Death and fire! keep your temper, sir; restrain your warmth.

Augusta. Warmth, Saville! I never was cooler in my life; and what's more, I believe you'll never find a way to warm me.

Saville. Lookye! sir, I have lost some thousands; and if you'll be temperate—(*Augusta sings*)—temperate, I say, sir, for one moment—Distraction! Will you hear me?

Augusta. Why, I do, I do hear you.

Saville. Then out of pure good-nature—merely out of good-nature, I will give you a throw for five thousand.

Augusta. Nay, Saville, I never game; besides, it would be playing for nothing—you have none of the ready left.

Saville. Then, by heavens! I'll be calm no longer. Harkye! sir, you add insult to my despair; and here I tell you, I have been duped—duped by knaves and cheats.

Augusta. Cheats! Zounds! I hope you don't allude to me, sir.

Saville. Yes, sir, I suspect you were in the combination; and to be plain, sir, I have no doubt but you advanced the money only to ensnare me; and if you do not instantly give me a chance of retrieval, I will proclaim you to the world a thief and an impostor.

Augusta. (*Aside.*) Oh, lord! nobody near: I'm frightened to death.

Saville. Come, sir, I have called you impostor.

Augusta. No, you haven't; indeed, you haven't.

Saville. Then I add coward to the stigma; and now I am resolved on having satisfaction, one way or other. Come, sir, no evasion—the sword or the dice.

Augusta. Oh, lord! sir, I never gave a gentleman satisfaction in my life.

Saville. Mean, dastardly wretch! defend yourself this instant.

Augusta. (*Kneeling.*) Oh! have pity, sir: if you'll be calm, I'll give you a thousand pounds—

Saville. A thousand devils! Give me a fair chance.

Grump. (*Without.*) Tell him not to write any more—won't pay postage.

Enter Grump.

Augusta. (*Rising.*) D—n you, sir, what do you mean by offering me a thousand pounds? (*Draws and offers to fight. Saville retires.*) Come on, I say, sir. What, you've had enough, have you? D—me! I knew I should humble you.

Grump. What, young Flash-away turned duellist.

Augusta. Sir, I have been so insulted, that I shall leave the house while I can keep my temper. Mr. Saville, if you can shake off your natural timidity, you will let me hear from you; if not, I shall be obliged to expose you; I shall, indeed.

Grump. Fine fellow! lick some of my debtors into payment. What, George, Literati too fierce, eh?

Saville. Sir, this is no time for explanation. As for you, mean wretch as you are! think not to escape my resentment.

Augusta. What, you can bully now! Sir, if you'll believe me, when you came, the hectoring combatant you now see, was down on his knees for pity, offering a thousand pounds.

Grump. Ay, ay, great bully, I warrant—not worth so many pence.

Augusta. Yes, sir, he would have frightened any other man out of his senses; but I, sir—I have humbled him. Come, go about your business; I pardon you.

Saville. Pardon me! but you are too contemptible for notice. Dear uncle, permit me to retire for a moment to recollect myself. [*Exit.*

Augusta. Contemptible, indeed. 'Sblood! I'll follow and chastise him this instant.

Grump. Great mind to let him—the dog deserves it; no, spare him this time; walk with me.

Augusta. Well, sir, out of mere respect to you; else, zounds! if I didn't know you'd prevent me, I'd—But no matter, I am cool.

Grump. That's right—more adapted to literati; come, walk side by side; there now, two heroes together. Od! lick the world, eh! brother Alexander.

Augusta. Yes, my little Clytus, when you come to know me, you'll find that I'm a match for any man—if I choose to engage with him. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*A Room in an old house, with electrical and magnetical apparatus.*

Enter Sir Charles Chouse *and* Pallet, *in disguise, as a doctor and his man.*

Sir C. Bravo! master Pallet; excellent! how well one painter can copy another. You look like the real Doctor Hubblebubble himself. I always said you had a good knack at disguise. What think you of me for your journeyman?

Pallet. Not an apothecary's 'prentice in town can be better prepared for a pestle and mortar; and, with submission, I may say, disguise sits natural upon us both.

Sir C. I have borrowed this old house, and provided the trumpery that you see, to give a better colour to the plan.

Pallet. But are you sure Flurry will venture hither?

Sir C. Quite certain: I knew he had heard of Doctor Hubblebubble's late fame in magnetism, and other modern wonders; therefore, sent him a line in the Doctor's name, assuring him that he would make a complete cure of him, gratis, for the sake of his own reputation. You may easily imagine our valetudinarian bit at the proposal.

Pallet. No doubt: but how can I bite him when he comes? My brother brush may understand something of physic, but I confess myself quite a novice in the science.

Sir C. Novice! so much the better: what signifies science in this age? puff your own ignorance, take advantage of the credulous, and you are sure to have a multitude at your heels. You must talk to him in High Dutch.

Pallet. I could as soon converse with him in Chinese.

Sir C. No matter, any jargon will suffice; his folly will keep pace with your's, I warrant you. Do but detain him here, till I can have an interview with madam, and the business is done.

Flurry. (*Without.*) Ha! hem!

Sir C. Hush! here he comes: to your studies; adjust your periwig, and fix your brow.

Flurry. (*Without.*) Mercy on me! what a terrible steep old stair-case! I'm up at last.

Enter Flurry.

Oh, dear! where's the Doctor? Is that the great man that promises to cure me with a touch, gratis?

Sir C. Yes: the worse you are, the sooner you'll be well.

Flurry. Dear me! how lucky it is that I'm so bad! May I speak to him? he seems quite taken up with himself. I expected to have seen the whole town at his door.

Sir C. Hush! no noise! this is a private day; don't interrupt his meditations; and above all, mind how you tread; the whole room is one electrical matter: if you touch a nail, you'll be convulsed.

Flurry. Oh, lord! lay hold of me. (*Pallet puts out the lamp.*) Dungeons and death! why, we are almost in the dark.

Sir C. In the dark! to be sure; that's the way your great physicians practise, always in the dark. Now, sir, prepare yourself.

Flurry. Yes—I—I will—what must I do?

Sir C. Draw near the Doctor: as the first proof of his art, he'll put you to excessive pain.

Flurry. Excessive pain! Oh, lud! I'm in a cold sweat already.

Sir C. Never fear, you'll soon be warmed. Now, Doctor, here stands your patient.

Pallet. Bring out de surprising magnetic chair.

Sir C. (*Bringing it.*) Ay, this is the panacea: this is the universal remedy. Come, sir, lose no time—get into it. (*Aside.*) Once fix him there, and I'll be off.

Pallet. Fix de patient, and go fetch de instruments.

Flurry. Instruments! Oh, mercy! I shall be cut up alive.

Sir C. Quick, quick! lose no time; I haven't a moment to spare.

Flurry. Why, what are you about? would you truss me up like a rabbit?

Sir C. So! he seems pretty safe; and now to secure his lady. (*Aside.*) Doctor, don't lose sight of your patient. [*Exit.*

Flurry. What are you going to do, Doctor?

Pallet. Now for de cure; first, dis Asiatic cap must be put over your face: come, no struggle.

Enter Augusta.

Augusta. (*Aside.*) I met Sir Charles rushing out of this door in such a dress, and in such haste, he could not answer me.

Flurry. Take it away, take it away. Mercy, Doctor! What, would you iron-mask me?

Augusta. Here's something mysterious; perhaps Saville is in the plot. (*Aside.*)

Pallet. Put on de cap, or I sall give you endless pain.

Flurry. I won't—I won't be blind-folded. Oh, lud! will nobody help me?

Augusta. (*Oversets the table with all the electrical apparatus.*) I'll aid the confusion to secure our retreat.

Flurry. Oh, lud! oh, dear! the world's at an end. We shall all be burnt in our beds. Help, help! [*Exit.*

Pallet. (*With the dark lanthorn looking about.*) Zounds, what a crash! Sure, some one must have got into the room. D—n the chair! (*Tumbles over it.*) I don't see anybody. I'm as much terrified as Flurry himself.

Augusta. (*Aside.*) Are you so? then it's high time I should take courage.

Pallet. Well, I have finished my doctorship; and so periwig begone. Now, if he does but succeed with Mrs. Flurry—

Augusta. Who succeed with Mrs. Flurry?

Pallet. Oh! forgive me my sins.

Augusta. Peace, blockhead! who is to succeed with Mrs. Flurry—Sir Charles, or Saville?

Pallet. Dear, sweet sir—

Augusta. Don't prevaricate.

Pallet. I won't. Saville, did you say?

Augusta. Ay, Saville, sir. Come, confess, or I'll do you more mischief than you intended to that old trembletonian.

Pallet. If I betray Sir Charles, I ruin everything: better lay it to Saville. (*Aside.*) Well, sir, since I must confess the truth, the whole is a scheme of Mr. Saville's.

Augusta. So!

Pallet. He prevailed on Sir Charles and me to lure Mr. Flurry into this old house, that he might pass an agreeable half hour with his wife; and Sir Charles is now gone to inform him of our success.

Augusta. Conduct me to them, then.

Pallet. What, sir, would you spoil sport?

Augusta. Sport do you call it! Shew me the way this instant.

Pallet. I will, sir! Oh, lord! I never was so frightened in all my life. If I can but get safe into the street, little Pallet will soon brush off. (*Aside.*) [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Outside of the house.*

Enter AUGUSTA *and* PALLET.

Augusta. Come along, sir; no more electrical tricks, if you please; follow me.

Pallet. To be sure, sir; but first let me secure old Puzzlepate from following us. (*Aside.*)

Augusta. Why do you loiter so? Come sir, lead the way.

Pallet. That I will, and make away too—if I can. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LITIGAMUS.

Liti. Charming fellow, Sir Charles! a few more such baronets would support a new Doctors' Commons. Crim. con. as plenty as hops. Old Flurry little thinks what he's about now.

Flurry. (*From the window.*) Help, help!—Where am I? [loft!

Liti. What, my dear Mr. Flurry up in the cock-

Flurry. My dear friend Liti, is it you? where are we?

Liti. Where are we?—in Knight Rider-street, Doctors' Commons.

Flurry. What, are you come to the Doctor to be cured with a touch, gratis?

Liti. A touch, gratis! Oh! no; that would not do for me: when I am touched, I always take.

Flurry. Oh dear! how shall I find the way out of this confounded old mansion. Will you step up and assist me?

Liti. Swift as thought—But ho! proceedings are stopped; the door is locked: it will be impossible to join issue on this occasion.

Flurry. The door locked! Oh, mercy! I shall be robbed and murdered. I'll try to get out of the window.

Liti. Heaven forbid! you'll break your neck. I may lose a client. (*Aside.*) There's a ladder yonder, by that house that's repairing. I'll go and fetch it directly. [*Exit.*

Flurry. Be quick, be quick! While I'm here, my wife may be going off with her gallant. Oh! if ever I think of a touch again—

Re-enter LITIGAMUS, *with a ladder.*

Liti. Now, dear sir, make haste and descend; but take care; one false step you know—

Flurry. Yes, yes, I know. I'll be after them. Hold it fast, Mr. Proctor. Am I fair? There now—I'll be after them as quick as a lamplighter. [*Runs out.*

Liti. (*With the ladder on his shoulder.*) 'Gad! I think I look more like a lamplighter. Ha, ha! A whimsical suit this. No matter; a good proctor can carry anything. [*Exit, with ladder.*

Enter MRS. FLURRY *and* SIR CHARLES CHOUSE.

Sir C. Surely, my dearest madam, you are not serious.

Mrs. F. Haven't I reason to be serious, Sir Charles? I am not the dupe you wished me. My servant told me Mr. Flurry was here; and I insist that you let me enter the house directly.

Sir C. I tell you he is not there; but if he were, you would not come in search of your husband? Why if this were known, it would ruin you in polite life for ever.

Re-enter PALLET, *with the key.*

Pallet. Thanks to fortune, I have escaped from my troublesome companion—Ha!

Mrs. F. Don't prevent me, Sir Charles; I insist on looking after him. Sir, open the door immediately.

Pallet. What, put man and wife in the same piece?

Mrs. F. I will no longer be trifled with.

Sir C. Think of the difference between the lover and the husband

Pallet. Yes; a good copy, and a bad original.

Mrs. F. Unhand me, I say. Nay, then 'tis time to call—help! help!

Enter SAVILLE.

Saville. How! a lady in distress! Release her this instant, or by heavens—

Sir C. Silence, Saville; don't interrupt pastime.

Saville. Sir Charles, is it you? I hope, then, there is no occasion for my interference.

Mrs. F. Sir, if you have any spirit or humanity, you will prevent my being detained any longer from my husband, who is locked up in that house.

Saville. Mrs. Flurry, the friend of Augusta! Why, Sir Charles, you would not keep the lady from her husband?

Pallet. Her husband! the old story. Harkye!—

Saville. Stand by, sir; I know the lady well, and the respect that is her due. Say no more; but let her enter the house directly.

Sir C. Zounds! Saville, is this your friendship?

Saville. Friendship! I am sorry, Sir Charles, to find you so unworthy of it. Come, madam, favour me with your hand: there! Be assured while I have life, no power on earth shall interrupt you. [*Puts her in.*

Sir C. Death and fury! Do you know what you have done, sir?

Saville. Yes; released a lady from violence; and, perhaps, saved my friend from dishonour.

Sir C. Mighty well; I understand this irony; but let me follow her, or by all that's—

Saville. Spare your warmth, Sir Charles; you have heard my determination.

Sir C. Then you shall hear mine. Let me pass this instant, or abide the consequences.

Saville. The first I will not, the last I'm prepared for,

Pallet. (*With a tuck-stick.*) Come out my two-edged brush; you shall give the finishing-stroke, I warrant.

Saville. Is this your usual bravery!

Sir C. No matter, sir; I will pass.

Enter AUGUSTA.

Augusta. (*Aside.*) Saville in danger! Let me forget my sex, and fly to save him. (*Placing herself on the side of Saville.*)

Flurry. (*Without.*) Oh, lud! I can't find her anywhere.

Sir C. Augusta and Flurry coming! Confusion! We must retire. Saville, you shall repent this insult. [*Exit with Pallet.*

Saville. I have much to repent of; but this I shall ever reflect upon with pleasure.

Enter FLURRY.

Flurry. I have lost my wife! I have lost my wife! and now I have lost the proctor!

Enter MRS. FLURRY.

Mrs. F. Oh! Mr. Flurry, how happy I am to find you. Where have you been? How did you get out of the house?

Flurry. How did you get into it? Where's your gallant? Oh! if I could but find the proctor!—

Augusta. (*Aside.*) So, all is as I suspected; and I have been fighting in the defence of a rival.

Mrs. F. Indeed, sir, I have been much obliged to this gentleman in your absence; and while I live his generosity must be engraved on my heart.

Augusta. (*Aside.*) A very passionate acknowledgment, indeed!

Flurry. Ha! what, I am obliged to more gentlemen than one. I thought, Mr. Saville had been attached to my ward, and not to my wife.

Augusta. (*Aside.*) So I thought, too.

Flurry. Oh, lud! at this rate, my poor nerves will be played upon by every fellow in town. However, I am now going to a place where they will put me in a way to reward you all: Doctors' Commons for me. Oh! if I could but catch the proctor. [*Exit.*

Mrs. F. Mr. Saville, your most obedient; I shall find a better time to thank you. [*Exit.*

Augusta. (*Aside.*) I suppose so.

Saville. How comes it, Chevalier, after what has passed, we meet as friends? though you would not fight with me, I see you dare to draw in my defence.

Augusta. The truth is, I am a strange creature, Saville; nay, so very contradictory, that, at times, you would almost think me a woman. I bullied before your uncle to prove your temper; I offered the thousand pounds to try your generosity; and I could do no less than assist you in your love affairs, especially when the lady is so deserving.

Saville. You mistake; I was her protector only, not her lover.

Augusta. Come, come, confess she is a very beautiful woman; and you wanted to mar Sir Charles's happiness by making your own—Ha! what's the matter with you? Heavens! there's blood upon your arm.

Saville. I know it; a mere scratch, not worth a thought.

Augusta. Not worth a thought! Oh! here take my handkerchief, and bind it directly. Come, you must, you shall: nay, then, I'll bind it myself. Let me see: heavens! what a wound! Oh, Saville!—

Saville. What agitates you?

Augusta. The sight of blood dissolves me; it penetrates my soul: I can't support it.

Saville. This from an enemy?

Augusta. I am not your enemy, Saville; I am your friend; one whose heart bleeds for every wound in your's. But while we talk, you grow fainter. Let me conduct you to Mr. Flurry's; there, perhaps, the lady who loves you, will console you.

Saville. Why will you misconceive me; I never loved but one nor ever can. The angel I was attached to, was as superior to the rest of her sex—But I'll trouble you no longer. Farewell.

Augusta. Stay! let me accompany you.

Saville. No; I have private business, and will detain you no further. Give me your hand, Chevalier; you are a generous fellow, and I feel much distressed from the thought of having injured you. We shall meet again. [*Exit.*

Augusta. Poor Saville! he little thinks how well I know where his private business is; but as his lawyer happens to be mine, too, I hope to get possession of his remaining property by to-morrow at farthest.

Enter a Lawyer's Clerk.

Clerk. Sir, my master, Counsellor Gab, hath ordered me to run after you with a letter.

Augusta. From Saville's lawyer; the very man I was thinking of. (*Reads.*)—"*Dearest of ladies,—Circuits, nisi prius, manifold briefs, and some motions of course, oblige me to move out of town. Must defer client Saville's distress till return—hope no distress to you; can but be more done up. Have said the needful, could say more, but desist: I am a man of few words. Your's very*—GABRIEL GAB."—Bless me, this delay may be fatal. Saville's circumstances can never suffer him to wait for this man of few words: he will most likely apply elsewhere, and my plans be entirely overset. Let me consider: I have it. As I find Saville has no knowledge of his lawyer's person, I'll pop my friend's tie over this little noddle of mine; borrow his chambers in his absence, and prove myself as wise in one gown as another. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Chambers in the Temple.*

Enter a Lawyer's Clerk, shewing in SAVILLE.

Clerk. Pray, sir, walk in; I expect my master from Westminster-hall immediately; he begged you would not go away.

Saville. I believe it is somewhat past the time appointed.

Clerk. I dare say, sir, he'll be here in a minute. Pray sir, sit down.

Saville. Thank you, friend, I shall amuse myself.

Clerk. (*Aside.*) I wonder how madam, my sham master, will escap ebeing discovered—but women and lawyers talk equally fast, therefore, her task won't be so difficult. [*Exit.*

Saville. My distresses crowd upon me so rapidly, I know not whither to turn myself: the money I am now about to raise, is my last stake; half of that is gone already. My uncle has refused every assistance—but what does it signify; I have lost all hope of my Augusta, and the charm of living is no more.

Augusta. (*Without.*) Thomas, pay the coachman sixpence; counsellor Coaxem pays the other tester: we stopped ten yards short of Temple Bar on purpose.

Enter AUGUSTA, *dressed as a counsellor.*

Your name, sir, I presume, is Saville. Sorry I have been so detained and stopped by cause why, at Westminster-hall; but if so be it should be so, as that I have not made you wait, there is nothing lost by not putting in appearance.

Saville. No apology, sir, is necessary, I assure you; you know my business, and I understand can do it; the deeds are all in your hands, and you approve them; your letter so informs me.

Augusta. Sir, my name is Counsellor Gab, and when Counsellor Gab says a thing, that is, when a thing is said, then he says no more about it: you want to find, raise, and make up a sum of money. Counsellor Gab has client to that effect. You shew cause of security, and then effect follows cause, as in cases out of number. I am a man of few words.

Saville. I like few words full as well as yourself. I am in want of money, and have shewn cause, as you say.

Augusta. True; want of money is like a chancery suit, a trial of patience.

Saville. I perceive it is, indeed; but if everything is ready, there can be no occasion for further delay, and in that case, I have only to satisfy you.

Augusta. As to the money, all that remains is a bill on bankers in form, due at sight, payable to bearer; perfectly legal, but avoids stamps, and shall be sent to-morrow; but if so be as that you like, wish, or request mode that is different, Counsellor Gab is always ready to satisfy client, without making use of many words; and if you wish for an opinion—

Saville. By no means, Mr. Counsellor; I would not wish to trespass on your time.

Augusta. You're right; a trespass on the case is, as I said before,—*Vide* cases out of number, suits, pleas, costs, taxes and demurrers; for instance, if a man loses his mistress—

Saville. I beg you will not trouble yourself.

Augusta. Or, to prove clearer; suppose plaintiff has lost fortune to sharpers, the action—

Saville. Needs no rhetoric to condemn it.

Enter Clerk.

Clerk. A lady desires to speak with you, sir.

Augusta. A lady! well, desire the lady to walk in.

Saville. I fear I intrude.

Augusta. Oh! not in the least; the lady shall be despatched immediately; I never throw away my time upon women.

Enter DIARY.

Diary. If I may be so inquisitous as to ask, your name is Mr. Lawyer Gab? I waited on you from my mistress, Miss Augusta Melmoth. Lord, Mr. Saville here; who would have supposed it? But I beg pardon, as Orestes said to his friend, Pilgarlic—

Saville. Well, what of your lady? don't be afraid of me. I hope she is well, and I ought to wish that she is happy.

Diary. Now to act my part, as well as my mistress. (*Aside.*) Nay, as for the matter of that, my young lady wants nothing; that is, nothing more than other young ladies want too. She wished to know, whether Mr. Lawyer here, had examined the marriage articles on her side, and whether Mr. Lawyer, on t'other side, had examined them too; and whether they were ready on both sides? And so I came to inquire, like the Busy Body there, in the Way of the World.

Saville. What did you say? Marriage articles! Sure, your young lady, Augusta, is not going to be married?

Diary. Lord, sir, and why not? If gentlemen deal cards one way, ladies must play their cards another; as Skippio says in Gil Blas. Don't you think so, Mr. Lawyer?

Augusta. Skippio! Never saw an opinion of his in my life: but as to cards, if two females engage with one gentleman, it's odds but he'll be put to his trumps.

Saville. You seem merry, sir.

Augusta. Yes, during term, smile and talk: in vacation, sad and silent.

Saville. Permit me, Mrs. Diary, to ask only one question. Who is destined to be the possessor of that heart the proudest might aspire to; and which once the humblest was bold enough to solicit?

Augusta. I swear, by the assizes, Mr. Saville, but you seem as if, as how you wanted to take a client out of my hands. If the young lady chooses to marry; if A wants to join issue with B, what has D to do with it?

Diary. Ay, what has D to do with issue? So pray let us alone, Mr. Saville; and do you, Mr. Lawyer, be pleased to send home the marriage ceremonies, that my mistress may put her hand to them as soon as possible; for when we women take a thing in our heads, we are determined to go through with it, as Cæsar says in his dictionary.

[*Exit.*

Saville. I ought certainly to beg your pardon for the earnestness of my inquiries; but the lady mentioned, was one whom I was weak enough—But no matter, I shall only intrude further on your patience.

Augusta. Not in the least; I feel interested in that warmth which does you so much honour; but perhaps the lady may be ignorant of it.

Saville. That is not now material. Bless me, I have exceeded my time; I have an appointment with Sir Charles Chouse, which obliges me to be punctual.

Augusta. Obliges you to be punctual! There is surely something in your manner that seems to indicate what I hope is not true, that you have an affair of honour on your hands—Can I be of service?

Saville. Sure, sir, I ought to be surprised at the alteration of your style.

Augusta. Oh dear, sir! we lawyers have two languages; one for forms and courts, another for feeling and friendship.

Saville. I am obliged to you, sir, for the compliment; but all I have to request is, that you will send the money to-morrow.

Augusta. Counsellor Gab has promised, and performance follow of course. Would I could detain him till I had seen Sir Charles. (*Aside.*) Sir, on second thoughts, if so be the laws' delay is irksome, as necessity has no law, please to wait in that library till I return, and I'll endeavour to get the sum specified on notice immediate.

Saville. It is impossible for me to stay—to-morrow must suffice.

Augusta. Let me advise you, sir, to tarry; sha'n't be long; you'll find pretty recreation in my library: Statutes at Large—Burn's Justice, new edition—Lawyer's Vade-mecum—Every Man his own Attorney—Pleadings at Nisi Prius—

Saville. Very instructive, but I can't profit by them at present: your servant.

Augusta. Pray, sir, stay a little.

Saville. It is not in my power.

Augusta. Do, take counsel.

Saville. I tell you, I have had enough of counsel.

Augusta. I hope, sir, you don't doubt my ability.

Saville. Not in the art of talking, I assure you.

Augusta. If you did but know me, you would not wonder at my excellence in that.

Saville. I wonder at nothing in a lawyer, but the difficulty of getting rid of him. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Augusta. I will but stay to disengage myself from these law incumbrances, and try if I can't be before-hand with Sir Charles; for I am determined to prevent this dreaded rencontre, if possible. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A large Exhibition Room in Pallet's house, with various pictures, and a whole length of Mrs. Flurry; a sofa, &c. The window-curtain down.*

Enter LITIGAMUS, *with a large pocket-book and pencil.*

Liti. Here am I, still upon the look-out in master Pallet's seminary, though he himself is no party to this motion; for his friend, Sir Charles, I find, though a good maker of clients, is but a sorry one.

himself; therefore, I am gone over to my first opinion. Old Flurry has got it into his head that his lady is coming here again to meet her paramour; so he has sent me slyly to take notes of proceedings. Ah! bless all billing and cooing, I say! they are the sack and sugar of Doctors' Commons. Give me a dashing wife to lead up the dance, and a good husband to pay the piper. Surely, I hear somebody; I had better conceal myself; it will look so treacherous to pretend friendship, and then discover the parties. No, at all events, I'll betray with honour. Where shall I go? Oh! ay, ay, this sofa will do the business. (*Conceals himself under the sofa.*)

Enter Mrs. Flurry *and* Sir Charles Chouse.

Mrs. F. Leave me, sir: I will no more be deceived.

Sir C. Nay, my dear Mrs. Flurry, hear reason.

Mrs. F. No, sir; I'll hear nothing: I insist on your pursuing me no further. I had never ventured here again, had I not seen you at the end of the street, and stepped in on purpose to avoid you.

Sir C. Now, my dear madam, how can you be so ungenerous?

Mrs. F. Ungenerous, do you call me; can I forget your treachery, your disrespect, your violence!

Sir C. The irresistible effect of your charms, my angel! believe me, a pretty woman should always forgive the transports which her own beauty occasions.

Mrs. F. I tell you again, sir, leave me.

Sir C. No, I will still be your shadow; you know the sincerity of my passion for you.

Liti. (*Peeping.*) Ay, now my business is going to begin. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. F. Whither would you lead, Sir Charles? Don't I know you?

Sir C. I swear you misinterpret all my sentiments. Love—pure disinterested love is the foundation of those attentions which must occupy my life. Those who view you, could not doubt it; then let us thus seal our reconciliation,

Liti. This is a case in point: A kisses B's hand.

Mrs. F. I beg, Sir Charles, you will desist.

Liti. (*Peeping.*) All nonsense.

Sir C. Come, come, opportunity is the bliss of love. [at least.

Liti. (*Peeping.*) Five thousand pounds damages

Pallet. (*Without.*) But my dear Mr. Flurry, have a little patience; depend upon it, your lady can't come into my house without my knowing it.

Mrs. F. Oh, heavens! my husband! I'm undone, if he sees us again together. Whither shall I fly! Can't we get out of the room?

Sir C. Zounds! they're at the door. Here let us step behind your picture; the fair copy shall conceal the beautiful original. (*They go behind the picture.*)

Liti. (*Peeping.*) Five thousand pounds reduced to a cipher.

Enter Pallet, Flurry, *and* Grump.

Pallet. There, now you have searched the whole house, and you see what I told you is true; no Mrs. Flurry to be found.

Grump. Glad of it: better never found again; don't you think so, old Incredulous?

Liti. Fresh company; I must turn over a new leaf. (*Aside.*)

Flurry. Dear me, I scarcely know what I'm about. There is the confounded picture I told you of.

Pallet. Yes, though I say it myself, the copy is as if the original were there, too.

Grump. (*Pulling the sofa round to look at the picture.*) Ay, one as bad as t'other; but come, let's look: looking at a picture costs nothing. What's that behind, a lamb or a goat?

Pallet. (*Discovering Litigamus.*) Oh, mercy! A man concealed?

Flurry. Murder! thieves and robbers!

Grump. Ha! what, rob me! Wish he would. Was robbed once, and never had a better day in my life: hanged the man, and got forty pounds by it.

Liti. Don't abuse me, gentlemen; I come here on business; I am no robber, I am a limb of the law.

Grump. All the same thing; better lopped off.

Pallet. My house is no place for law, I can assure you; we never have any bad people here.

Flurry. Yes you have, Mr. Pallet, bad enough; my wife is a proof of it. As to Litigamus, I sent him myself to see what he could make out.

Grump. Make you out a bill that will make you sick.

Pallet. Come, master Proctor, step out of my house; no law's delays here; you'll find nothing to make a bill from in this apartment.

Liti. Are you sure of that, 'squire Pallet; perhaps there may be objects in the back ground that may swell the landscape amazingly; figures out of sight.

Pallet. I protest and vow, I don't know what figures you are prating about.

Flurry. Prate away, dear Litigamus, have you discovered anything wicked? Do speak and make me happy.

Liti. Perhaps, yes,—perhaps, no: the picture, indeed, is not quite finished; sorry, on my own account, it is not, as well as my client's—a great deal out of both our pockets; but undone now, may be done another time: Sir Charles is a man to wheedle over a lady.

Pallet. As I hope to be E—R—A—I don't comprehend a word. What Sir Charles do you allude to?

Liti. Why, the same Sir Charles that puzzled you about Mrs. Jenkins and Mrs. Tomkins; that was himself so generous, and made love to another man's wife, merely for the sake of a little loose cash to reward his friends the better.

Flurry. Oh! that my wife did but hear that!

Pallet. Red and white lead, Mr. Turncoat! How dare you go about thus to disgrace me under my own roof?

Grump. Can't be disgraced; thought no worse of here than every where else.

Liti. Nay, if you doubt my evidence, I'll call him in the twinkling of an eye, to speak for himself; he's within a yard of somebody's elbow.

Flurry. Oh, lud!—I'm frightened to death.

Pallet. You audacious dirtier of parchment, do you think I suffer any dark doings in my house, when I am out of it?

Liti. I don't mind abuse, it's what I am used to; so I'll make bold to draw up that curtain, and throw a new light upon the subject.

Pallet. (*Goes up to the window, draws up the curtain, and on seeing Sir Charles, lets it drop again.*) I'll save you the trouble, for I defy your malice; Sir Charles has not been here, I can't say when; and should he presume to come without my knowledge, I should soon let drop—

Sir C. (*Giving Pallet a purse.*) Hush! the proctor knows I am here. Stop his tongue, and hold your own.

Liti. Yes; you do drop, indeed.

Pallet. (*Giving a purse to Litigamus.*) Why, what does the man mean? Do you want the sun to put your eyes out?

Liti. (*Takes the purse.*) Oh, no! I had much rather be hoodwinked. Perhaps I am mistaken: I thought that—but—what was it that we were talking about? Mr. Pallet, my hands are so full of business, that my memory is very treacherous.

Pallet. Nothing can be more likely for a gentleman of great practice, as I frequently find myself. When I mentioned Sir Charles, I hardly recollected what I was doing; the best artists may begin a design without knowing how it will be finished.

Grump. No good design here—bad beginning—worse ending.

Flurry. Mercy on us! We're all as much in the dark as ever; I'll go and open the curtain myself. (*Going towards the window.*)

Pallet. Sweet sir, can't think of troubling you: besides, your proctor has satisfied himself.

Liti. Quite so: Mr. Pallet's arguments are irresistable.

Flurry. No matter, I will draw up the curtain.

Grump. That's right; peep for nothing; lend you my spectacles.

Pallet. (*Stopping him.*) My pictures are not yet dry; you may put out some of the figures.

Flurry. I will go to the window.

Pallet. (*Struggling to keep him back.*) You must not.

Mrs. F. (*Disengaging herself from Sir Charles.*) Unhand me, Sir Charles.

Flurry. (*Starting.*) Oh, heavens! my wife cooped up with her gallant.

Grump. Yes; you have put out the figures, indeed.

Mrs. F. Mr. Flurry, to you, sir, only I owe any apology, if apology be necessary; but, conscious of my own innocence, I feel no fear in appearing before you.

Flurry. Oh, cockatrice! don't think of imposing upon me; I have already been frightened out of my senses upon your account; and now don't I find you here hid behind your own self? Oh! Mr. Pallet; what, you blush, do you?

Pallet. Dear sir, you know I live by colouring. Good madam, do me justice. Tell any story to save us both. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. F. I disdain prevarication, sir, and want no such aid; I came here actually to avoid this gentleman, who I saw at one end of the street and who, unknown to myself, followed me in at the other.

Liti. Very right; so that's the way both ends meet.

Mrs. F. Let me hope, sir, you will not insult, unjustly, a woman's feelings; if you have been present all the time, you can testify what has passed.

Liti. Perfectly right in your statement; I have the whole down upon paper, with the damages that would have been, but for interruption.

Flurry. There, there! I told you what would have happened; the proctor is a loser as well as myself; but I'll bring my action against you, Sir Charles, nevertheless.

Sir C. Mr. Flurry, I beg we may understand each other; hitherto I have taken compassion on your weak side.

Grump. So he did; took compassion on your wife.

Sir C. But if you are not satisfied, I have further satisfaction at your service. [me?

Flurry. Lud! lud! What, would you murder

Liti. What, put an end to the suit before term, or cause shewn, or before one doctor of the civil law has spoken upon the case?

Sir C. Peace, you ignorant—

Liti. Ignorant!

Sir C. Yes, ignorant.

Liti. Oh, oh! Ignorant! A lawyer, too; that's a libel.

Sir C. Silence, babbler! the lady will, I am sure, clear me from all attempts on her honour; and as for you, (*to Flurry*) lookye, sir; should you presume to attack mine—I say, lookye, sir—you will follow me immediately [*Exit.*

Liti. Heaven forbid! trust to the law, my client. We don't want courage in the courts; leave your quarrel to me; I'll call out the parties—citation, jactitation—

Mrs. F. A truce to your jargon, Mr. Proctor; we can quarrel enough, without any interference.

Flurry. That we can, without any interference at all. Bless me! what a happy man I am, to have my wife painted for nothing; my proctor convinced by a look, and my throat cut by way of satisfaction. Oh! what a fortunate husband am I!

[*Exit with Mrs. F.*

Grump. Yes, fortunate as wise. Such a head for matrimony! Always judge of a tree by its branches.

Pallet. What an unlucky thing it is to exhibit a picture, without first examining the back-ground.

Liti. (*Counting the money.*) And yet, my good Mr. Pallet, how wonderfully you shine in your profession.

Pallet. (*Putting his hand to his mouth.*) And my dear Mr. Litigamus, how greatly you excel in your's.

Liti. Do you think so? Then you shall paint my picture.

Pallet. Ha, ha, ha! then, in return, you shall make my will.

[*Exeunt, laughing and wheedling each other.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Augusta's house.*

Enter DIARY.

Diary. We women are always upon the 'change, as they say in the city; and I am sure my mistress would make an excellent weather-cock. Once I thought she was all love and rapture about poor Mr. Saville; but now—Oh! here she is, *propria quæ maribus*, as the heathens call it.

Enter AUGUSTA, *in her own dress.*

Glad to see you, ma'am, come to yourself again; but as you was bold enough to wear the breeches before marriage, I think you might have as well continued them on till afterwards.

Augusta. Suppose I don't mean to marry at all, Diary.

Diary. Not marry at all, ma'am! Why, now you have ruined Mr. Saville, you must give him satisfaction, as poor Polydore the orphan says.

Augusta. Better one should be ruined, than both of us, Diary. What prospect of happiness can I have with a man, whose irregularity of life is so conspicuous; his rage for play is equalled only by the inconstancy of his heart—Mrs. Flurry—

Diary. Mrs. Flurry! dear madam, have you forgot Counsellor Gab; his concern about the marriage settlement; his anxious inquiries—

Augusta. Not to be depended on, Diary, in the least: light and unsettled in his nature, he flies from one scene of dissipation to another. On hearing, as I suppose, of the discovery at the painter's, and finding his inamorata as faithless as himself, he had immediate recourse to the gaming-table, and there lost every farthing of that money, which I had, under my assumed character, taken so much pains to supply him with.

Diary. Poor dear Mr. Saville! then he is now quite stripped; as bare as parson Adams himself: he'll never be a Pyramid to your Thisbe.

Saville. (*Without.*) I must, and will see her.

Diary. As I'm a maid, Mr. Saville himself! My dear mistress, think of his distress; stay and take pity.

Enter SAVILLE, *in disorder.*

Saville. Augusta!

Diary. Ah! sir, I fear it's all in vain: you're an undone man.

Saville. I am, indeed; the last blow is struck, and hope has forsaken me for ever. What, avoid me, Augusta? Believe me, there is no occasion: I come not here to interrupt your happier hours. Gay, blooming, and surrounded with life's brightest projects, I ask you not to share the sorrows of a wretch, who suffers justly for his own imprudence.

Diary. Lord! sir, that's just what my mistress says herself.

Saville. I doubt it not; her looks betray the sternness of her heart. Turn not away, Augusta; hear me but a moment; 'tis the last request I shall ever make: I came to bid you an eternal adieu.

Diary. Dear, dear! what a dismal word that is.

Saville. If I have been thoughtless and extravagant, believe me, Augusta, my love has never been estranged from you; amidst all the torments of a torn, distracted bosom, your sweet idea still has twined around my heart. Even now, the fond remembrance of those dear delights that mutually engaged our earlier years, doubles my distress, and makes the agony I feel extreme.

Diary. I cannot bear it any longer. What a Sampson Agonistes he is!

Saville. I leave you, madam, to that happiness I was not born to bestow. But if I am now ruined beyond a possibility of recovery, know that I have plunged myself deeper and deeper, from the delusive hope of again retrieving my shattered fortune, only to lay it at Augusta's feet. I should have thought a single tear of tender recollection, would not have cost too dear. My friend, the Chevalier, can testify how strenuously I have vindicated your conduct, and arraigned my own.

Augusta. (*Coolly.*) The Chevalier, sir, entertains the same opinion of you as Augusta does.

Saville. Yes, madam, I see how it is. Too late I find, of what little moment my peace of mind is to you: Saville, the proud, the prosperous, and the affluent, you might have condescended to receive; but poor, abject, and disconsolate; his fortune ruined, and his heart broken down; not only love disdains, but even pity will not spare a sigh. From this hour I fix my opinion of your sex. Weak is the man who expects to find sympathy or feeling in a woman's breast.—[*Exit Augusta.*]—Confusion! does she mean to insult my sorrows? Can she triumph over my distress? Unkind Augusta!

Diary. Dear sir, don't take it so to heart; be calm.

Saville. Calm, Diary! Impossible! Who that has ever loved like me—Oh, oh!

Diary. Lord, lord! I can't stand it; it's too much. Mr. Saville, sir, don't think I've a heart like my mistress; I pity you, I feel for you, indeed I do. Oh! if she had ever read Pluto's Lives, or the great heroes of antiquity, she would have known what real sympathy was.

Saville. She has certainly formed some other attachment, and I will know the worst. (*Aside.*) My good Diary, I thank you for the part you take in my concerns: accept this purse; 'tis all the recompense I have in my power to make you; and now tell me, as the last favour I shall ask, who is to be the happy partner of your lovely mistress?

Diary. Don't, sir, don't—Oh! Mr. Saville, I could discover—but I won't take it, indeed I won't.

Saville. Take it; I insist upon it; and now tell me everything you know.

Diary. (*Taking the purse.*) You have been cruelly deceived; indeed you have—My artful mistress!

Saville. How, Diary?

Diary. I used to think it was all out of kindness to you; but now, I fear, she is as false as Queen Dido.

Saville. Keep me not on the torture of suspense; but go on.

Diary. Well, then, under another name—

Saville. Another name!

Diary. Yes, under another name, she has contrived to get possession of great part of your fortune.

Saville. Amazement!

Diary. In short, sir, she was the very lawyer that prated away so fast, and talked you out of your bonds and parchments.

Saville. Astonishing! But what can that avail her? she gave me the full amount of their value.

Diary. Yes, but in another disguise. As the lively Chevalier, she contrived to have it all won from you at the dice-table.

Saville. Augusta, the Chevalier! Now I see it all: treacherous, deceitful woman. Sir Charles the partner of her iniquity. He is to be the happy man—to share the fortune of the plundered Saville. He introduced me to the Chevalier, as to an honourable friend; he recommended the lawyer; he constantly held out the allurements of the gaming-table, while she, whom I adored,—Oh! false dissembler.

Diary. Be comforted, sir; weeping is in vain. Better try to forget her; she is not worth your thinking of. (*Bell rings.*) There's her bell; I'll go and give in my discharge. Well, the best friends must part, as poor Dapple said to Sancho Pancha. Adieu, Mr. Saville; I'll keep the purse for your sake. Adieu! (*Weeps.*) Lord love him, he's a sweet, much wronged, and most injurious man.

[*Exit.*

Saville. No wonder Sir Charles failed in his appointment; with such a complication of guilt and baseness, how could he face me honourably in the field? But the hour of retribution is not far off.

Enter Mrs. Flurry.

Mrs. F. I am happy to meet you here, Mr. Saville, and to take the first opportunity of returning my thanks for those obligations, which my husband would neither understand, or permit me to acknowledge.

Saville. Mention them not, madam; I know of none.

Mrs. F. You seem disturbed, sir. Has anything unpleasant happened? I hope you are not as unfortunate as myself.

Saville. Oh! madam, I am unfortunate, indeed: Augusta has undone me.

Mrs. F. She is, I fear, an artful woman, and in league with that designing man, who would have undone me.

Saville. Yes, she has not only joined to deceive, but plotted to defraud me.

Mrs. F. May the companion of her guilt be the author of her punishment. I have good reason to think, Sir Charles will soon be united to her. I overheard them just now in close conversation. He left the house but this instant, and the last thing she desired of him, was to procure a license directly.

Saville. Villain! but he shall not triumph long; your injuries, as well as mine, shall be atoned for.

Mrs. F. Moderate your transports, sir; think not of me; my wrongs have been sufficiently avenged; and to speak truly, my own indiscretions have left me not entirely blameless.

Saville. Ah! madam, touch not that string, it is torture inexpressible.

Enter Flurry.

Flurry. Mr. Saville here! How dare you shew your head, you young libertine, after your behaviour to-day? Not content with inveigling my ward, do you want to seduce my wife?

Saville. Sir, I scorn, in either instance, an action so dishonourable; my exertions, in behalf of your lady, will, if you give yourself the trouble to inquire into them, entitle me to your regard. My attachment to your ward, Augusta, was, on my part, sincere; but to spare you any further uneasiness, on that head, you will find she is going to bestow her hand to another more comformable to her inclinations; and I am free to confess, better adapted to promote her views in life. Farewell.

[*Exit.*

Flurry. Ha! how! What, give her hand to another? Exertions for this, and attachment to t'other! Pray, madam, what does all this mean?

Mrs. F. You have hitherto so carefully avoided all proper explanation, and have so greedily listened to every reproachful censure on your wife, that I am at length wearied of endeavouring to exculpate myself: your senseless jealousy distresses me every day more and more; and if you cannot grow more generous, I am determined to leave you, and retire into the country.

Flurry. Ay, do; leave me; I won't faint! I can take care of myself. I'll send for Mrs. Tomkins and Mrs. Jenkins, to bear me company.

Mrs. F. Barbarous man! when I am driven from the society of my friends; when I have banished myself for ever from you, you will find, too late, what injustice you have done my fame. (*Weeps.*) You see, sir, to what your inhumanity has reduced me: I leave you to your triumph.

Flurry. She weeps! Oh, lud! I can't stand it: anything but that; it looks like innocence; it does; for I weep, too. Oh, lud, lud!

Enter Grump *and* Sir Charles Chouse.

Grump. What, crying old Snivelface! Wife seems in tears, too. Wet summer, mayhap.

Flurry. Yes; no sunshine for me, friend Grump: quite a cloudy prospect; but, perhaps, I've wronged her.

Grump. Well, what if you have? Right her again; stand the steadier.

Sir C. You have wronged her, Mr. Flurry; I came on purpose to vindicate her character, and ask your pardon for my own intemperate warmth: I alone have been to blame. When old gentlemen marry young ladies, we rakes, you know—

Grump. Will try to join in the family compact. Always told you so, old Liquorish.

Sir C. Come, Mr. Grump, you have heard the story, and I am sure will assist in justifying innocence.

Flurry. Ha! will you, friend? Lud! I never could have thought to make the poor thing weep. Well, let's go and sob together.

Grump. Yes, sob away; tears cost nothing. More showers less storms. Get along, Tricklebeard.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A superb Apartment in Flurry's house.*

Enter Saville *and a Servant of Flurry's.*

Saville. Mr. Flurry you say is not come home.

Serv. No, sir.

Saville. Do you know whether Sir Charles Chouse is expected here?

Serv. I believe he is, sir; I understand he has been into the city on some business for Miss Augusta Melmoth, and they are to meet here to consult her guardian upon it.

Saville. Then, if you please, I'll wait their arrival. [*Exit Servant.*] 'Tis as I expected; Sir Charles has procured the license, and now Flurry is to be bullied or cajoled into consent: I shall, however, have one opportunity of exposing, if not of chastising my worthless rival. Ha! Augusta alone! I was not prepared for this: she shall find my pride equal to her own. I'll quit the room.

Enter Augusta.

Augusta. How! Avoid me, Saville? Trust me, there is no occasion. Think you I came hither to share the sorrows of a man who suffers for his own imprudence?

Saville. Far from it, madam; you came to share the wreck, that imprudence has supplied.

Augusta. Rather say, by caution and foresight, I have prevented my property from being embarked in the same precarious bottom.

Saville. Ungenerous Augusta! think not by taunts to shelter yourself from my just reproaches.

Augusta. How, sir! is a woman to be reproached for keeping guard over her passions, and not suffering her love to lead to her undoing?

Saville. Talk not of love; had I possessed the wealth of India, and you had continued the same tender, faithful fair, my fond heart once thought you; though poor and friendless, a wanderer through the world, bereft of everything but truth and virtue, I would have snatched you to my sheltering breast, and shared with you each blessing I enjoyed. Talk not of love, you know it but my name.

Augusta. Your mistaken opinion, sir, moves my pity, not my anger; I will now confess that once I cherished for you as pure and ardent a flame as ever warmed a youthful bosom. You first engaged my unsuspecting heart; even in the dawn of life, I loved you; and amid the gladsome round of childish joys, my little fluttering breast preferred its Saville.

Saville. Oh! Augusta, why thus dissemble still?

Augusta. Hear me, sir. As we advanced in years, I beheld—(heaven knows what agony it gave me!)—I beheld you wedded to dissipation; to every species of riot, intemperance, and extravagance; while a determined and desperate attachment to the gaming-table engaged your whole soul, and marked you for destruction.

Saville. And, then, conscious of my weakness, you prudently united with your friends, to profit by my distress.

Augusta. What else remained for me? instead of the flattering prospect my early fancy pictured, I saw attendant upon you only ruin and dismay. Instead of a discreet, affectionate husband to guide and protect me; instead of a tender companion to cheer the walk of life, to soothe the little cares we all must know, and share the tranquil pleasures of a peaceful home, what did your conduct offer to my view? a sullen partner of an unquiet dwelling: his temper soured by disappointment; his mind alienated from his family; his house a torment; his wife a burthen, and himself a victim to despair.

Saville. Add to the picture, a base designing woman; who, lost to every sense of generosity and honour, meanly took advantage of that unhappy victim's folly to aggrandize her own fortune, and bestow it on adventurers as worthless as herself.

Augusta. Sir, you grow scurrilous: I shall not stay to be affronted.

Saville. Madam, madam, you shall hear me; 'tis now my turn to upbraid; and I'll not lose this, perhaps the only opportunity: I am no stranger to your deceptions; you personated the lawyer to get the deeds and writings of my estates into your own hands.

Augusta. I did.

Saville. You were disguised as the Chevalier—

Augusta. I was.

Saville. Your pretended friendship was but to blind me to your arts; your loan of money to entice me into deeper play, that you and your associate, Sir Charles, might carry off the spoil.

Augusta. You are right.

Saville. Shameless effrontery! and now that base associate has, by your direction, procured a license for your marriage.

Augusta. He has.

Saville. You mean, then, to bestow your hand and fortune on that cowardly partner of your fraud and treachery.

Augusta. I shall bestow my hand and fortune where I please; nor know I what right you have to question me.

Saville. Grant me patience, unfeeling hardened woman! on this head, at least, I have a right to to question you. Why did you enrich yourself at my expense? why did you pursue me thus in various shapes to abet my follies, and hasten my undoing? Could you not be blessed unless I were miserable? what,w hat could induce you to swell your cup of happiness with the embittered dregs of my misfortunes?

Augusta. Love! that powerful passion which you say I know not, but by name. If I laid aside the delicacy of my sex, 'twas but to save you from rnin; if I won your money, 'twas to secure it from the hands of the sharpers; if I got possession of your deeds, 'twas but to keep it from the clutches of the usurer; and if I have procured a license for my marriage, I have procured it in my Saville's name, and shall be proud and blessed to share it with him.

Saville. My soul! my angel! can you forgive—

Augusta. Oh! Saville, we have our failings, too: you must, in your turn, forgive. Sir Charles has explained the circumstance of the rencontre in the street, and I blush for the injustice of my suspicions.

Saville. Believe me, none but yourself ever held a place in my affections. Oh! Augusta, you have now an added power over me; and my heart assures me, that checked by your sweet reproofs, and swayed by your charming admonitions, no temptation on earth will ever again lead me to risk that happiness which you so feelingly described—the tranquil pleasures of a peaceful home.

Augusta. Hush! here comes my guardian—now for our last trial.

Enter Sir Charles Chouse, Mr. *and* Mrs. Flurry, *and* Grump.

Grump. Bravo, old Totteration! Wife too good for you after all.

Flurry. Od! I'm the merriest new, old reconciled husband alive. Dear wife, give me a kiss. 'Slife! I am so hearty, I could—I sha'n't want my Dalmahoy this twelvemonth.

Grump. Tell a story—want it in half an hour.

Saville. Mr. Flurry, I am rejoiced to see you in such charming spirits. May I presume—

Flurry. Yes, you may presume; I have heard of your losses and crosses, and your pains and your gains. Your defending my wife, and your challenging Sir Charles; who, though a sad dog, one must allow is a very candid fellow.

Augusta. His alertness to procure the license in your name proves that. Do you know but for me he would have met you in the field?

Sir C. I hope the good part of my character in this drama will apologize for its defects; and that my friend Saville will not think of cutting my throat till he is tired of the noose I have been labouring to provide for him.

Saville. Give me your hand, Sir Charles. Should that ever be the case, my ingratitude to this paragon of her sex, would make it more than proper you should cut mine.

Grump. Eh! brother—that is, sister Alexander—Baronet has told us all—give joy—profligate—see you've got the lady—more than you deserve—friend Flurry consents now to oblige me; don't you, old Whimsical?

Flurry. Ay; there, there; may you be as happy—that is, nearly as happy as myself and Mrs. Flurry.

Grump. Well said, Waste-away; love your wife, and don't fear growing thin.

Mrs. F. I sincerely congratulate you both; and hope my example may prove a caution to my sex, and teach young married women, that with the purest intentions they may, by indulgiog idle vanity, expose themselves to every misfortune, and encounter every disgrace.

Sir C. And now, as matters are settled, may I my dear cousin, throw in a little hint about instinct?

Augusta. I understand you, sir: there is the promised pocket-book: may its contents make you comfortable, and past errors teach you to be wiser.

Sir C. Ten thousand thanks, my dear madam, for your counsel and its accompaniments. When rich, we are always wise; 'tis poverty only makes us yield to our weakness. Let me see: one hundred, two hundred—

Enter Litigamus, *with a brief.*

Liti. Joy, joy, my client! Defendant there seems to have money enough now to pay damages. No compromise, I beseech you: here's a brief sufficient to blacken the whole sex.

Grump. Too late for such kindness—a day after the fair, eh! Master Blackball? No more sofas—done with peep-bo—Cut up brief for patty-pans.

Liti. Eh, what! no divorce—no action?

Sir C. No, Mr. Hoodwink; not one doctor of civil law to speak upon the case; and, what is worse, none of my notes in your pocket.

Liti. Bless me, a very bad case, indeed!

Flurry. To tell you the truth, Litigamus, you discovered so little, and I have found out so much, that I don't wish to be exposed any further.

Liti. Perfectly right, my client; as well pay for silence as loquacity. Put up my brief, and make proper charges. As there is no divorce, I am right happy to hear the next best thing—a marriage is going to take place: you and this lady, I presume, sir; never saw a finer couple; make no doubt but she's the most amiable of her sex at present; but should any little accident happen, any *faux-pas*, Litigamus is the man. Tack or separate; paper or parchment; make no odds, Litigamus is the man for anything.

Augusta. That we see plain enough; and whenever there's occasion, you shall have the earliest intelligence. Meanwhile, as I have already worn the gown, permit me to address this court.

Do not with hasty judgment sternly chide,
Let your good-nature your discernment guide;
Should then your kindness sanction our endeavour,
Who shall dispute, "'Tis better late than never?"

[*Exeunt.*

THE BROTHERS;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



Act II. Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

SIR BENJAMIN DOVE	SKIFF	FRANCIS	VIOLETTA
CAPTAIN IRONSIDES	PATERSON	JONATHAN	FANNY GOODWIN
BELFORD, SENIOR	OLD GOODWIN	LADY DOVE	LUCY WATERS
BELFORD, JUNIOR	PHILIP	SOPHIA	KITTY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A rocky Shore, with a Fisherman's Cabin in the Cliff: A violent tempest, with thunder and lightning: A Ship discovered stranded on the coast. After having looked out of their cabin, as if waiting for the abatement of the storm,—*

Enter OLD GOODWIN, PHILIP, *and* FANNY.

Philip. It blows a rank storm; 'tis well, father, we hauled the boat ashore before the weather came on; she's safe bestowed, however, let what will happen.

O. Good. Ay, Philip, we had need be provident; except that poor skiff, my child, what have we left in this world that we can call our own?

Philip. To my thoughts, now, we live as happily in this poor hut as we did yonder in the great house, when you was 'Squire Belfield's principal tenant, and as topping a farmer as any in the whole county of Cornwall.

O. Good. Ah, child!

Philip. Nay, never droop; to be sure, father, the squire has dealt hardly with you, and a mighty point, truly, he has gained—the ruin of an honest man. If those are to be the uses of a great estate, heaven continue me what I am!

Fanny. Ay, ay, brother, a good conscience in a coarse drugget, is better than an aching heart in a silken gown.

O. Good. Well, children, well, if you can bear misfortunes patiently, 'twere an ill office for me to repine; we have long tilled the earth for a subsistence; now, Philip, we must plough the ocean; in those waves lies our harvest; there, my brave lad, we have an equal inheritance with the best.

Philip. True, father; the sea that feeds us, provides us an habitation here in the hollow of the cliff; I trust the squire will exact no rent for this dwelling. Alas! that ever two brothers should have been so opposite, as our merciless landlord, and the poor young gentleman they say is now dead!

O. Good. Sirrah, I charge you, name not that unhappy youth to me any more. I was endeavouring to forget him and his misfortunes, when the sight of that vessel in distress brought him afresh to my remembrance; for, it seems, he perished by sea; the more shame upon him whose cruelty and injustice drove him thither.—But come, the wind lulls apace; let us launch the boat, and make a trip to yonder vessel; if we can assist in lightening her, perhaps she may ride it out.

Philip. 'Tis to no purpose; the crew are coming ashore in their boat, I saw them enter the creek.

O. Good. Did you so? Then do you and your sister step into the cabin, make a good fire, and provide such fish and other stores as you have within; I will go down and meet them. Whoever they may be, that have suffered this misfortune on our coasts, let us remember, children, never to regard any man as an enemy, who stands in need of our protection. [*Exit.*

Philip. I am strongly tempted to go down to the creek too. If father should light on any mischief,—well, for once in my life, I'll disobey him; sister, you can look to matters within doors, I'll go round by the point, and be there as soon as he.

Fanny. Do so, Philip, 'twill be best. [*Exeunt.*

Enter OLD GOODWIN, *followed by* FRANCIS, *and several Sailors, carrying goods and chests from the wreck.*

O. Good. This way, my friends, this way; there's stowage enough within for all your goods.

Francis. Come, bear a hand, my brave lads; there's no time to lose: follow that honest man, and set down your chests where he directs you.

Sailor. Troth, I care not how soon I'm quit of mine; 'tis plaguy heavy. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sailor.* Here's a pretty spot of work! plague on't, what a night has this been! I thought this d—d lee-shore would catch us at last.

2 *Sailor.* Why, 'twas unpossible to claw her off; well, there's an end of her—the Charming Sally privateer! Poor soul! a better sea-boat never swam upon the salt sea.

3 *Sailor.* I knew we should have no luck, after we took up that woman there from the packet that sunk alongside us.

1 *Sailor.* What, Madam Violetta, as they call her? Why, 'tis like enough; but, hush, here comes our captain's nephew; he's a brave lad, and a seaman's friend; and, between you and me—(*Boatswain's whistle.*)—But hark, we are called; come along. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Belfield Junior, *and* Francis.

Belf. jun. That ever fortune should cast us upon this coast, Francis.

Francis. Sir?

Belf. jun. Have the people landed those chests we brought off with us in the boat?

Francis. They have, sir; an old fisherman, whom we met, has shewn us here to a cavern in the cliff, where we have stowed them all in safety.

Belf. jun. That's well. Where's my uncle?

Francis. On board; no persuasions can prevail on him to quit the ship, which he swears will lift with the tide; his old crony, the master, is with him, and they ply the casks so briskly, that it seems a moot point which fills the fastest, they or the wreck.

Belf. jun. Strange insensibility! but you must bring him off by force then, if there is no other way of saving him; I think, o' my conscience, he is as indifferent to danger as the plank he treads on. We are now thrown upon my unnatural brother's estate; that house, Francis, which you see to the left, is his; and what may be the consequence if he and my uncle should meet, I know not; for such has been Captain Ironsides' resentment on my account, that he has declared war against the very name of Belfield, and, in one of his whimsical passions, you know, insisted on my laying it aside for ever; so that, hitherto, I have been known on board by no other name than that of Lewson.

Francis. 'Tis true, sir; and I think 'twill be advisable to continue the disguise as long as you can. As for the old Captain, from the life he always leads on shore, and his impatience to get on board again, I think 'tis very possible an interview between him and your brother may be prevented.

Belf. jun. I think so too. Go then, Francis, and conduct the old gentleman hither; I see Violetta coming. [*Exit Francis.*] Sure, there is something in that woman's story uncommonly mysterious. Of English parents, born in Lisbon, her family and fortune buried in the earthquake; so much she freely tells, but more, I am convinced, remains untold, and of a melancholy sort; she has once or twice, as I thought, seemed disposed to unbosom herself to me; but it is so painful to be told of sorrows one has not power to relieve, that I have hitherto avoided the discourse.

Enter Violetta.

Well, madam, melancholy still? still that face of sorrow and despair? twice shipwrecked, and twice rescued from the jaws of death, do you regret your preservation? and have I incurred your displeasure by prolonging your existence?

Vio. Not so, Mr. Lewson; such ingratitude be far from me. Can I forget, when the vessel in which I had sailed from Portugal, foundered by your side, with what noble, what benevolent ardour, you flew to my assistance. Regardful only of my safety, your own seemed no part of your care.

Belf. jun. Oh, no more of this; the preservation of a fellow creature is as natural as self-defence. You now, for the first time in your life, breathe the air of England; a rough reception it has given you; but be not, therefore, discouraged; our hearts, Violetta, are more accessible than our shores, nor can you find inhospitality in Britain, save only in our climate.

Vio. These characteristics of the English may be just; I take my estimate from a less favourable example.

Belf. jun. Villany, madam, is the growth of every soil; nor can I, while yonder habitation is in my view, forget that England has given birth to monsters that disgrace humanity; but this I will say for my countrymen, that where you can point out one rascal with a heart to wrong you, I will produce fifty honest fellows, ready and resolute to redress you.

Vio. Ah! but on what part of the English coast is it that we are now landed?

Belf. jun. On the coast of Cornwall.

Vio. Of Cornwall is it? You seem to know the owner of that house; are you well acquainted with the country hereabouts?

Belf. jun. Intimately; it has been the cradle of my infancy, and, with little interruption, my residence ever since.

Vio. You are amongst your friends, then, no doubt; how fortunate is it, that you will have their consolation and assistance in your distress!

Belf. jun. Madam—

Vio. Every moment will bring them down to the very shores; this brave, humane, this hospitable people, will flock in crowds to your relief; your friends, Mr. Lewson—

Belf. jun. My friends, Violetta! Must I confess it to you? I have no friends. Those rocks—that have thus scattered my treasures,—those waves, that have devoured them, to me are not so fatal as hath been that man whom nature meant to be my nearest friend.

Vio. What! and are you a fellow-sufferer, then? Is this the way you reconcile me to your nation? Are these the friends of human kind? Why don't we fly from this ungenerous, this ungrateful country?

Belf. jun. Hold, madam! one villain, however base, can no more involve a whole nation in his crimes, than one example, however dignified, can inspire it with his virtues. Thank heaven, the worthless owner of that mansion is yet without a rival.

Vio. You have twice directed my attention to that house; 'tis a lovely spot; what pity that so delicious a retirement should be made the residence of so undeserving a being.

Belf. jun. It is, indeed, a charming place; and was once the seat of hospitality and honour; but its present possessor, Andrew Belfield—Madam! for heaven's sake, what ails you? You seem suddenly disordered. Have I said—

Vio. No, 'tis nothing; don't regard me, Mr. Lewson; I am weak, and subject to these surprises; I shall be glad, however, to retire.

Belf. jun. A little repose, I hope, will relieve you; within this hut some accommodation may be found. Lean on my arm. (*Leads her to the door of the cabin.*)

Enter Old Goodwin.

O. Good. Heaven defend me! do my eyes deceive me? 'tis wondrous like his shape, his air, his look—

Belf. jun. What is your astonishment, friend? Do you know me? If it was not for that habit, I should say your name is Goodwin.

O. Good. 'Tis he! he is alive! my dear young master, Mr. Belfield! Yes, sir, my name is Goodwin. However changed my appearance, my heart is still the same, and overflows with joy at this unexpected meeting.

Belf. jun. Give me thy hand, my old, my honest friend; and is this sorry hole thy habitation?

O. Good. It is.

Belf. jun. The world, I see, has frowned on thee since we parted.

O. Good. Yes, sir; but what are my misfortunes? You must have undergone innumerable hardships; and now, at last, shipwrecked on your own coast. Well, but your vessel is not totally lost; and we will work night and day in saving your effects.

Belf. jun. Oh! as for that, the sea gave all, let it take back a part; I have enough on shore not to envy my brother his fortune. But there is one blessing, Master Goodwin, I own I should grudge him the possession of—There was a young lady—

O. Good. What, sir, haven't you forgot Miss Sophia?

Belf. jun. Forgot her! my heart trembles while I ask you, if she is indeed as you call her, Miss Sophia?

O. Good. She is yet unmarried, though every day we expect—

Belf. jun. 'Tis enough! Fortune, I acquit thee! Happy be the winds that threw me on this coast, and blest the rocks that received me. Let my vessel go to pieces; she has done her part in bearing me hither; while I can cast myself at the feet of my Sophia, recount to her my unabating passion, and have one fair struggle for her heart. [*Exeunt.*

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. Once more I am alone. How my heart sunk, when Lewson pronounced the name of Belfield! It must be he! it must be my false, cruel, yet (spite of all my wrongs) beloved husband!—Yes, there he lives, each circumstance confirms it: Cornwall the county; here the sea-coast, and these white craggy cliffs; there the disposition of his seat, the grove, lake, lawn; every feature of the landscape tallies with the descriptions he has given me of it. What shall I do, and to whom shall I complain? When Lewson spoke of him, it was with a bitterness that shocked me. I will not disclose myself to him; by what fell from him, I suspect he is related to Mr. Belfield; but hush! I talk to these rocks, and forget that they have ears.

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. Are you any better, madam? Is the air of any service to you?

Vio. I am much relieved by it; the beauty of that place attracted my attention; and, if you please, we will walk further up the hill to take a nearer view of it. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sailors.

Omnes. Huzza! huzza! huzza!

1 *Sailor.* Long life to your honour! welcome ashore, noble Captain.

2 *Sailor.* Avast there, Jack! stand clear, and let his old honour pass; bless his heart, he looks cheerly, howsomever; let the world wag as it will, he'll never flinch.

3 *Sailor.* Not he; he's true English oak to the heart of him; and a fine old seaman-like figure he is.

Enter IRONSIDES *and* SKIFF.

Ironsides. Ah, messmates, we're all a-ground; I have been taking a parting cup with the Charming Sally: she's gone, but the stoutest bark must have an end; master, here, and I did all we could to lighten her; we took leave of her in an officer-like manner.

1 *Sailor.* Hang sorrow; we know the worst on't: 'tis only taking a fresh cruize; and, for my part, I'll sail with Captain Ironsides as far as there's water to carry me.

Omnes. So we will all.

Ironsides. Say ye so, my hearts? if the wind sits that way, hoist sail, say I; old George will make one amongst you, if that be all; I hate an idle life. So, so, away to your work; to-morrow we'll make a day on't. [*Exeunt Sailors.*

Ironsides. Skiff!

Skiff. Here, your honour.

Ironsides. I told you, Skiff, how 'twould be; if you had luff'd up in time, as I would have had you, and not made so free with the land, this mishap had never come to pass.

Skiff. Lord love you, Captain Ironsides, 'twas a barrel of beef to a biscuit, the wind had not shifted so direct contrary as it did; who could have thought it?

Ironsides. Why, I could have thought it; every body could have thought it. Do you consider whereabouts you are, mun? Upon the coast of England, as I take it. Everything here goes contrary both by sea and land. Everything whips, and chops, and changes about, like mad in this country; and the people, I think, are as full of vagaries as the climate.

Skiff. Well, I could have swore—

Ironsides. Ay, so you could, Skiff, and so you did, pretty roundly too; but for the good you did by it, you might as well have puff'd a whiff of tobacco in the wind's face.

Skiff. Well, Captain, though we have lost our ship, we haven't lost our all; thank the fates we've saved treasure enough to make all our fortunes, notwithstanding.

Ironsides. Fortunes, quotha? What have two such old weather-beaten fellows as thee and I are, to do with fortune? or, indeed, what has fortune to do with us? Flip and tobacco is the only luxury we have any relish for; had we fine houses, could we live in them?—a greasy hammock has been our birth for these fifty years;—fine horses? could we ride them? and as for the fair sex there, that my nephew makes such a pother about, I don't know what thou may'st think of the matter, Skiff; but, for my own part, I should not care if there were no such animals in the creation.

Enter BELFIELD JUNIOR.

Belf. jun. Uncle; what cheer, man?

Ironsides. Oh, Bob, is it thee? whither bound now, my dear boy?

Belf. jun. Why, how can you ask such a question? We have landed our treasure, saved all our friends, and set foot upon English ground; and what business, think you, can a young fellow like me have, but one?

Ironsides. Psha! you're a fool, Bob; these wenches will be the undoing of you; a plague of them altogether, say I. What are they good for, but to spoil company, and keep brave fellows from their duty? O' my conscience, they do more mischief to the king's navy in one twelvemonth, than the French have done in ten; a pack of—but I ha' done with 'em; thank the stars, I ha' fairly washed my hands of them; I ha' nothing to say to none of them.

Skiff. Mercy be good unto us! that my wife could but hear your worship talk!

Belf. jun. Oh, my dear uncle—

Ironsides. But I'll veer away no more good advice after you; so even drive as you will, under your petticoat-sails; black, brown, fair, or tawny, 'tis all fish that comes in your net; why, where's your reason, Bob, all this here while? Where's your religion, and be d—d to you?

Belf. jun. Come, come, my dear uncle, a truce to your philosophy. Go, throw your dollars into yonder ocean, and bribe the tempest to be still; you shall as soon reverse the operations of nature as wean my heart from my Sophia.

Ironsides. Hold, hold, take me right; if, by Sophia, you mean the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove, I don't care if I make one with you. What say'st thou, boy? shall it be so?

Belf. jun. So, then you think there may be one good woman, however?

Ironsides. Just as I think there may be one ho-

nest Dutchman, one sober German, or one righteous methodist. Look ye, Bob, so I do but keep single, I have no objection to other people's marrying; but, on those occasions, I would manage myself as I would my ship; not by running her into every odd creek and cranny, in the smuggling fashion, as if I had no good credentials to produce; but play fairly, and in sight d'ye see; and, whenever a safe harbour opens, stand boldly in, boy, and lay her up snug, in a good birth, once for all.

Belf. jun. Come then, uncle, let us about it; and you may greatly favour my enterprise, since you can keep the father and mother in play, while I—

Ironsides. Avast, young man, avast! the father, if you please, without the mother; Sir Benjamin's a passable good companion for a landman, but for my lady—I'll have nothing to say to my lady; she's his wife, thank the stars, and not mine.

Belf. jun. Be it as you will; I shall be glad of your company on any terms.

Ironsides. Say no more then. About ship! if you are bound for that port, I'm your mate. Master, look to the wreck; I'm for a fresh cruize. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*The Outside of Sir Benjamin Dove's house.*

Enter Belfield Senior, *and* Lucy Waters.

Lucy. What, don't I know you? haven't you been to me, of all mankind, the basest?

Belf. Not yet, Lucy.

Lucy. Sure, Mr. Belfield, you won't pretend to deny it to my face!

Belf. To thy face, child, I will not pretend that I can deny anything; you are much too handsome to be contradicted.

Lucy. Pish!

Belf. So, so.

Lucy. Haven't you, faithless as you are, promised me marriage, over and over again?

Belf. Repeatedly.

Lucy. And you have now engaged yourself to the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove, have you not?

Belf. Assuredly.

Lucy. Let me demand of you, then, Mr. Belfield, since you have no honourable designs towards me yourself, why you prevented those of an humbler lover, young Philip, the son of your late tenant, poor Goodwin?

Belf. For the very reasons you state in your question; because I had no honourable designs, and he had. You disappointed my hopes, and I was resolved to defeat his.

Lucy. And this you thought reason sufficient to expel his father from your farm; to persecute him, and his innocent family, till you had accomplished their ruin, and driven them to the very brink of the ocean for their habitation and subsistence?

Belf. Your questions, Miss Lucy, begin to be impertinent.

Lucy. Oh, do they touch you, sir? But I'll waste no more time with you, my business is with your Sophia; here, in the very spot which you hope to make the scene of your guilty triumphs, will I expose you to her; set forth your inhuman conduct to your unhappy brother, and detect the mean artifices you have been driven to, in order to displace him in her affections.

Belf. You will?

Lucy. I will, be assured; so let them pass.

Belf. Stay, Lucy, understand yourself a little better. Didn't you pretend to Sophia, that my brother paid his addresses to you; that he had pledged himself to marry you; nay, that he had—

Lucy. Hold, Mr. Belfield, nor further explain a transaction, which, though it reflects shame enough upon me, that was your instrument, ought to cover you, who was principal in the crime, with treble confusion and remorse.

Belf. True, child, it was rather a disreputable transaction; and 'tis therefore fit no part of it should rest with me: I shall disavow it altogether.

Lucy. Incredible confidence!

Belf. We shall see who will meet most belief in the world, you or I; chuse, therefore, your part; if you keep my secret, you make me your friend; if you betray it, you have me for your enemy; and a fatal one you shall find me. Now enter, if you think fit; there lies your way to Sophia. [*Exit Lucy into the house.*] So! how am I to parry this blow? what plea shall I use with Sophia?—'twas the ardour of my love; anything will find pardon with a woman, that conveys flattery to her charms. After all, if the worst should happen, and I should be defeated in this match, so shall I be saved from doing that, which, when done, 'tis probable I may repent of; and I have some intimations from within, which tell me that it will be so: I perceive that, in this life, he, who is checked by the rubs of compunction, can never arrive at the summit of prosperity.

Enter Paterson.

Paterson. What, melancholy, Mr. Belfield? So near your happiness, and so full of thought?

Belf. Happiness! What's that?

Paterson. I'll tell you, sir; the possession of a lovely girl with fifty thousand pounds in her lap, and twice fifty thousand virtues in her mind; this I call happiness, as much as mortal man can merit; and this, as I take it, you are destined to enjoy.

Belf. That is not so certain, Mr. Paterson. Would you believe it? that perverse hussy, Lucy Waters, who left me but this minute, threatens to transverse all my hopes, and is gone this instant to Sophia with that resolution.

Paterson. Impossible! how is Miss Waters provided or provoked to do this?

Belf. Why, 'tis a foolish story, and scarce worth relating to you; but you know, when your letters called me home from Portugal, I found my younger brother in close attendance on Miss Dove; and, indeed, such good use had the fellow made of his time in my absence, that I found it impossible to counterwork his operations by fair and open approaches; so, to make short of the story, I took this girl, Lucy Waters, into partnership, and, by a happy device, ruined him with Sophia.

Paterson. This, Mr. Belfield, I neither know, nor wish to know.

Belf. Let it pass, then. Defeated in these views, my brother, as you know, betook himself to the desperate course of privateering, with that old tar-barrel, my uncle; what may have been his fate, I know not, but I have found it convenient to propagate a report of his death.

Paterson. I am sorry for it, Mr. Belfield; I wish nothing was convenient, that can be thought dishonourable.

Belf. Nature, Mr. Paterson, never put into a human composition more candour and credulity than she did into mine; but acquaintance with life has shewn me how impracticable these principles are; to live with mankind, we must live like mankind; were it a world of honesty, I should blush to be a man of art.

Paterson. And do you dream of ever reaching your journey's end by such crooked paths as these are?

Belf. And yet, my most sage moralist, wonderful as it may seem to thee, true it is, notwithstanding, that, after having treaded all these by-ways and crooked alleys, which thy right-lined apprehensions knows nothing of; after having driven my rival from the field, and being almost in possession of the spoil, still I feel a repugnance in me that almost tempts me to renounce my good fortune, and abandon a victory I have struggled so hard to obtain.

Paterson. I guessed as much; 'tis your Violetta, 'tis your fair Portuguese, that counterworks your good fortune; and I must own to you, it was principally to save you from that improvident attachment, that I wrote so pressingly for your return; but though I have got your body in safe holding, your heart is still at Lisbon; and if you marry Miss Dove, 'tis because Violetta's fortune was demolished by the earthquake; and Sir Benjamin's stands safe upon terra firma.

Belf. Pr'ythee, Paterson, don't be too hard upon me; sure you don't suspect that I am married to Violetta?

Paterson. Married to Violetta! Now you grow much too serious, and 'tis time to put an end to the discourse. [*Exit into the house.*

Belf. And you grow much too quick-sighted, Mr. Paterson, for my acquaintance. I think he does not quite suspect me of double-dealing in this business; and yet I have my doubts: his reply to my question was equivocal, and his departure abrupt; I know not what to think;—this I know, that love is a deity, and avarice a devil; that Violetta is my lawful wife; and that Andrew Belfield is a villain. [*Exit.*

Re-enter PATERSON.

Paterson. All abroad this fine day, not a creature within doors.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Mr. Paterson! hist! Mr. Paterson, a word in your ear, sweet sir.

Paterson. Curse on't, she has caught me. Well, Mrs. Kitty?

Kitty. Why, I have been hunting you all the house over; my lady's impatient to see you.

Paterson. Oh, I'm my Lady Dove's most obedient servant. And what are her ladyship's commands, pray?

Kitty. Fie, Mr. Paterson; how should I know what her ladyship wants with you? but a secret it is, no doubt, for she desires you to come to her immediately in the garden, at the bottom of the yew-tree walk, next the warren.

Paterson. The devil she does? What a pity it is, Mrs. Kitty, we can't cure your lady of this turn for solitude; I wish you would go with me; your company, probably, will divert her from her contemplations; besides, I shall certainly mistake the place.

Kitty. I go with you, Mr. Paterson! a fine thing truly! I'd have you to know that my character is not to be trusted with young fellows in yew-tree walks, whatever my lady may think of the matter; besides, I've an assignatiou in another place. [*Exit.*

Paterson. What a devilish dilemma am I in! Why, this is a peremptory assignation. Certain it is, there are some ladies that no wise man should be commonly civil to; here have I been flattering myself that I was stroaking a termagant into humour, and all the while have been betraying a tender victim into love. Love! love, did I say? her ladyship's passion is a disgrace to the name; but what shall I do? 'tis a pitiful thing to run away from a victory; but 'tis frequently the case in precipitate successes, we conquer more than we have wit to keep, or ability to enjoy. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Yew-tree Walk.*

Enter BELFIELD JUNIOR.

Belf. jun. Now, could I but meet my Sophia—Where can she have hid herself? Hush! Lady Dove, as I live.

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. So, Mr. Paterson, you're a pretty gentleman, to keep a lady waiting here; why, how you stand? Come, come, I shall expect a very handsome atonement for this indecorum. Why, what! let me look. Ah! who have we here?

Belf. jun. A man, madam; and, though not your man, yet one as honest and as secret: come, come, my lady, I'm no tell-tale; he you but grateful, this goes no further.

Lady D. Lost and undone! young Belfield!

Belf. jun. The same, but be not alarmed; we both have our secrets; I am, like you, a votary to love: favour but my virtuous passion for Miss Dove, and take you your Paterson; I shall be silent as the grave.

Lady D. Humph!

Belf. jun. Nay, never hesitate; my brother, I know, had your wishes: but wherein has nature favoured him more than me? And, since fortune has now made my scale as heavy as his, why should you partially direct the beam?

Lady D. Well, if it is so, and that you promise not to betray me—but this accident has so discomposed me; (plague on't, say I!) don't press me any further, at present; I must leave you; remember the condition of our agreement, and expect my friendship. Oh! I could tear your eyes out! [*Exit.*

Belf. jun. Well, Sir Benjamin, keep your own counsel, if you are wise; I'll do as I would be done by; had I such a wife as Lady Dove, I should be very happy to have such a friend as Mr. Paterson. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Garden.*

Enter SOPHIA DOVE *and* LUCY WATERS.

Lucy. If there is faith in woman, I have seen young Belfield; I have beheld his apparition; for what else could it be?

Sophia, How? When? Where? I shall faint with surprise.

Lucy. As I crossed the yew-tree walk, I saw him pass by the head of the canal, towards the house. Alas, poor youth! the injuries I have done him have called him from his grave.

Sophia. Injuries, Miss Waters! What injuries have you done him? Tell me; for therein, perhaps, I may be concerned.

Lucy. Deeply concerned you are: with the most penitent remorse I confess it to you, that his affections to you were pure, honest, and sincere. Yes, amiable Sophia, you was unrivalled in his esteem; and I, who persuaded you to the contrary, am the basest, the falsest of womankind; every syllable I told you of his engagements to me was a malicious invention: how could you be so blind to your own superiority, to give credit to the imposition, and suffer him to depart without an explanation? Oh! that villain, that villain, his brother, has undone us all!

Sophia. Villain, do you call him? Whither would you transport my imagination? You hurry me with such rapidity from one surprise to another, that I know not where to fix, how to act, or what to believe.

Lucy. Oh, madam, he is a villain! a most accomplished one; and if I can but snatch you from the snare he has spread for you, I hope it will, in some measure, atone for the injuries I have done to you, and to that unhappy youth, who now—O, heavens! I see him again; he comes this way; I cannot endure his sight; alive or dead, I must avoid him. [*Runs out.*

Enter BELFIELD JUNIOR.

Belf. jun. Adorable Sophia! this transport overpays my labours. [me.

Sophia. Sir! Mr. Belfield, is it you? Oh! support

Belf. jun. With my life, thou loveliest of women! Behold, your poor adventurer is returned: happy past compute, if his fate is not indifferent to you; rich beyond measure, if his safety is worthy your concern.

Sophia. Release me, I beseech you. What have I done? Sure, you are too generous to take advantage of my confusion.

Belf. jun. Pardon me, my Sophia; the advantages I take from your confusion are not to be purchased

by the riches of the east: I would not forego the transport of holding you one minute in my arms for all that wealth and greatness have to give.

Enter Lady Dove, *while Belfield Junior is kneeling and embracing Sophia.*

Lady D. Hey-day! What's here to do with you *Sophia.* Ah! (*Shrieks.*) [both?

Belf. jun. Confusion! Lady Dove here?

Lady D. Yes, sir, Lady Dove is here, and will take care you shall have no more garden dialogues. On your knees too! The fellow was not half so civil to me. (*Aside.*) Ridiculous! a poor, beggarly swabber, truly! As for you, Mrs.—

Belf. jun. Hold, madam; as much of your fury and foul language as you please upon me; but not one hard word against that lady, or by heavens!—

Lady D. Come, sir, none of your reprobate swearing; none of your sea-noises here: I would my first husband was alive, I would he was, for your sake. I am surprised, Miss Dove, you have no more regard for your reputation; a delicate swain, truly, you have chosen; just thrown ashore from a shipwrecked privateer. Go, go; get you in, for shame; your father shall know of these guings on, depend on't. [*Exit Sophia.*] As for you, sir—(*As Lady Dove is going out, Belfield Junior stops her.*)

Belf. jun. A word with you, madam: is this fair dealing? What would you have said, if I had broke in thus upon you and Mr. Paterson?

Lady D. Mr. Paterson! Why, you rave. What is it you mean?

Belf. jun. Come, come, this is too ridiculous; you know your reputation is in my keeping; call to mind what passed between us a while ago, and the engagement you are under on that account.

Lady D. Ha, ha, ha!

Belf. jun. Very well, truly; and you think to brave this matter out, do you?

Lady D. Most assuredly; and shall make Sir Benjamin call you to account, if you dare to breathe a word against my reputation. Incorrigible coxcomb! to think I would keep any terms with you after such an event. Take my word for it, Belfield, you are come home no wiser than you went out; you missed the only advantage you might have taken of that rencontre, and now I set you at defiance: take heed to what you say, or look to hear from Sir Benjamin.

Belf. jun. Oh, no doubt on't! How can Sir Benjamin avoid fighting for your sake, when your ladyship has so liberally equipped him with weapons? [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene IV.—*A Hall.*

Enter Jonathan *and* Francis.

Jon. And so, sir, 'tis just as I tell you, everything in this family goes according to the will of the lady: for my own part, I am one of those that hate trouble; I swim with the stream, and make my place as easy as I can.

Francis. Your looks, Mr. Jonathan, convince me that you live at your ease.

Jon. I do so; and, therefore, in spite of the old proverb, "like master like man," you never saw two people more different than I and Sir Benjamin Dove. He, Lord help him! is a little, peaking, puling thing; I am a jolly, portable man, as you see. It so happened, that we both became widowers at the same time: I knew when I was well, and have continued single ever since. He fell into the clutches of—hark! sure, I heard my lady.

Francis. No, it was nothing. When did the poor gentleman light upon this termagant?

Jon. Lack-a-day! 'twas here at the borough of Knavestown, when master had the great contest with Squire Belfield, about three years ago; her first husband, Mr. Searcher, was a king's messenger, as they call it, and came down express from a great man about court during the poll; he caught a surfeit, as ill-luck would have it, at the election-dinner; and, before he died, his wife, that's now my lady, came down to see him; then it was master fell in love with her. Egad! 'twas the unluckiest job of all his life.

Sir B. (*Without.*) Jonathan! Why, Jonathan!

Francis. Hark! you are called.

Jon. Ay, ay! 'tis only my master: my lady tells the servants not to mind what Sir Benjamin says, and I love to do as I am bid.

Francis. Well, honest Jonathan, if you won't move, I must: by this time, I hope, my young master is happy with your young mistress. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Benjamin Dove.

Sir B. Why, Jonathan, I say! Oh! are you here? Why couldn't you come when I called you?

Jon. Lack-a-day, sir! you don't consider how much easier it is for you to call, than for me to come.

Sir B. I think, honest Jonathan, when I first knew you, you was a parish orphan; I 'prenticed you out; you ran away from your master; I took you into my family; you married; I set you up in a farm of my own, stocked it; you paid me no rent; I received you again into my service, or rather, I should say, my lady's. Are these things so, or does my memory fail me, Jonathan?

Jon. Why, to be sure, I partly remember somewhat of what your worship mentions.

Sir B. If you partly remember something of all this, Jonathan, don't entirely forget to come when I call.

Ironsides. (*Without.*) Hoy, there! Within! What, nobody stirring! all hands asleep; all under the hatches!

Sir B. Hey-day! Who the dickens have we got here? Old Captain Ironsides, as I am a sinner! Who could have thought of this? Run to the door, good Jonathan—nay, hold, there's no escaping now. What will become of me? He'll ruin everything; and throw the whole house into confusion.

Enter Ironsides.

Ironsides. What, Sir Ben! My little knight of Malta! Give me a buss, my boy. Hold, hold! sure, I'm out of my reckoning; let me look a little nearer: why, what mishap has befallen you, that you heave out these signals of distress?

Sir B. I'm heartily glad to see thee, my old friend; but a truce to your sea-phrases, for I don't understand them: what signals of distress have I about me?

Ironsides. Why, that white flag there, at your main-top-mast head: in plain English, what dost do with that clout about thy pate?

Sir B. Clout, do you call it? 'Tis a little *en dishabille*, indeed; but there's nothing extraordinary, I take it, in a man's wearing his gown and cap in a morning; 'tis the dress I usually chuse to study in.

Ironsides. And this hall is your library, is it? Ah, my old friend! my old friend! But come, I want to have a little chat with you, and thought to have dropped in at pudding-time, as they say; for though it may be morning with thee, Sir Ben, 'tis mid-day with the rest of the world.

Sir B. Indeed, is it so late? But I was fallen upon an agreeable *tête-à-tête* with Lady Dove, and hardly knew how the time passed.

Ironsides. Come, come, 'tis very clear how your time has passed; but what occasion is there for this fellow's being privy to our conversation. Why don't the lubber stir? What does the fat lazy oaf stand staring at?

Sir B. What shall I say now? Was ever anything so distressing? (*Aside.*) Why, that's Jonathan, Captain; don't you remember your old friend, Jonathan?

Jon. I hope your honour's in good health; I'm glad to see your honour come home again.

Ironsides. Honest Jonathan, I came to visit your master, and not you; if you'll go and hasten dinner, and bring Sir Benjamin his periwig and clothes, you'll do me a very acceptable piece of service; for, to tell you the truth, my friend, I haven't had a comfortable meal of fresh provision this many a day. [*Exit Jonathan.*

Sir B. 'Foregad! you are come to the wrong house to find one. (*Aside.*)

Ironsides. And so, sir knight, knowing I was welcome, and having met with a mishap here, upon your coast, I am come to taste your good cheer, and pass an evening with you over a tiff of punch.

Sir B. The devil you are! (*Aside.*) This is very kind of you: there is no man in England, Captain Ironsides, better pleased to see his friends about him than I am.

Ironsides. Ay, ay! if I did'nt think I was welcome, I shouldn't ha' come.

Sir B. You may be assured you are welcome.

Ironsides, I am assured.

Sir B. You are, by my soul; take my word for it, you are.

Ironsides. Well, well, what need of all this ceremony about a meal's meat? Who doubts you?

Sir B. You need not doubt me, believe it: I'll only step out and ask my lady what time she has ordered dinner; or whether she has made any engagement I'm not apprised of.

Ironsides. No, no: engagement! how can that be, and you in this pickle? Come, come, sit down; dinner won't come the quicker for your inquiry: and now tell me, how does my god-daughter, Sophia?

Sir B. Thank you heartily, Captain, my daughter's well in health.

Ironsides. That's well; and how fares your fine new wife? How goes on matrimony? Fond as ever, my little amorous Dove? always billing, always cooing?

Sir B. No, Captain, no: we are totally altered in that respect; we shew no fondness now before company; my lady is so delicate in that particular, that from the little notice she takes of me in public, you would scarce believe we were man and wife.

Ironsides. Ha, ha, ha! why, 'tis the very circumstance would confirm it; but I'm glad to hear it; for of all things under the sun I most nauseate your nuptial familiarities; and though, you remember, I was fool enough to dissuade you from this match, I'm rejoiced to hear you manage so well and so wisely.

Sir B. No man happier in this life, Captain; no man happier: one thing only is wanting; had the kind stars but crowned our endearments—

Ironsides. What, my lady don't breed, then!

Sir B. Hush, hush! for heaven's sake, don't speak so loud; should my lady overhear you, it might put strange things into her head; oh! she is a lady of delicate spirits, tender nerves, quite weak and tender nerves; a small matter throws her down; gentle as a lamb; starts at a straw; speak loud, and it destroys her: oh! my friend, you are not used to deal with women's constitutions; these hypochondriac cases require a deal of management; 'tis but charity to humour them; and you cannot think what pains it requires to keep them always quiet and in temper.

Ironsides. Ay! like enough.

Lady D. (*Without.*) Hey-day! Sir Benjamin!

Ironsides. But here comes my lady, and in excellent temper, if her looks don't belie her.

Enter Lady Dove.

Lady D. What's to do now, Sir Benjamin? What's the matter, that you send for your clothes in such a hurry? Can't you be contented to remain as you are? Your present dress is well enough to stay at home in; and I don't know that you have any call out of doors.

Ironsides. Gentle as a lamb, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. This attention of your's, my dear, is beyond measure flattering. I am infinitely beholden to you; but you are so taken up with your concern on my account, that you overlook our old friend and neighbour, Captain Ironsides.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin, you make yourself quite ridiculous; this folly is not to be endured; you are enough to tire the patience of any woman living.

Sir B. She's quite discomposed, all in a flutter for fear I should take cold by changing my dress.

Ironsides. Yes, I perceive she has exceeding weak nerves. You are much in the right to humour her.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin Dove, if you mean that I should stay a minute longer in this house, I insist upon your turning that old porpoise out of it: is it not enough to bring your nauseous sea-companions within these doors, but must I be compelled to entertain them? Poh! I sha'n't get the scent of his tar-jacket out of my nostrils this fortnight.

Sir B. Hush, my dear Lady Dove! for heaven's sake, don't shame and expose me in this manner! How can I possibly turn an honest gentleman out of my doors, who has given me no offence in life?

Lady D. Marry, but he has, though; and great offence too! I tell you, Sir Benjamin, you are made a fool of. [posed.

Sir B. Nay, now, my dear, sweet love, be com-

Lady D. Yes, forsooth! and let a young, rambling, raking prodigal run away with your daughter.

Sir B. How! What?

Lady D. A fine thing, truly, to be composed—

Ironsides. Who is it your ladyship suspects of such a design?

Lady D. Who, sir? Why, who but your nephew Robert? You flattered us with a false hope he was dead; but, to our sorrow, we find him alive, and returned; and now you are cajoling this poor, simple, unthinking man, while your wild Indian, your savage there, is making off with his daughter.

Sir B. Mercy on us! What am I to think of all this?

Ironsides. What are you to think! Why, that it is a lie; that you are an ass; and that your wife is a termagant. My nephew is a lad of honour, and scorns to run away with any man's daughter, or wife either; though, I think, there's little danger of that here. As for me, sooner than mess with such a vixen, I'd starve; and so, Sir Benjamin, I wish you a good stomach to your dinner. [*Exit.*

Lady D. Insolent, unmannerly brute! Was ever the like heard? And you to stand tamely by! I declare, I've a great mind to raise the servants upon him, since I have no other defenders. Thus am I for ever treated by your scurvy companions!

Sir B. Be pacified, my dear; am I in fault? But, for heaven's sake! what is become of my daughter?

Lady D. Yes, you can think of your daughter; but she is safe enough for this turn. I have taken care of her for one while, and thus I am rewarded for it. Am I a vixen? am I a termagant? Oh! had my first husband—had my poor, dear, dead Mr. Searcher heard such a word, he would have rattled him! But he—what do I talk of? he was a man: yes, yes, he was, indeed, a man. As for you—

Sir B. Strain the comparison no further, Lady Dove; there are particulars, I dare say, in which I fall short of Mr. Searcher.

Lady D. Short of him! I'll tell you what, Sir Benjamin; I valued the dear greyhound that hung at his button-hole, more than I do all the foolish trinkets your vanity has lavished on me.

Sir B. Your ladyship, doubtless, was the paragon of wives: I well remember, when the poor man laid ill, at my borough of Knavestown, how you came flying on the wings of love, by the Exeter waggon, to visit him before he died.

Lady D. I understand your sneer, sir, and I despise it: there is one condition only, upon which

you may regain my forfeited opinion; young Belfield, who, with this old fellow, has designs in hand of a dangerous nature, has treated me with an indignity still greater than what you have been a witness to. Shew yourself a man upon this occasion, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. Anything, dearest, for peace sake.

Lady D. Peace sake! It is war, and not peace, which I require. But come, if you'll walk this way, I'll lay the matter open to you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*The Sea-shore before Goodwin's cabin.*

Enter Violetta *and* Fanny.

Vio. And when is this great match of Mr. Belfield's to be? [day.

Fanny. Alas, madam! we look to hear of it every

Vio. You seem to consider this event, child, as a misfortune to yourself: however others may be affected by Mr. Belfield's marrying Miss Dove, to you, I conceive, it must be a matter of indifference.

Fanny. I have been taught, madam, to consider no event as matter of indifference to me, by which good people are made unhappy. Miss Sophy is the best young lady living: Mr. Belfield is—

Vio. Hold, Fanny, do step into the house; in my writing-box you will find a letter sealed, but without a direction; bring it to me. [*Exit Fanny.*] I have been writing to this base man, for I want fortitude to support an interview. What if I unbosomed myself to this girl, and entrusted the letter to her conveyance? She seems exceedingly honest, and, for one of so mean a condition, uncommonly sensible; I think I may safely confide in her. Well, Fanny?

Enter Fanny.

Fanny. Here is your letter, madam.

Vio. I thank you: I trouble you too much; but thou art a good-natured girl, and your attention to me shall not go unrewarded.

Fanny. I am happy to wait upon you. I wish I could do or say anything to divert you; but my discourse can't be very amusing to a lady of your sort; and talking of this wedding seems to have made you more melancholy than you was before.

Vio. Come hither, child; you have remarked my disquietude, I will now disclose to you the occasion of it: you seem interested for Miss Dove; I too am touched with her situation; you tell me, she is the best young lady living.

Fanny. Oh, madam! if it were possible for an angel to take a human shape, she must be one.

Vio. 'Tis very well: I commend your zeal; you are speaking now of the qualities of her mind?

Fanny. Not of them alone; she has not only the virtues, but the beauties, of an angel.

Vio. Indeed! Pray tell me, is she so very handsome?

Fanny. As fine a person as you could wish to see.

Vio. Tall?

Fanny. About your size.

Vio. Fair, or dark complexioned?

Fanny. Of a most lovely complexion; 'tis her greatest beauty, and all pure nature, I'll be answerable; then her eyes are so soft, and so smiling! and as for her hair—

Vio. Hey-day! Why, where are you rambling, child? I am satisfied; I make no doubt she is a consummate beauty, and that Mr. Belfield loves her to distraction. (*Aside.*) I don't like this girl so well as I did; she is a great talker; I am glad I did not disclose my mind to her. I'll go in, and determine on some expedient. [*Exit.*

Fanny. Alas, poor lady! as sure as can be, she has been crossed in love; nothing in this world besides could make her so miserable; but, sure, I see Mr. Francis! If falling in love leads to such misfortunes, 'tis fit I should get out of his way. [*Exit.*

Enter Francis *and* Philip.

Francis. Wasn't that your sister, Philip, that ran into the cabin?

Philip. I think it was.

Francis. You've made a good day's work on't; the weather coming about so fair, I think we've scarce lost anything of value, but the ship: didn't you meet the old captain, as you came down to the creek?

Philip. I did; he has been at Sir Benjamin Dove's here, at Cropley Castle, and is come back in a curious humour.

Francis. So, so! I attended my young master thither at the same time; how came they not to return together?

Philip. That I can't tell.—Come, let's go in, and refresh ourselves. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Garden.*

Enter Sophia Dove *and* Lucy Waters.

Sophia. Indeed, and indeed, Miss Lucy Waters, these are strong facts which you tell me; and I do believe, that no prudent woman would engage with a man of Mr. Andrew Belfield's disposition: but what course am I to follow? and how am I to extricate myself from the embarrassments of my situation?

Lucy. Truly, madam, you have but one refuge that I know of.

Sophia. And that lies in the arms of a young adventurer! O Lucy, Lucy! this is a flattering prescription, calculated rather to humour the patient, than to remove the disease.

Lucy. Nay, but if there is a necessity for your taking this step—

Sophia. Ay! necessity is grown strangely commodious of late, and always compels us to do the very thing we have most a mind to.

Lucy. Well, madam, but common humanity to young Mr. Belfield—you must allow, he has been hardly treated.

Sophia. By me, Lucy?

Lucy. Madam! No, madam, not by you; but 'tis charity to heal the wounded, though you have not been a party in the fray.

Sophia. I grant you. You are a true female philosopher; you would let charity recommend you a husband, and a husband recommend you to charity. But I won't reason upon the matter; at least, not in the humour I am now, nor at this particular time: no, Lucy, nor in this particular spot; for here it was, at this very hour, yesterday evening, young Belfield surprised me.

Lucy. And see, madam, punctual to the same lucky moment, he comes again: let him plead his own cause; you need fear no interruption; my lady has too agreeable an engagement of her own, to endeavour at disturbing those of other people. [*Exit.*

Enter Belfield Junior.

Belf. jun. Have I then found thee, loveliest of women? Oh, Sophia! report has struck me to the heart, if, as I am told, to-morrow gives you to my brother, this is the last time I am ever to behold you.

Sophia. Why so, Mr. Belfield? Why should our separation be a necessary consequence of our alliance?

Belf. jun. Because I have been ambitious, and cannot survive the pangs of disappointment.

Sophia. Alas, poor man! but you know where to bury your disappointments; the sea is still open to you, and take my word for it, Mr. Belfield, the man who can live for three years, ay! or three months, in separation from the woman of his heart, need be under no apprehensions for his life, let what will befal her.

Belf. jun. Cruel, insulting Sophia! when I last parted from you, I flattered myself, I had left some impression on your heart; but in every event of

my life, I meet a base, injurious brother; the everlasting bar to my happiness. I can support it no longer; and Mr. Belfield, madam, never can, never shall, be your's.

Sophia. How, sir! Never shall be mine? What do you tell me? There is but that man on earth with whom I can be happy; and, if my fate is such, that he is never to be mine, the world, and all it contains, will for ever after be indifferent to me.

Belf. jun. I have heard enough; farewell!

Sophia. Farewell, sagacious Mr. Belfield! the next fond female who thus openly declares herself to you, will, I hope, meet with a more gallant reception than I have done.

Belf. jun. How, what! Is't possible? O heavens!

Sophia. What, you've discovered it at last? Oh, fie upon you!

Belf. jun. Thus, thus, let me embrace my unexpected blessing! Come to my heart, my fond o'erflowing heart! and tell me, once again, that my Sophia will be only mine!

Sophia. O man, man! all despondency one moment, all rapture the next. No question now but you conceive every difficulty surmounted, and that we have nothing to do but to run into each other's arms, make a fashionable elopement, and be happy for life; and I must own to you, Mr. Belfield, were there no other condition of our union, even this project should not deter me; but I have better hopes, provided you will be piloted by me; for, believe me, my good friend, I am better acquainted with this coast than you are.

Belf. jun. I doubt not your discretion, and shall implicitly surrender myself to your guidance.

Sophia. Give me a proof of it then, by retreating from this place immediately; 'tis my father's hour for walking, and I would not have you meet; besides, your brother is expected.

Belf. jun. Ay! that brother, my Sophia, that brother brings vexation and regret whenever he is named; but I hope I need not dread a second injury in your esteem; and yet, I know not how it is, but if I were addicted to superstition—

Sophia. And if I were addicted to anger, I should quarrel with you for not obeying my injunctions with more readiness.

Belf. jun. I will obey thee, and, yet, 'tis difficult. Those lips, which thus have blest me, cannot dismiss me without—

Sophia. Nay, Mr. Belfield, don't you—well, then—Mercy upon us! who's coming here?

Belf. jun. How! Oh, yes! never fear; 'tis a friend; 'tis Violetta; 'tis a lady that I—

Sophia. That you what, Mr. Belfield? What lady is it? I never saw her in my life before.

Belf. jun. No; she is a foreigner; born in Portugal, though of an English family; the packet, in which she was coming to England, foundered alongside of our ship, and I was the instrument of saving her life. I interest myself much in her happiness, and I beseech you, for my sake, to be kind to her. [*Exit.*

Sophia. He interests himself much in her happiness; he beseeches me, for his sake, to be kind to her! What am I to judge of all this?

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. Madam, I ask pardon for this intrusion, but I have business with you of a nature that—I presume I'm not mistaken, you are the young lady I have been directed to, the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove?

Sophia. I am, madam; but won't you please to repose yourself in the house? I understand you are a stranger in this country. May I beg to know what commands you have for me? Mr. Belfield has made me acquainted with some circumstances relative to your story, and for his sake, madam, I shall be proud to render you any service in my power.

Vio. For Mr. Belfield's sake, did you say, madam? Has Mr. Belfield named me to you, madam?

Sophia. Is there any wonder in that, pray?

Vio. No, none at all. In any man else such confidence would surprise me; but in Mr. Belfield 'tis natural; there is no wondering at what he does.

Sophia. You must pardon me, I find we think differently of Mr. Belfield; he left me but this minute, and, in the kindest terms, recommended you to my friendship.

Vio. 'Twas he then that parted from you as I came up: I thought so, but I was too much agitated to observe him, and, I am confident, he is too guilty to dare to look upon me.

Sophia. Why so, madam? For heaven's sake, inform me what injuries you have received from Mr. Belfield. I must own to you, I am much interested in finding him to be a man of honour.

Vio. I know your situation, madam, and I pity it; Providence has sent me here, in time, to save you, and to tell you—

Sophia. What? To tell me what? Oh, speak! or I shall sink with apprehension.

Vio. To tell you that he is my husband.

Sophia. Husband! Your husband? What do I hear? ungenerous, base, deceitful Belfield! I thought he seemed confounded at your appearance; everything confirms his treachery, and I cannot doubt the truth of what you tell me.

Vio. A truth it is, madam, that I must ever reflect on with the most sorrowful regret.

Sophia. Come, let me beg you to walk towards the house. I ask no account of this transaction of Mr. Belfield's; I would fain banish his name from my memory for ever, and you shall, this instant, be a witness to his peremptory dismission. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Garden.*

Enter BELFIELD JUNIOR, *and* PATERSON.

Belf. jun. And so, sir, these are her ladyship's commands, are they?

Paterson. This is what I am commissioned by Lady Dove to tell you. What report shall I make to her?

Belf. jun. Even what you please, Mr. Paterson: mould it, and model it to your liking; put as many palliatives as you think proper, to sweeten it to her ladyship's taste, so you do but give her to understand that I neither can, nor will, abandon my Sophia. Cease to think of her indeed! What earthly power can exclude her idea from my thoughts? I am surprised Lady Dove should think of sending me such a message; and I wonder, sir, that you should consent to bring it.

Paterson. Sir!

Belf. jun. Nay, Mr. Paterson, don't assume such a menacing air, nor practise on my temper too far in this business. I know both your situation and my own; consider, sir, mine is a cause that would animate the most dastardly spirit; your's is enough to damp the most courageous. [*Exit.*

Paterson. A very short and sententious gentleman! but there is truth in his remark; mine is but a sorry commission after all: the man's in the right to fight for his mistress; she's worth the venture, and if there was no way else to be quit of mine, I should be in the right to fight too. Egad! I don't see why aversion shouldn't make me as desperate, as love makes him. Hell and fury! here comes my Venus!

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. Well, Paterson, what says the fellow to my message?

Paterson. Says, madam! I'm ashamed to tell you what he says; he's the arrantest boatswain that ever I conversed with.

Lady D. But tell me what he says.

Paterson. Everything, that scandal and scurrility can utter against you. [me?

Lady D. Against me! What could he say against

Paterson. Modesty forbids me to tell you.

Lady D. Oh, the vile reprobate! I, that have been so guarded in my conduct, so discreet in my partialities, as to keep them secret, even from my own husband; but, I hope, he didn't venture to abuse my person?

Paterson. No, madam, no; had he proceeded to such lengths, I couldn't, in honour, have put up with it; I hope I have more spirit than to suffer any reflections upon your ladyship's personal accomplishments.

Lady D. Well, but did you say nothing in defence of my reputation?

Paterson. Nothing.

Lady D. No?

Paterson. Not a syllable; trust me for that: 'tis the wisest way upon all tender topics to be silent; for he, who takes upon himself to defend a lady's reputation, only publishes her favours to the world; and, therefore, I would always leave that office to a husband. [heart—

Lady D. 'Tis true; and if Sir Benjamin had any

Paterson. Come, come, my dear lady, don't be too severe upon Sir Benjamin; many men of no better appearance than Sir Benjamin, have shewn themselves perfect heroes: I know a whole family that, with the limbs of ladies, have the hearts of lions. Who can tell but your husband may be one of this sort?

Lady D. Ah!—

Paterson. Well, but try him; tell him how you have been used, and see what his spirit will prompt him to do. Apropos! here the little gentleman comes; if he won't fight, 'tis but what you expect; if he will, who can tell where a lucky arrow may hit? [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Benjamin Dove.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin, I want to have a little discourse in private with you.

Sir B. With me, my lady?

Lady D. With you, Sir Benjamin; 'tis upon a matter of a very serious nature; pray sit down by me. I don't know how it is, my dear, but I have observed of late, with much concern, a great abatement in your regard for me.

Sir B. Oh, fie, my lady! Why do you think so? What reason have you for so unkind a suspicion?

Lady D. 'Tis in vain for you to deny it. I am convinced you have done loving me.

Sir B. Well, now, I vow, my dear, as I am a sinner, you do me wrong.

Lady D. Lookye, Sir Benjamin, love, like mine, is apt to be quick-sighted, and, I am persuaded, I am not deceived in my observations.

Sir B. Indeed, and indeed, my Lady Dove, you accuse me wrongfully.

Lady D. Mistake me not, my dear, I do not accuse you, I accuse myself; I am sensible there are faults and imperfections in my temper.

Sir B. Oh! trifles, my dear; mere trifles!

Lady D. Come, come, I know you have led but an uncomfortable life of late; and, I am afraid, I have been innocently, in some degree, the cause of it.

Sir B. Far be it from me to contradict your ladyship, if you are pleased to say so.

Lady D. I am sure it has been as I say: my over fondness for you has been troublesome and vexatious; you hate confinement, I know you do; you are a man of spirit, and formed to figure in the world.

Sir B. Oh! you flatter me.

Lady D. Nay, nay, there's no disguising it: you sigh for action; your looks declare it: this alteration in your habit and appearance puts it out of doubt; there is a certain quickness in your eye; 'twas the first symptom that attracted my regards; and, I am mistaken, Sir Benjamin, if you do not possess as much courage as any man.

Sir B. Your ladyship does me honour.

Lady D. I do you justice, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. Why, I believe, for the matter of courage, I have as much as my neighbours; but 'tis of a strange perverse quality; for, as some spirits rise with the difficulties they have to encounter, my courage, on the contrary, is always greatest when there is least call for it.

Lady D. Oh! you shall never make me believe this, Sir Benjamin. You could'nt bear to see me ill used; I'm positive you couldn't.

Sir B. 'Tis as well, however, not to be too sure of that. (*Aside.*)

Lady D. You cou'dn't be so mean-spirited, as to stand by and hear your poor dear wife abused and insulted, and—

Sir B. Oh, no, by no means; 'twould break my heart; but who has abused you, and insulted you, and—

Lady D. Who? why this young Belfield, that I told you of.

Sir B. Oh, never listen to him! a woman of your years should have more sense than to mind what such idle young fleers can say of you.

Lady D. (*Rising.*) My years, Sir Benjamin! Why, you are more intolerable than he is; but let him take his course; let him run away with your daughter; it shall be no further concern of mine to prevent him.

Sir B. No, my dear, I've done that effectually.

Lady D. How so, pray?

Sir B. By taking care she sha'n't run away with my estate at the same time. Some people lock their daughters up, to prevent their eloping; I've gone a wiser way to work with mine, let her go loose, and locked up her fortune.

Lady D. And, o' my conscience, I believe you mean to do the same by your wife; turn her loose upon the world, as you do your daughter; leave her to the mercy of every freebooter; let her be vilified and abused—her honour, her reputation, mangled and torn by every paltry, privateering fellow, that fortune casts upon your coast.

Sir B. Hold, my lady, hold; young Belfield did not glance at your reputation, I hope.—Did he?

Lady D. Indeed, but he did though; and therein I think every wife has a title to her husband's protection.

Sir B. True, my dear; 'tis our duty to plead, but yours to provide us with the brief.

Lady D. There are some insults, Sir Benjamin, that no man of spirit ought to put up with; and the imputation of being made a wittol of, is the most unpardonable of any.

Sir B. Right, my dear; even truth, you know, is not to be spoke at all times.

Lady D. How, sir, would you insinuate anything to the disparagement of my fidelity? But chuse your side, quarrel you must, either with him or with me.

Sir B. Oh, if that is the alternative, what a deal of time have we wasted. Step with me into the library, and I'll pen him a challenge immediately. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*The Cabin, with a View of the Sea, as before.*

Enter Philip, *and* Lucy Waters.

Philip. How I have loved you, Lucy, and what I have suffered on your account, you know well enough; and you shou'dn't now, when I am struggling to forget you, come to put me in mind of past afflictions. Go, go, leave me, I pray you, leave me.

Lucy. Nay, Philip, but hear me.

Philip. Hear you, ungrateful girl! you know it has been all my delight to hear you, to see you, and to sit by your side,—for hours I have done it; for whole days together. But those days are past;

I must labour now for my livelihood, and, if you rob me of my time, you wrong me of my subsistence.

Lucy. O, Philip! I am undone if you don't protect me!

Philip. Ah, Lucy! that I fear is past prevention.

Lucy. No, Philip, no! I am innocent, and therefore persecuted by the most criminal of men. I have disclosed all Mr. Belfield's artifices to Miss Sophia, and now am terrified to death. I saw him follow me out of the Park, as I was coming hither, and I dare not return home alone; indeed, Philip, I dare not.

Philip. Well, Lucy, step in with me, and fear nothing; I see the squire is coming. He, who can refuse his protection to a woman, may he never taste the blessings a woman can bestow! [*Exeunt.*

Enter BELFIELD SENIOR.

Belf. Ay, 'tis she! confusion follow her! How perversely has she traversed my projects with Sophia! By all that's resolute, I'll be revenged! My brother, too, returned—vexatious circumstance! there am I foiled again. Since first I stepped out of the path of honour, what have I obtained? O, treachery! treachery! if thou can'st not, in this world, make us happy, better have remained that dull formal thing, an honest man, and trusted to what the future might produce.

Enter PHILIP.

So, fellow, who are you?

Philip. A man, sir; an honest man.

Belf. A saucy one, methinks.

Philip. The injurious are apt to think so; however, I ask pardon. As your riches make you too proud, my honesty, perhaps, makes me too bold.

Belf. O, I know you now: you are son to that old fellow I thought proper to discharge from my farm. Please to betake yourself from the door of your cabin; there's a young woman within I must have a word with. [with—

Philip. If 'tis Lucy Waters you would speak

Belf. If, rascal! It is Lucy Waters that I would speak with—that I will speak with—and, spite of your insolence, compel to answer whatever I please to ask, and go with me wherever I please to carry her.

Philip. Then, sir, I must tell you, poor as I am, she is under my protection. You see, sir, I am armed; you have no right to force an entrance here, and, while I have life, you never shall.

Belf. Then be it at your peril, villain, if you oppose me. (*They fight.*)

Enter PATERSON, *who beats down their swords.*

Paterson. For shame, Mr. Belfield! what are you about—tilting with this peasant?

Belf. Paterson, stand off.

Paterson. Come, come, put up your sword.

Belf. D——n, sir! what do you mean? Do you turn against me? Give way, or, by my soul, I'll run you through.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES *and* SKIFF.

Ironsides. Heyday, what the devil ails you all! I thought the whole ship's company had sprung a mutiny. Master and I were taking a nap together for good fellowship; and you made such a d—d clattering and clashing, there's no sleeping in peace for you.

Belf. Come, Mr. Paterson, will you please to bear me company, or stay with your new acquaintance?

Ironsides. Oh, ho, my righteous nephew! is it you that are kicking up this riot? Why, you ungracious profligate, would you murder an honest lad at the door of his own house? his castle—his castellum. Are these your fresh-water tricks?

Belf. Your language, Captain Ironsides, savours strongly of your profession; and I hold both you, your occupation, and opinion, equally vulgar and contemptible.

Ironsides. My profession! Why, what have you to say to my profession, you unsanctified whelp, you? I hope it is an honest vocation to fight the enemies of one's country: you, it seems, are for murdering friends: I trust it is not for such a skipjack as thee art to fleer at my profession. Master, did'st ever hear the like?

Skiff. Never, never, captain; for my own part, I am one of few words; but, for my own part, I always thought that to be a brave seaman, like your honour, was the greatest title an Englishman can wear.

Ironsides. Why, so it is, Skiff; ahem!

Belf. Well, sir, I leave you to the enjoyment of your honours; so, your servant. Sirrah, I shall find a time for you. (*Belfield is going out.*)

Ironsides. Hark ye, sir; come back: one more word with you.

Belf. Well, sir!

Ironsides. Your father was an honest gentleman: your mother, though I say it that should not say it, was an angel; my eyes ache when I speak of her: ar'n't you ashamed, sirrah, to disgrace such parents? My nephew, Bob, your brother, is an honest lad, and as brave as ever stepped between stem and stern; a' has a few faults, indeed, as who is free? But you, Andrew, you are as false as a quicksand, and as full of mischief as a fire-ship.

Paterson. Come, Mr. Belfield, for heaven's sake, let us go home. [*Exit, with Belfield.*

Ironsides. Hark ye, Philip, I forgot to ask you what all this stir was about. [form you.

Philip. Sir, if you please to walk in, I will in-

Ironsides. With all my heart: a pragmatical, impertinent coxcomb! Come, master, we'll fill a pipe, and hear the lad's story within doors. I never yet was ashamed of my profession, and I'll take care my profession shall have no reason to be ashamed of me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter BELFIELD JUNIOR, *and* SOPHIA.

Belf. jun. Madam! madam! will you vouchsafe to give me a hearing?

Sophia. Unless you could recall an act no earthly power can cancel, all attempt at explanation is vain.

Belf. jun. Yet, before we part for ever, obstinate, inexorable Sophia, tell me what is my offence?

Sophia. Answer yourself that question, Mr. Belfield; consult your own heart; consult your Violetta.

Belf. jun. Now, on my life, she's meanly jealous of Violetta; that grateful woman has been warm in her commendations of me, and her distempered fancy turns that candour into criminality. (*Aside.*)

Sophia. Ha! he seems confounded! guilty, beyond all doubt. (*Aside.*)

Belf. jun. By heaven, I'll no longer be the dupe to these bad humours! Lucy Waters, Violetta, every woman she sees or hears, alarms her jealousy, overthrows my hopes, and rouses every passion into fury. Well madam, at length I see what you allude to: I shall follow your advice, and consult my Violetta;—nay, more, consult my happiness; for, with her, at least, I shall find repose; with you, I plainly see, there can be none.

Sophia. 'Tis very well, sir; the only favour you can now grant me is never to see you again: for, after what has passed between us, every time you intrude into my company, you will commit an insult upon good breeding and humanity.

Belf. jun. Madam, I'll take care to give you no further offence. [*Exit.*

Sophia. Oh, my poor heart will break!

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE.

Sir B. Hey-day, Sophia! what's the matter?—

What ails my child? Who has offended you! Did not I see the younger Belfield part from you just now?

Sophia. O, sir! if you have any love for me, don't name that base treacherous wretch to me any more. [*Exit.*

Sir B. Upon my word, I am young Mr. Belfield's most obsequious servant; a very notable confusion, truly, he has been pleased to make in my family! Lady Dove raves, Sophia cries: my wife calls him a saucy impudent fellow; my daughter says he's a base treacherous wretch; from all which I am to conclude, that he has spoke too plain truths to the one, and told too many lies to the other. Lady Dove has peremptorily insisted upon my giving him a challenge; but, to say the truth, I had no great stomach to the business, till this fresh provocation: I perceive now, I am growing into a most unaccountable rage; 'tis something so different from what I ever felt before, that, for what I know, it may be courage, and I mistake it for anger. I never did quarrel with any man, and hitherto, no man ever quarrelled with me. Egad, if I once break the ice, it sha'n't stop here; if young Belfield does not prove me a coward, Lady Dove shall see that I am a man of spirit. Sure, I see my gentleman coming here again! (*Steps aside.*)

Enter Belfield, Junior.

Belf. jun. What meanness, what infatuation possesses me, that I should resolve to throw myself once more in her way!—but she's gone, and yet I may escape with credit.

Sir B. Ay; there he is, sure enough! By the mass, I don't like him! I'll listen a while, and discover what sort of a humour he is in.

Belf. jun. I am ashamed of this weakness: I am determined to assume a proper spirit, and act as becomes a man upon this occasion.

Sir B. Upon my soul, I am very sorry for it.

Belf. jun. Now am I so distracted between love, rage, and disappointment, that I could find in my heart to sacrifice her, myself, and all mankind.

Sir B. Lord ha' mercy upon us! I'd better steal off, and leave him to himself.

Belf. jun. And yet, perhaps, all this may proceed from an excess of fondness in my Sophia.

Sir B. Upon my word, you are blest with a most happy assurance!

Belf. jun. Something may have dropped from Violante to alarm her jealousy; and, working upon the exquisite sensibility of her innocent mind, may have brought my sincerity into question.

Sir B. I don't understand a word of all this.

Belf. jun. Now could I fall at her feet for pardon, though I know not in what I have offended: I have not the heart to move. Fie upon it! What an arrant coward has love made me!

Sir B. A coward, does he say? I am heartily rejoiced to hear it; if I must needs come to action, pray heaven, it be with a coward! I'll even take him while he is in the humour, for fear he should recover his courage, and I lose mine. So, sir! your humble servant, Mr. Belfield! I'm glad I have found you, sir.

Belf. jun. Sir Benjamin, your most obedient. Pray, what are your commands, now you have found me?

Sir B. Hold! hold! don't come any nearer: don't you see I am in a most prodigious passion? Fire and fury! what's the reason you have made all this disorder in my house? my daughter in tears; my wife in fits; every thing in an uproar; and all your doing! Do you think I'll put up with this treatment? If you suppose you have a coward to deal with, you'll find yourself mistaken—greatly mistaken, let me tell you, sir! Mercy upon me, what a passion I am in! In short, Mr. Belfield, the honour of my house is concerned, and I must and will have satisfaction. (*Aside.*) I think this is pretty well to set in with: I'm horribly out of breath. What great fatigues do men of courage undergo!

Belf. jun. Look ye, Sir Benjamin, I don't rightly comprehend what you would be at; but, if you think I have injured you, few words are best; disputes between men of honour are soon adjusted. I'm at your service, in any way you think fit.

Sir B. How you fly out, now! Is that giving me the satisfaction I require? I am the person injured in this matter, and, as such, have a right to be in a passion; but I see neither right nor reason, why you, who have done the wrong, should be as angry as I who have received it.

Belf. jun. (*Aside.*) I suspect, I have totally mistaken this honest gentlemen; he only wants to build some reputation with his wife upon this rencounter, and 'twould be inhuman not to gratify him.

Sir B. What shall I do now? Egad, I seem to have posed him! This plaguy sword sticks so hard in the scabbard! Well, come forth, rapier; 'tis but one thrust; and what should a man fear, that has Lady Dove for his wife?

Belf. jun. Heyday! is the man mad? Put up your sword, Sir Benjamin; put it up, and don't expose yourself in this manner.

Sir B. You shall excuse me, sir; I have had some difficulty in drawing it, and am determined now to try what metal it's made of. So, come on, sir!

Belf. jun. Really, this is too ridiculous: I tell you, Sir Benjamin, I am in no humour for these follies. I've done no wrong to you, or yours; on the contrary, great wrong has been done to me: but I have no quarrel with you, so, pray put up your sword.

Sir B. And I tell you, Mr. Belfield, 'tis in vain to excuse yourself. The less readiness he shews, so much the more resolution I feel.

Belf. jun. Well, sir knight, if such is your humour, I won't spoil your longing. So, have at you!

Enter Lady Dove.

Lady D. Ah! (*Shrieks.*)

Belf. jun. Hold, hold, Sir Benjamin! I never fight in ladies' company.

Sir B. Oh, my lady! is it you? Don't be alarmed, my dear; 'tis all over: a small *fracas* between this gentleman and myself, that's all; don't be under any surprise; I believe the gentleman has had enough: I believe he is perfectly satisfied with my behaviour, and, I persuade myself, you will have no cause in future to complain of his. Mr. Belfield, this is Lady Dove.

Belf. jun. Madam, to a generous enemy, 'tis mean to deny justice, or withhold applause. You are happy in the most valiant of defenders, gentle as you may find him in the tender passions; to a man, madam, he acquits himself like a man. Sir Benjamin Dove, in justice to your merit, I am ready to make any submission to this lady you shall please to impose. If you suffer her to bully you after this, you deserve to be hen-pecked all the days of your life. (*Aside to Sir B.*)

Sir B. Say no more, my dear Bob; I shall love you for this the longest hour I have to live.

Belf. jun. If I have done you any sersice, promise me only one hour's conversation with your lovely daughter, and make what use of me you please.

Sir B. Here's my hand; you shall have it; leave us. [*Exit Belfield, Junior.*

Lady D. What am I to think of all this? It can't well be a contrivance; and yet, 'tis strange, that you little animal should have the assurance to face a man, and to be so bashful at a rencontre with a woman!

Sir B. Well, Lady Dove, what are you musing upon? You see, you are obeyed; the honour of your family is vindicated: slow to enter into these affairs, being once engaged, I pertinaciously conduct them to an issue.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin, I—I—

Sir B. Here, Jonathan, do you hear? set my things ready in the library; make haste.

Lady D. I say, Sir Benjamin, I think—

Sir B. Well, let's hear what it is you think?

Lady D. Bless us all! why, you snap one up so! I say, I think, my dear, you have acquitted yourself tolerably well, and I am perfectly satisfied.

Sir B. Humph! you think I have done tolerably well; I think so too: do you apprehend me? Tolerably! for this business, that you think tolerably well done, is but half concluded, let me tell you: nay, what some would call the toughest part of the undertaking, remains unfinished; but, I dare say, with your concurrence, I shall find it easy enough.

Lady D. What is it you mean to do with my concurrence? what mighty project does your wise brain teem with?

Sir B. Nay, now I reflect on't again, I dont think there'll be any need of your concurrence; for, *nolens* or *volens*, I'm determined it shall be done. In short, this it is:—I am unalterably resolved, from this time forward, Lady Dove, to be sole and absolute in this house;—master of my own servants, father to my own child, and sovereign lord and governor, madam, over my own wife!

Lady D. You are?

Sir B. I am. Gods! gods! what a pitiful, contemptible figure does a man make under petticoat government! I am determined to be free.

Enter PATERSON, *and whispers Lady Dove.*

Ha! how's this, Mr. Paterson! What liberties are these you take with my wife, and before my face? No more of these freedoms, I do beseech you, sir, as you expect to have to answer it to a husband, who will have no secrets whispered to his wife, to which he is not privy; nor any appointments made, in which he is not a party.

Paterson. Heyday! what a change of government is here! Egad, I'm very glad on't. Sir Benjamin, I see you are busy about family affairs; so I'll wait on you some other time. [*Exit.*

Lady Dove. What insolence is this, Sir Benjamin? what ribaldry do you shock my ears with? Let me pass, sir; I'll stay no longer in the same room with you.

Sir B. Not in the same room, nor under the same roof, shall you long abide, unless you reform your manners; however, for the present, you must be content to stay where you are.

Lady D. What, sir! will you imprison me in my own house? I'm sick; I'm ill; I'm suffocated; I want air: I must and will walk into the garden.

Sir B. Then, madam, you must find some better weapon than your fan to parry my sword with: this pass I defend: what, dost think, after having encountered a man, I shall turn my back on a woman? No, madam; I have ventured my life to defend your honour; 'twould be hard if I wanted spirit to protect my own. To-morrow, madam, you leave this house for ever.

Lady D. Will you break my heart, you tyrant? Will you turn me out of doors, to starve, you barbarous man?

Sir B. Oh! never fear; you will fare, to the full, as well as you did in your first husband's time; in your poor, dear, dead Mr. Searcher's time. You told me once, that you prized the paltry greyhound that hung at his button-hole, more than all the jewels my folly had lavished upon you. I take you at your word; you shall have your bauble, and I will take back all mine; they'll be of no use to you hereafter.

Lady D. O, Sir Benjamin! Sir Benjamin! for mercy's sake turn me not out of your house! I will be obedient, gentle, and complying, for the future; don't shame me; on my knees, I beseech you, don't.

Enter BELFIELD, SENIOR.

Sir B. Mr. Belfield, I am heartily glad to see you; don't go back, sir; you catch us, indeed, a little unawares; but these situations are not uncommon in well-ordered families: rewards and punishments are the life of government; and the authority of a husband must be upheld.

Belf. I confess, Sir Benjamin, I was greatly surprised at finding Lady Dove in that attitude; but I never pry into family secrets: I had much rather suppose your lady was on her knees to intercede with you in my behalf, than be told she was reduced to that humble posture for any reason that affects herself.

Sir B. Sir, you are free to suppose what you please for Lady Dove; I'm willing to spare you that trouble on my account; and, therefore, I tell you plainly, if you will sign and seal your articles this night, to-morrow morning Sophia shall be your's. I'm resolved, that the self-same day which consecrates the redemption of my liberty, shall confirm the surrender of your's.

Lady D. O, Mr. Belfield! I beseech you, intercede with this dear cruel man in my behalf! Would you believe, that he harbours a design of expelling me his house, on the very day, too, when he purposes celebrating the nuptials of his daughter?

Belf. Come, Sir Benjamin, I must speak to you now as a friend in the nearest connexion: I beg you will not damp our happiness with so melancholy an event. I will venture to pledge myself for her ladyship.

Sir B. Well, for your sake, perhaps, I may prolong her departure for one day; but I'm determined, if she does stay to-morrow, she shall not preside at table; if 'tis only to shew the company what a refractory wife, in the hands of a man of spirit, may be brought to submit to. Our wives, Mr. Belfield, may tease us, and vex us, and still escape with impunity; but, if once they thoroughly provoke us, the charm breaks, and they are lost for ever. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Sea Coast.*

Enter OLD GOODWIN *and* FANNY.

O. Good. What you tell me, Fanny, gives me great concern; that Mr. Francis should think to seduce the innocence of my child, for a paltry bribe! What can have passed to encourage him to put such an affront upon you?

Fanny. Till this proposal, which I tell you of, I always took Mr. Francis for one of the best-behaved, modestest young men, I had ever met with.

O. Good. To say the truth, Fanny, so did I; but the world is full of hypocrisy, and our acquaintance with him has been very short.

Enter FRANCIS.

Hark'ye, young man, a word with you. What is it I or my children have done to offend you?

Francis. Offend me! what is it you mean?

O. Good. When your vessel was stranded upon our coast, did we take advantage of your distress? On the contrary, wasn't this poor hut thrown open to your use, as a receptacle for your treasures, and a repose for your fatigues! Have either those treasures, or that repose, been invaded? Whom amongst you have we robbed or defrauded?

Francis. None, none; your honesty has been as conspicuous as your hospitality.

O. Good. Why, then, having received no injury, do you seek to do one? an injury of the basest nature. You see there a poor girl, whose only portion in this world is her innocence, and of that you have sought to—

Francis. Hold; nor impute designs to me which I abhor. You say your daughter has no portion but her innocence; assured of that, I ask none else; and if she can forgive the stratagem I have

made use of, I am ready to atone for it by a life devoted to her service.

O. Good. Well, sir, I am happy to find you are the man I took you for, and cannot discommend your caution; so, that, if you like my daughter, and Fanny is consenting—But, soft! who have we got here?

Fanny. I wish Mr. Paterson was further off, for interrupting us just now.

Enter PATERSON.

Paterson. Pray, good people, isn't there a lady with you, of the name of Violetta?

O. Good. There is.

Paterson. Can you direct me to her? I have business with her of the utmost consequence.

O. Good. Fanny, you and Mr. Francis step in, and let the lady know. [*Exeunt Fanny and Francis.*] If it's no offence, Mr. Paterson, allow me to ask you, whether there is any hope of our young gentleman here, who is just returned, succeeding in his addresses to Miss Dove?

Paterson. Certainly none, Master Goodwin.

G. Good. I'm heartily sorry for it.

Paterson. I find you are a stranger to the reasons which make against it; but how are you interested in his success?

O. Good. I am a witness of his virtues; and, consequently, not indifferent to his success. [*Exit.*

Enter VIOLETTA.

Paterson. Madam, I presume your name is Violetta?

Vio. It is, sir.

Paterson. I wait upon you, madam, at Miss Dove's desire, and as a particular friend of Mr. Andrew Belfield's.

Vio. Sir!

Paterson. Madam!

Vio. Pray, proceed.

Paterson. To entreat the favour of your company at Cropley Castle, upon business, wherein that lady and gentleman are intimately concerned; I presume, madam, you guess what I mean?

Vio. Indeed, sir, I cannot easily guess how I can possibly be a party in any business between Miss Dove and Mr. Belfield. I thought all intercourse between those persons was now entirely at an end.

Paterson. Oh, no, madam; by no means: the affair is far from being at an end.

Vio. How, sir! not at an end?

Paterson. No, madam; on the contrary, from Sir Benjamin's great anxiety for the match, and, above all, from the very seasonable intelligence you was so good to communicate to Miss Sophia, I am not without hopes that Mr. Andrew Belfield will be happy enough to conquer all her scruples, and engage her to consent to marry him.

Vio. Indeed! but pray, sir, those scruples of Miss Dove's, which you flatter yourself Mr. Belfield will so happily conquer, how is it that ladies in this country reconcile themselves to such matters? I should have thought such an obstacle utterly insurmountable.

Paterson. Why, to be sure, madam, Miss Dove has had some doubts and difficulties to contend with; but duty, you know—and, as I said before, you, madam, you have been a great friend to Mr. Belfield, you have forwarded matters surprisingly.

Vio. It is very surprising, truly, if I have.

Paterson. You seem greatly staggered at what I tell you. I see you are a stranger to the principles upon which young ladies frequently act in this country; I believe, madam, in England, as many, or more, matches are made from pique, than for love; and, to say the truth, I take this of Miss Dove's to be one of that sort. There is a certain person, you know, who will feel upon this occasion.

Vio. Yes; I well know there is a certain person, who will feel upon this occasion; but, are the sufferings of that unhappy one to be converted into raillery and amusement?

Paterson. Oh, madam, the ladies will tell you, that therein consists the very luxury of revenge! But, I beseech you, have the goodness to make haste, my friend, Mr. Belfield, may stand in need of your support.

Vio. Thus insulted, I can contain myself no longer. Upon what infernal shore am I cast? Into what society of demons am I fallen? that a woman whom, by an act of honour, I would have redeemed from misery and ruin, should have the insolence, the inhumanity, to invite me to be a spectatress of her marriage with my own husband!

Paterson. With your husband! What do I hear? Is Mr. Andrew Belfield your husband?

Vio. Ay, do you doubt it? 'Would I could say he was not!

Paterson. Just heaven! you then are the Violetta, you are the Portuguese lady I have heard so much of, and married to Mr. Belfield.—Base and perfidious! Why, madam, both Miss Dove and myself conceived that 'twas the young adventurer with whom you suffered shipwreck, that—

Vio. What, Lewson! the brave, generous, honourable Lewson?

Paterson. Lewson! Lewson! as sure as can be, you mean young Belfield; for now the recollection strikes me, that I've heard he took that name before he quitted England. That Lewson, madam, whom we believed you married to, is Robert Belfield, the younger brother to your husband.

Vio. Mercy defend me! into what distress had this mutual mistake nearly involved us.

Paterson. Come then, madam, let us lose no time, but fly, with all despatch, to Cropley Castle; I have a postchaise waiting, which will convey us thither, in a few minutes; but before we go, I'll step in and direct these good people to find young Belfield, and send him after us. Old Ironsides and all must be there. [*Exit.*

Vio. Let me reflect upon my fate—wedded, betrayed, abandoned! at once a widow and a wife, all that my soul held dear, in the same hour obtained and lost. O false, false Belfield! Strong, indeed, must be that passion, and deeply seated in my heart, which even thy treachery could not eradicate! Twice shipwrecked! twice rescued from the jaws of death! Just heaven! I do not, dare not, murmur; nor can I doubt but that thy hand invisibly is stretched forth to save me; and, through this labyrinth of sorrow, to conduct me to repose. *Re-enter* PATERSON.

Paterson. Now, madam, if you will trust yourself to my convoy, I'll bring you into harbour, where you shall never suffer shipwreck more.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Sir Benjamin Dove's House.*

Enter SIR BENJAMIN *and* LADY DOVE.

Sir B. Upon these terms and stipulations, Lady Dove, I consent to your remaining at Cropley Castle. Enjoy you your own prerogative, and leave me in possession of mine; above all things, my dear, I must insist that Mr. Paterson be henceforward considered as my friend and companion, and not your ladyship's.

Lady D. Nay, but indeed and indeed, my dear Sir Benjamin, this is being too hard with me, to debar me the common gratifications of every woman of distinction; Mr. Paterson, you know, is my very particular friend.

Sir B. 'Tis for his being so very particular, my dear, that I object to him.

Lady D. Friendship, Sir Benjamin, is the virtuous recreation of delicate and susceptible minds; would you envy me that innocent pleasure? Why, you know, my dearest, that your passion for me, which was once so violent, is now softened and subsided into mere friendship.

Sir B. True, my dear; and, therefore, I am afraid, lest my love having, by easy degrees, slackened into friendship, his friendship should, by as natural a transition, quicken into love; say no more, therefore, upon this point, but leave me to Mr. Paterson, and Mr. Paterson to me: go, send Sophia to me—Oh, here she comes: your ladyship need not be present at our conference; I think my own daughter, surely, belongs to my province, and not yours. Good morning to you. [*Exit Lady D.*

Enter SOPHIA.

Well, daughter, are you prepared to comply with my desires, and give your hand to Andrew Belfield, this morning?

Sophia. Sir!

Sir B. My heart is fixed upon this event; I have watched late and early to bring it to bear; and you'll find, my child, when you come to peruse your marriage settlement, how tenderly I have consulted your happiness in this match.

Sophia. Alas! I should never think of searching for happiness amongst deeds and conveyances; 'tis the man, and not the money, that is likely to determine my lot.

Sir B. Well, and is not Mr. Belfield a man? a fine man, as I take it he is, and a fine estate I'm sure he has got. Then, consider, likewise, how this alliance will accommodate matters in the borough of Knavestown, where I and my family have stood three contested elections with his, and lost two of them; that sport will now be at an end; and our interests will be consolidated by this match, as well as our estates.

Sophia. Still you mistake my meaning; I talk of the qualities of a man, you of his possessions; I require in a husband, good morals, good nature, and good sense; what has all this to do with contiguous estates, connected interests, and contested elections?

Sir B. I don't rightly understand what you would have, child; but this I well know, that if money alone will not make a woman happy, 'twill always purchase that that will. I hope, Sophy, you've done thinking of that rambling, idle young fellow, Bob Belfield.

Sophia. Perish all thought of him for ever! Nothing can be more contrary, more impossible in nature, than my union with young Belfield.—Age, ugliness, ill-nature, bring any-thing to my arms, rather than him.

Sir B. But why so angry with him, child? This violent detestation and abhorrence, is as favourable a symptom as any reasonable lover could wish for.

Enter PATERSON.

Paterson. Joy to you, Sir Benjamin! all joy attend you both; the bridegroom by this time is arrived; we saw his equipage enter the avenue, as ours drove into the court.

Sir B. Mr. Paterson, sir, I know not if yet your friend is to be a bridegroom, I find my daughter, here, so cold and uncomplying, for my own part, I don't know how I shall look Mr. Belfield in the face.

Paterson. Fear nothing, Sir Benjamin; make haste and receive your son-in-law; I have news to communicate to miss Dove, which I am confident will dispose her to comply with your wishes.

Sir B. Well, sir, I shall leave her to your tutorage. This obliging gentleman undertakes not only for my wife, but my daughter too. [*Exit.*

Sophia. I am surprised, Mr. Paterson—

Paterson. Hold, madam, for one moment; I have made a discovery of the last importance to your welfare; you are in an error with regard to young Belfield. Violetta, the lady you believed him married to, is here in the house; I have brought her hither at your request; and from her I learn, that the elder brother is her husband—he who, this very morning, but for my discovery, had been yours also.

Sophia. What's this you tell me, sir? Where is this lady—where is Violetta? where is young Belfield?

Paterson. Violetta, madam, I have put under safe convoy; and by this time, your waiting woman has lodged her privately in the closet of your bedchamber: there you will find her, and learn the whole process of this providential escape. I'll only speak a word to Sir Benjamin, and come to you without any further delay. [*Exit Sophia.*

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE *and* BELFIELD, SEN.

Sir B. Well, Mr. Paterson, what says my daughter?

Paterson. Every thing that becomes an obedient daughter to say: so, that if this gentleman is not made completely happy within this hour, the fault will lie at his door, and not with Miss Sophia.

Sir B. This is good news, Paterson; but I am impatient to have the ceremony concluded; the bells are ringing, the parson is waiting, and the equipages are at the door: step up to Sophia, and tell her to hasten; and hark ye, my friend, as you go by Lady Dove's door, give her a call; do you mind me, only call at the door: don't you go in; she's busy at work upon a large parcel of ribbons, which I've given her to make into wedding favours; she'll be very angry if you go into her chamber. Go, go, get you gone. [*Exit Paterson.*

Belf. How comes it to pass, Sir Benjamin, that Mr. Paterson is become so necessary an agent in the female affairs of your family? I confess to you my pride is wounded, when I find I am to thank him for your daughter's consent to marry me. The man that can prevail upon a woman to act against her liking, what may he not persuade her to do, with it?

Sir B. Your remark is just: Paterson has certainly some secret faculty of persuasion; and all that can be said is, that 'tis better to see your danger before marriage, than to be feeling it out, as I have done, afterwards.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES *and* BELFIELD, JUN.

Sir B. What, old acquaintance, are you come to rejoice with me on this occasion? Bob Belfield too, as I live! you are both heartily welcome. I could have spared their visit notwithstanding. (*Aside.*)

Belf. My brother here? vexation!

Belf. jun. Sir Benjamin! I come now to claim your promise of one hour's conversation with your daughter.

Sir B. The devil you do! [*Belf.* Ridiculous!

Belf. jun. To you, sir, obligations of this sort may be matter of ridicule: but while I religiously observe all promises I make to others, I shall expect others to be as observant of those they make to me.

Belf. Sir, I have a most profound veneration for your principles, and am happy to find your understanding so much cultivated by travel; but, in spite of your address, you will find it rather difficult to induce me to waive my right in Miss Dove, in favour of a professed adventurer.

Belf. jun. Shameless, unfeeling man! an adventurer do you call me? You, whose unbrotherly persecution drove me to this hazardous, this humiliating occupation?

Ironsides. Sirrah! Bob! no reflections upon privateering; it has lined your pockets well, you young rogue; and you may tell your fine brother there, that we have landed treasure enough upon his estate to buy the fee-simple of it: ay, and, for what I know, of Sir Wiseacre's here into the bargain.

Sir B. What's that you say, Captain Ironsides? Let's have a word in a corner with you.

Belf. Look ye, sir, if you conceive yourself wronged by me, there is but one way. You know your remedy.

Belf. jun. I know your meaning, brother; and, to demonstrate how much greater my courage is than your's, I must confess to you, I dare not accept your proposal. [believe.

Sir B. No, no, I've given him enough of that, I

Ironsides. Bob Belfield, if I did not know thee for a lad of mettle, I should not tell what to make of all this; for my own part, I understand none of your scruples and refinements, not I; a man is a man; and if I take care to give an affront to no man, I think I have a right to take an affront from no man.

Sir B. Come, gentlemen, suspend your dispute; here comes my daughter—let her decide betwixt you.

Belf. jun. Let me receive my sentence from her lips, and I will submit to it.

Enter Sophia, Paterson, *and* Lady Dove.

Sir B. Here's a young gentleman, daughter, that will take no denial; he comes to forbid the bans just when you are both going into the church to be married.

Sophia. Upon my word, this is something extraordinary. What are the gentleman's reasons for this behaviour?

Sir B. He claims a sort of promise from me that he should be indulged in an hour's conversation with you, before you give your hand to his brother.

Sophia. An hour's conversation! What little that gentleman can have to say to me, I believe, may be said in a very few minutes.

Belf. I think, brother, this conversation don't promise a great deal.

Sophia. In the first place, then, I own to this gentleman, and the company present, that there was a time when I entertained the highest opinion of his merit. Nay, I will not scruple to confess that I had conceived a regard for him of the tenderest sort.

Ironsides. And pray, young lady, how came my nephew to forfeit your good opinion?

Sophia. By a conduct, sir, that must for ever forfeit, not my esteem only, but your's, and all mankind's: I am sorry to be his accuser; but I will appeal to you, Mr. Belfield, who are his brother, whether it is reconcilable either to honour or humanity, to prosecute an affair of marriage with one woman, when you are previously and indispensably engaged to another?

Belf. Humph!

Sophia. Yet this, sir, is the treatment I received: judge, therefore, if I can desire or consent to have any long conversation with a gentleman, who is under such engagements; nay, whom I can prove actually married to another woman, in this very house, and ready to vouch the truth of what I assert. Judge for me, Mr. Belfield, could you believe any man capable of such complicated, such inconceivable villany?

Belf. Heavens! This touches me too closely.

Sir B. Sir, I would fain know what excuse you can have for this behaviour? I can tell you, sir, I don't understand it.

Lady D. Oh, fie! fie upon you, Mr. Belfield! I wonder you are not ashamed to shew your face in this family.

Sir B. Who desired you to put in your oar?

Ironsides. Why, sirrah, would not one wife content you? 'Tis enough, in all reason, for one man; is it not, Sir Benjamin? [accuse me.

Belf. jun. Sir, when it is proved I am married,

Ironsides. Look ye, Bob, I don't blame you for marrying; 'twas an indiscretion, and I can forgive it; but to deny it, is a meanness, and I abhor it.

Sophia. Mr. Belfield, do you say nothing upon this occasion?

Belf. Paterson, I am struck to the heart; I cannot support my guilt! I am married to Violetta; save me the confusion of relating it; this dishonourable engagement for ever I renounce; nor will I rest till I have made an atonement to an injured wife. Madam, I beg leave to withdraw for a few minutes.

Belf. jun. Hold, sir! this contrivance is of your forging; you have touched me too near; and now, if you dare draw your sword, follow me.

Sophia. Hold, gentlemen! you forget the lady is now in the house; she is a witness that will effectually put an end to your dispute: I will conduct her hither. [*Exit.*

Belf. jun. I agree to it.

Ironsides. Harkye, nephew; I shrewdly suspect you have been laying a train to blow yourself up: if once Bob comes fairly alongside of you, you'll find your quarters too hot to hold you. I never yet found my boy out in a lie, and sha'n't tamely see a lie imposed upon him; for, while he is honest, and I have breath, he shall never want a friend to stand by him, or a father to protect him.

Belf. Mr. Paterson, explain my story: I will depart this instant in search of Violetta.

Enter Sophia *and* Violetta.

Sophia. Stay, I conjure you! stay, turn, and look back upon this lady, before you go. (*Presenting Violetta.*)

Belf. My wife!

Sophia. Yes, sir, your wife, and my unanswerable witness.

Sir B. Heyday! here's a turn!

Ironsides. I thought how 'twould be.

Vio. Yes, sir, your faithful, your forsaken wife.

Sophia. Thank heaven, that I can add, your only wife!

Belf. How shall I look upon you? What shall I say? Where shall I hide my confusion? Oh, take me to your arms, and, in that soft shelter, let me find forgiveness and protection.

Vio. Be this your only punishment! and this!

Belf. jun. Was it then a sister I preserved from death? [pardon too?

Belf. What's this I hear? Oh, brother! can you

Belf. jun. Be indeed a brother, and let this providential event be the renovation of our friendship.

Belf. What shall I say to you, madam? (*To Sophia.*) Paterson, you know my heart: bear witness to its remorse. By heaven, my secret resolution was instantly to have departed in search of this my injured wife; but I'm not worthy even of your resentment; here is one that merits and returns your love. (*Turning to his brother.*)

Ironsides. Come, god-daughter, we can never say the fleet's fairly come to an anchor while the admiral's ship is out at sea. (*Presenting Belfield, Junior.*) My nephew here is as honest a lad as lives, and loves you at the soul of him; give him your hand, and I'll broach the last chest of dollars to make him a fortune deserving of you. What say you, my old friend?

Sir B. Here's my hand; I've spoke the word; she's his own. Lady Dove, I won't hear a syllable to the contrary.

Ironsides. Then, the galleon is thy own, boy. What should an old fellow like me do with money? Give me a warm nightcap, a tiff of punch, and an elbow-chair in your chimney corner, and I'll lay up for the remainder of my days.

Belf. jun. How shall I give utterance to my gratitude, or my love?

Belf. Now are you all assembled to overwhelm me with confusion. Like some poor culprit, surrounded by a crowd of witnesses, I stand convicted and appalled. But all your wrongs shall be redressed; my whole life shall be employed in acts of justice and atonement. Virtue, and this virtuous woman, were my first ruling passions.

Now they resume their social, soft controul,
And love and happiness possess my soul.

[*Exeunt.*

THE BUSY BODY;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.



Act II.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

SIR GEORGE AIRY	CHARLES	MIRANDA
SIR FRANCIS GRIPE	MARPLOT	ISABINDA
SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK	WHISPER	PATCH

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, *meeting* CHARLES.

Charles. Ha! Sir George Airy, a birding thus early! What forbidden game roused you so soon? for no lawful occasion could invite a person of your figure abroad at such unfashionable hours.

Sir G. There are some men, Charles, whom ortune has left free from inquietudes, who are diligently studious to find out ways and means to make themselves uneasy.

Charles. Is it possible that anything in nature can ruffle the temper of a man whom the four seasons of the year compliment with as many thousand pounds; nay, and a father at rest with his ancestors.

Sir G. Why, there it is now! a man that wants money thinks none can be unhappy that has it; but my affairs are in such a whimsical posture, that it will require a calculation of my nativity to find if my gold will relieve me or not.

Charles. Ha, ha, ha! never consult the stars about that; gold has a power beyond them. Then what can thy business be that gold won't serve thee in.

Sir G. Why I'm in love.

Charles. In love! Ha, ha, ha, ha! in love! Ha, ha, ha, ha! with what, pr'ythee? a cherubin?

Sir G. No; with a woman.

Charles. A woman! good. Ha, ha, ha, ha! and gold not help thee?

Sir G. But suppose I'm in love with two?

Charles. Ay, if thou'rt in love with two hundred, gold will fetch them, I warrant thee, boy. But who are they? who are they? come.

Sir G. One is a lady whose face I never saw, but witty to a miracle; the other beautiful as Venus—

Charles. And a fool.

Sir G. For aught I know, for I never spoke to her; but you can inform me. I am charmed by the wit of the one, and die for the beauty of the other.

Charles. And pray which are you in quest of now?

Sir G. I prefer the sensual pleasure; I'm for her I've seen, who is thy father's ward, Miranda.

Charles. Nay, then I pity you; for the Jew, my father, will no more part with her and thirty thousand pounds than he would with a guinea to keep me from starving.

Sir G. Now you see gold can't do everything, Charles.

Charles. Yes; for it is her gold that bars my father's gate against you.

Sir G. Why, if he be this avaricious wretch, how cam'st thou by such a liberal education?

Charles. Not a sous out of his pocket, I assure you: I had an uncle who defrayed that charge; but for some little wildness of youth, though he made me his heir, left dad my guardian till I came to years of discretion, which I presume the old gentleman will never think I am; and now he has got the estate into his clutches, it does me no

more good than if it lay in Prester John's dominions.

Sir G. What, canst thou find no stratagem to redeem it?

Charles. I have made many essays to no purpose; though want, the mistress of invention, still tempts me on, yet still the old fox is too cunning for me. I am upon my last project, which if it fails, then for my last refuge, a brown musket.

Sir G. What is't? can I assist thee?

Charles. Not yet; when you can, I have confidence enough in you to ask it.

Sir G. I am always ready. But what does he intend to do with Miranda? Is she to be sold in private, or will he put her up by way of auction, at who bids most? If so, 'egad I'm for him; my gold, as you say, shall be subservient to my pleasure.

Charles. To deal ingenuously with you, Sir George, I know very little of her or home; for since my uncle's death, and my return from travel, I have never been well with my father; he thinks my expenses too great, and I his allowance too little; he never sees me but he quarrels, and to avoid that I shun his house as much as possible. The report is he intends to marry her himself.

Sir G. Can she consent to it?

Charles. Yes faith, so they say; but I tell you I am wholly ignorant of the matter. I fancy she plays the mother-in-law already, and sets the old gentleman on to do mischief.

Sir G. Then I have your free consent to get her?

Charles. Ay, and my helping hand, if occasion be.

Sir G. Poh! yonder's a fool coming this way; let's avoid him.

Charles. What, Marplot? No, no, he's my instrument; there's a thousand conveniences in him; he'll lend me his money, when he has any, run of my errands and be proud on it; in short he'll pimp for me, lie for me, drink for me, do anything but fight for me, and that I trust to my own arm for.

Sir G. Nay, then he's to be endured; I never knew his qualifications before. (*Retires.*)

Enter Marplot, *with a patch across his face.*

Mar. Dear Charles, your's. Ha! Sir George Airy! the man in the world I have an ambition to be known to. (*Aside.*) Give me thy hand dear boy. (*To Charles.*)

Charles. A good assurance! But harkye, how came your beautiful countenance clouded in the wrong place?

Mar. I must confess 'tis a little mal-a-propos; but no matter for that. A word with you, Charles. Pr'ythee introduce me to Sir George, he is a man of wit, and I'd give ten guineas to—

Charles. When you have them you mean.

Mar. Ay, when I have them; poh, plague, you cut the thread of my discourse. I would give ten guineas, I say, to be ranked in his acquaintance. But, pr'ythee, introduce me.

Charles. Well, on condition you'll give us a true account how you came by that mourning nose, I will.

Mar. I'll do it.

Charles. Sir George, here's a gentleman has a passionate desire to kiss your hand.

Sir G. (*Advancing.*) Oh! I honour men of the sword; and I presume this gentleman is lately come from Spain or Portugal, by his scars.

Mar. No, really, Sir George, mine sprung from civil fury. Happening last night to step into the groom-porter's, I had a strong inclination to go ten guineas with a sort of a, sort of a—kind of a milksop, as I thought. A plague of the dice! he flung out, and my pockets being empty, as Charles knows they often are, he proved a surly North Briton, and broke my face for my deficiency.

Sir G. Ha, ha! and did not you draw?

Mar. Draw, sir! why I did but lay my hand upon my sword to make a swift retreat, and he roared out, 'Now the deel a ma saul, sir, gin ye touch yer steel I se whip mine through yer wem.'

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha!

Charles. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Safe was the word. So you walked off, I suppose.

Mar. Yes, for I avoid fighting, purely to be serviceable to my friends, you know.

Sir G. Your friends are much obliged to you, sir; I hope you will rank me in that number.

Mar. Sir George, a bow from the side-box, or to be seen in your chariot, binds me ever your's.

Sir G. Trifles; you may command them when you please.

Charles. Provided he may command you.

Mar. Me! why I live for no other purpose. Sir George, I have the honour to be caressed by most of the reigning toasts of the town: I'll tell them you are the finest gentleman—

Sir G. No, no, pr'ythee let me alone to tell the ladies my parts. Can you convey a letter upon occasion, or deliver a message with an air of business, ha?

Mar. With the assurance of a page and the gravity of a statesman.

Sir G. You know Miranda?

Mar. What! my sister ward! why, her guardian is mine; we are fellow sufferers. Ah! he is a covetous, cheating, sanctified curmudgeon: that Sir Francis Gripe is a d—'d old—hypocritical—

Charles. Hold, hold; I suppose, friend, you forget that he is my father.

Mar. I ask your pardon, Charles, but it is for your sake I hate him. Well, I say, the world is mistaken in him; his outside piety makes him every man's executor, and his inside cunning makes him every heir's gaoler. 'Egad, Charles, I'm half persuaded that thou art some ward too, and never of his getting; for never were two things so unlike as you and your father; he scrapes up everything, and thou spendest everything; everybody is indebted to him, and thou art indebted to everybody.

Charles. You are very free, Mr. Marplot.

Mar. Ay, I give and take, Charles; you may be as free with me, you know.

Sir G. A pleasant fellow.

Charles. The dog is diverting sometimes, or there would be no enduring his impertinence. He is pressing to be employed, and willing to execute; but some ill fate generally attends all he undertakes, and he oftener spoils an intrigue than helps it.

Mar. I have always your good word; but if I miscarry, 'tis none of my fault; I follow my instructions.

Charles. Yes, witness the merchant's wife.

Mar. Pish, poh! that was an accident.

Sir G. What was it, pr'ythee?

Mar. Nay, Charles, now don't expose your friend.

Charles. Why, you must know I had lent a certain merchant my hunting horses, and was to have met his wife in his absence. Sending him along with my groom to make the compliment, and to deliver a letter to the lady at the same time, what does he do but gives the husband the letter and offers her the horses.

Mar. Why to be sure I did offer her the horses, and I remember you was even with me, for you denied the letter to be yours, and swore I had a design upon her, which my bones paid for.

Charles. Come, Sir George, let us walk round, if you are not engaged, for I have sent my man upon

a little earnest business, and I have ordered him to bring me the answer into the park.

Mar. Business! and I not know it! 'Egad I'll watch him. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. I must beg your pardon, Charles, I am to meet your father.

Charles. My father!

Sir G. Ay, and about the oddest bargain perhaps you ever heard of; but I'll not impart till I know the success.

Mar. What can his business be with Sir Francis? Now would I give all the world to know it. Why the devil should not one know every man's concerns? (*Aside.*)

Charles. Prosperity to't, whatever it be: I have private affairs too: over a bottle we'll compare notes.

Mar. Charles knows I love a glass as well as any man; I'll make one; shall it be to-night? I long to know their secrets. (*Aside.*)

Enter WHISPER.

Whis. Sir, sir, Mrs. Patch says Isabinda's Spanish father has quite spoiled the plot, and she cannot meet you in the park, but he infallibly will go out this afternoon, she says; but I must step again to know the hour.

Mar. What did Whisper say now? I shall go stark mad if I'm not let into the secret. (*Aside.*)

Charles. Curst misfortune!

Mar. Curst! what's curst, Charles?

Charles. Come along with me; my heart feels pleasure at her name. Sir George, yours; we'll meet at the old place, the usual hour.

Sir G. Agreed, I think I see Sir Francis yonder. [*Exit.*

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me; I am engaged. [*Exit.*

Mar. Engaged! Egad, I'll engage my life I'll know what your engagement is. [*Exit.*

Enter MIRANDA.

Mir. Let the chair wait. My servant, that dogged Sir George, said he was in the park.

Enter PATCH.

Ha! Miss Patch alone! did not you tell me you had contrived a way to bring Isabinda to the park?

Patch. Oh, madam, your ladyship cannot imagine what a wretched disappointment we have met with! Just as I had fetched a suit of my clothes for a disguise, comes my old master into his closet, which is right against her chamber door: this struck us into a terrible fright; at length I put on a grave face, and asked him if he was at leisure for his chocolate? in hopes to draw him out of his hole; but he snapp'd my nose off: "No, I shall be busy here these two hours." At which my poor mistress, seeing no way of escape, ordered me to wait on your ladyship with the sad relation.

Mir. Unhappy Isabinda! was ever anything so unaccountable as the humour of Sir Jealous Traffick?

Patch. Oh, madam, it's his living so long in Spain; he vows he'll spend half his estate but he'll be a parliament man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils, and other odious Spanish customs. He swears it is the height of impudence to have a woman seen barefaced even at church, and scarce believes there's a true begotten child in the city.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! how the old fool torments himself! Suppose he could introduce his rigid rules, does he think we could not match them in contrivance? No, no! let the tyrant man make what laws he will, if there's a woman under the government, I warrant she finds a way to break them. Is his mind set upon the Spaniard for a son-in-law, still?

Patch. Ay, and he expects him by the next fleet, which drives his daughter to melancholy and despair. But madam, I find you retain the same gay, cheerful spirit you had when I waited on your ladyship. My lady is mighty good-humoured too, and I have found a way to make Sir Jealous believe I am wholly in his interest, when my real design is to serve her: he makes me her gaoler, and I set her at liberty.

Mir. I knew thy prolific brain would be of singular service to her, or I had not parted with thee to her father.

Patch. But, madam, the report is that you are going to marry your guardian.

Mir. It is necessary such a report should be, Patch.

Patch. But is it true, madam?

Mir. That's not absolutely necessary.

Patch. I thought it was only the old strain, coaxing him still for your own, and railing at all the young fellows about town: in my mind now, you are as ill plagued with your guardian, madam, as my lady is with her father.

Mir. No, I have liberty, wench; that she wants: what would she give now to be in this dishabille in the open air, nay more, in pursuit of the young fellow she likes? for that's my case, I assure you.

Patch. As for that, madam, she's even with you; for though she cannot come abroad, we have a way to bring him home in spite of old Argus.

Mir. Now, Patch, your opinion of my choice, for here he comes. Ha! my guardian with him! what can be the meaning of this? I'm sure Sir Francis can't know me in this dress. Let's observe them. (*They withdraw.*)

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE *and* SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir F. Verily, Sir George, thou wilt repent throwing away thy money so, for I tell thee sincerely, Miranda, my charge does not like a young fellow; they are all vicious, and seldom make good husbands: In sober sadness she cannot abide them.

Mir. (*Peeping.*) In sober sadness you are mistaken. What can this mean?

Sir G. Lookye, Sir Francis, whether she can or cannot abide young fellows is not the business: will you take the fifty guineas?

Sir F. In good troth I will not; for I knew thy father, he was a hearty wary man, and I cannot consent that his son should squander away what he saved to no purpose.

Mir. (*Peeping.*) Now, in the name of wonder, what bargain can he be driving about me for fifty guineas?

Sir G. Well, Sir Francis, since you are so conscientious for my father's sake, then permit me the favour gratis.

Sir F. No verily; if thou dost not buy thy experience thou wilt never be wise; therefore give me a hundred and try thy fortune.

Sir G. The scruples arose, I find, from the scanty sum. Let me see—a hundred guineas. (*Takes the money out of a purse and chinks it.*) Ha! they have a very pretty sound, and a very pleasing look. But then, Miranda; but if she should be cruel—

Sir F. Ay, do consider on't. He, he, he!

Sir G. No, I'll do it. Come, to the point; here is the gold; sum up the conditions. (*Sir Francis pulls out a paper.*)

Mir. (*Peeping.*) Ay, for heaven's sake do, for my expectation is on the rack.

Sir F. Well, at your peril be it.

Sir G. Ay, ay, go on.

Sir F. Imprimis, you are to be admitted into my house in order to move your suit to Miranda, for the space of ten minutes, without let or molestation, provided I remain in the same room.

Sir G. But out of ear-shot.

Sir F. Well, well, I don't desire to hear what you say; ha, ha, ha! in consideration I am to have that purse and a hundred guineas.

Sir G. Take it. (*Gives him the purse.*) And this agreement is to be performed to-day.

Sir F. Ay, ay; the sooner the better. Poor fool! how Miranda and I shall laugh at him! (*Aside.*) well Sir George, ha, ha, ha! take the last sound of your guineas, ha, ha, ha! [*Chinks them. Exit.*

Mir. (*Peeping.*) Sure he does not know that I am Miranda.

Sir G. A very extraordinary bargain I have made, truly; if she should be really in love with this old cuff now. Psha! that's morally impossible. But then, what hopes have I to succeed? I never spoke to her.

Mir. (*Peeping.*) Say you so? then I am safe.

Sir G. What though my tongue never spoke, my eyes said a thousand things, and my hopes flattered me her's answered them. If I am lucky —if not, it is but a hundred guineas thrown away. (*Miranda comes forward.*)

Mir. Upon what, Sir George?

Sir G. Ha! my incognita! upon a woman, madam.

Mir. They are the worst things you can deal in, and damage the soonest; your very breath destroys them, and I fear you'll never see your return, Sir George, ha, ha!

Sir G. Were they more brittle than china, and dropped to pieces with a touch, every atom of her I have ventured at, if she is but mistress of thy wit, balances ten times the sum. Pr'ythee, let me see thy face.

Mir. By no means; that may spoil your opinion of my sense.

Sir G. Rather confirm it, madam.

Patch. So rob the lady of your gallantry, sir.

Sir G. No child, a dish of chocolate in the morning never spoils my dinner; the other lady I design for a set meal; so there's no danger.

Mir. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! what crimes have you committed against the god of love, that he should revenge them so severely, as to stamp husband on your forehead?

Sir G. For my folly, in having so often met you here without pursuing the laws of nature and exercising her commands: but I resolve ere we part now to know who you are, where you live, what kind of flesh and blood your face is; therefore unmask, and don't put me to the trouble of doing it for you.

Mir. My face is the same flesh and blood with my hand, Sir George; which if you will be so rude to provoke—

Sir G. You'll apply to my cheek; the ladies' favours are always welcome, but I must have that cloud withdrawn. (*Taking hold of her.*) Remember you are in the park, child; and what a terrible thing would it be to lose this pretty white hand!

Mir. And how it will sound in a chocolate-house, that Sir George Airy rudely pulled off a lady's mask, when he had given her his honour that he never would, directly or indirectly, endeavour to know her till she gave him leave?

Sir G. But if that lady thinks fit to pursue and meet me at every turn, like some troubled spirit, shall I be blamed if I inquire into the reality? I would have nothing dissatisfied in a female shape.

Mir. What shall I do? (*Pauses.*)

Sir G. Ay, pr'ythee, consider, for thou shalt find me very much at thy service.

Patch. Suppose, sir, the lady should be in love with you.

Sir G. Oh! I'll return the obligation in a moment.

Patch. And marry her?

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! that's not the way to love her, child.

Mir. If he discovers me I shall die. Which way shall I escape? let me see. (*Pauses.*)

Sir G. Well, madam.

Mir. I have it. Sir George, 'tis fit you should allow something; if you'll excuse my face, and turn your back (if you look upon me I shall sink, even masked as I am,) I will confess why I have engaged you so often, who I am, and where I live.

Sir G. Well to shew you I am a man of honour, I accept the conditions: let me but once know those, and the face won't be long a secret to me.

Patch. What do you mean, madam? (*Aside to Miranda.*)

Mir. To get off. (*Aside to Patch.*)

Sir G. 'Tis something indecent to turn one's back upon a lady; but you command, and I obey. (*Turns his back.*) Come, madam, begin.

Mir. First, then, it was my unhappy lot to see you at Paris (*Draws back a little way, and speaks,*) at a ball upon a birth-day; your shape and air charmed my eyes, your wit and complaisance my soul, and from that fatal night I loved you. (*Drawing back.*)

And when you left the place, grief seiz'd me so,
Nor rest my heart, nor sleep my eyes could know;
Last I resolv'd a hazardous point to try,
And quit the place in search of liberty.

[*Exit, followed by Patch.*

Sir G. Excellent. I hope she's handsome. Well now, madam, to the two other things, your name, and where you live. I am a gentleman, and this confession will not be lost upon me. Nay, pr'ythee, don't weep, but go on, for I find my heart melts in thy behalf. Speak quickly, or I shall turn about. Not yet; poor lady! she expects I should comfort her, and to do her justice, she has said enough to encourage me. (*Turns about.*) Ha! gone! the devil! jilted! Why, what a tale she has invented, of Paris, balls, and birth-days! 'Egad, I'd give ten guineas to know who the gipsy is. A curse of my folly; I deserve to lose her. What woman can forgive a man that turns his back?

The bold and resolute in love and war
To conquer take the right and swiftest way:
The boldest lover soonest gains the fair,
As courage makes the rudest force obey:
Take no denial, and the dames adore ye;
Closely pursue them, and they fall before ye.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Sir Francis Gripe's house.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE *and* MIRANDA.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh! I shall die with laughing: the most romantic adventure. Ha, ha, ha! what does the odious young fop mean! A hundred pieces to talk ten minutes with me! ha ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. And I am to be by too, there's the jest; adad, if it had been in private, I should not have cared to trust the young dog.

Mir. Indeed and indeed but you might, gardy. Now methinks there's nobody handsomer than

you: so neat, so clean, so good humoured, and so loving,

Sir F. Pretty rogue, pretty rogue! and so thou shalt find me, if thou dost prefer thy gardy before these caperers of the age: thou shalt outshine the queen's box on an opera night; thou shalt be the envy of the ring (for I will carry thee to Hyde-park,) and thy equipage shall surpass the—what d'ye call 'em ambassador's.

Mir. Nay, I am sure the discreet part of my sex will envy me more for the inside furniture, when you are in it, than my outside equipage.

Sir F. A cunning baggage, i'faith thou art, and a wise one too! and to shew thee that thou hast not chose amiss, I'll this moment disinherit my son and settle my whole estate upon thee.

Mir. There's an old rogue now. (*Aside.*) No gardy, I would not have your name be so black in the world. You know my father's will runs that I am not to possess my estate, without your consent, till I am five-and-twenty; you shall only abate the odd seven years, and make me mistress of my estate to-day, and I'll make you master of my person to-morrow.

Sir F. Humph! that may not be safe. No, chargy, I'll settle it upon thee for pin-money, and that will be every bit as well, thou knowest.

Mir. Unconscionable old wretch! bribe me with my own money! Which way shall I get out of his hands? (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Well, what art thou thinking on, my girl, ha! how to banter Sir George?

Mir. I must not pretend to banter; he knows my tongue too well. (*Aside.*) No, gardy, I have thought of a way will confound him more than all I could say, if I could talk to him seven years.

Sir F. How's that? oh! I'm transported, I'm ravished, I'm mad.

Mir. It would make you mad if you knew all. (*Aside.*) I'll not answer him a word, but be dumb to all he says,

Sir F. Dumb! good; ha, ha, ha! Excellent! ha, ha, ha, ha! I think I have you now, Sir George. Dumb! he'll go distracted; well, she is the wittiest rogue. Ha, ha! dumb! I can't but laugh, ha, ha! to think how d—'d mad he'll be when he finds he has given his money away for a dumb shew! ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Nay, gardy, if he did but know my thoughts of him it would make him ten times madder; ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. Ay, so it would, chargy, to hold him in such derision, to scorn to answer him, to be dumb; ha, ha, ha!

Enter CHARLES.

Sir F. How now, sirrah! who let you in?

Charles. My necessities, sir.

Sir F. Your necessities are very impertinent, and ought to have sent before they entered.

Charles. Sir, I knew it was a word would gain admittance no where.

Sir F. Then, sirrah, how durst you rudely thrust that upon your father which nobody else would admit.

Charles. Sure the name of a son is a sufficient plea! I ask this lady's pardon, if I have intruded.

Sir F. Ay, ay, ask her pardon and her blessing too, if you expect any thing from me.

Mir. I believe your's, Sir Francis, and a purse of guineas, would be more material. Your son may have business with you; I'll retire.

Sir F. I guess his business, but I'll dispatch him; I expect the knight every minute: you'll be in readiness?

Mir. Certainly. My expectation is more upon the wing than yours, old gentleman.

[*Aside and Exit.*

Sir F. Well, sir.

Charles. Nay, it is very ill, sir; my circumstances are, I'm sure.

Sir F. And what's that to me, sir? your management should have made them better.

Charles. If you please to entrust me with the management of my estate, I shall endeavour it, sir.

Sir F. What, to set upon a card, and buy a lady's favour at the price of a thousand pieces, to rig out an equipage for a wench, or by your carelessness to enrich your steward to fine for sheriff, or put up for a parliament man.

Charles. I hope I should not spend it this way: however, I ask only for what my uncle left me; yours you may dispose of as you please, sir.

Sir F. That I shall, out of your reach, I assure you, sir. Adad, these young fellows think old men get estates for nothing but for them to squander away in dicing, wenching, drinking, dressing, and so forth.

Charles. I think I was born a gentleman, sir; I am sure my uncle bred me like one.

Sir F. From which you would infer, sir, that gambling and wenching are requisites for a gentleman.

Charles. Monstrous! when I would ask him only for a support, he falls into these unmannerly reproaches. I must, though against my will, employ invention, and by stratagem relieve myself. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Sirrah, what is it you mutter, sirrah, ha? (*Holds up his cane.*) I say you shan't have a groat out of my hands till I please, and may be I'll never please; and what's that to you?

Charles. Nay, to be robbed or have one's throat cut is not much.

Sir F. What's that, sirrah? would you rob me or cut my throat, you rogue?

Charles. Heaven forbid, sir! I said no such thing.

Sir F. Mercy on me! what a plague it is to have a son of one-and-twenty, who wants to elbow one out of one's life to edge himself into the estate!

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. 'Egad he's here. I was afraid I had lost him: his secret could not be with his father; his wants are public there. Guardian, your servant. O Charles, are you there? I know by that sorrowful countenance of thine, the old man's fist is as close as his strong box. But I'll help thee. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. So! here's another extravagant coxcomb, that will spend his fortune before he comes to it, but he shall pay swinging interest, and so let the fool go on. Well, what, does necessity bring you too, sir?

Mar. You have hit it, guardian. I want a hundred pounds.

Sir F. For what?

Mar. Poh! for a hundred things; I can't for my life tell you for what.

Charles. Sir, I suppose I have received all the answer I am like to have?

Mar. O, the devil! if he gets out before me I shall lose him again. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Ay, sir, and you may be marching as soon as you please. I must see a change in your temper, ere you find one in mine.

Mar. Pray, sir, despatch me; the money, sir; I'm in mighty haste.

Sir F. Fool, take this and go to the cashier. I shall not be long plagued with thee. (*Gives him a note.*)

Mar. Devil take the cashier. I shall certainly have Charles gone before I come back.

[*Exit, running.*

Charles. Well, sir, I take my leave; but remem-

her you expose an only son to all the miseries of wretched poverty, which too often lays the plan for scenes of mischief.

Sir F. Stay, Charles! I have a sudden thought come into my head which may prove to thy advantage.

Charles. Ha! does he relent?

Sir F. My Lady Wrinkle, worth forty thousand pounds, sets up for a handsome young husband; she praised thee the other day; though the match-makers can get twenty guineas for a sight of her, I can introduce thee for nothing.

Charles. My Lady Wrinkle, sir! why she has but one eye.

Sir F. Then she'll see but half your extravaganoe, sir.

Charles. Condemn me to such a piece of deformity! a toothless, dirty, wry-necked, hunch-backed hag!

Sir F. Hunch-backed! so much the better! then she has a rest for her misfortunes, for thou wilt load her swingingly. Now, I warrant, you think this is no offer of a father; forty thousand pounds is nothing with you.

Charles. Yes, sir, I think it too much; a young beautiful woman with half the money would be more agreeable. I thank you, sir; but you choose better for yourself, I find.

Sir F. Out of my doors, you dog! you pretend to meddle with my marriage, sirrah!

Charles. Sir, I obey you, but—

Sir F. But me no buts—begone, sir! dare to ask me for money again; refuse forty thousand pounds! Out of my doors, I say, without reply.

[*Exit Charles.*

Enter Marplot, *running.*

Mar. Ha! gone! is Charles gone, gardy?

Sir F. Yes, and I desire your wise worship to walk after him.

Mar. Nay, egad I shall run, I tell you that. A plague of the cashier for detaining me so long! Where the devil shall I find him now? I shall certainly lose this secret, and I had rather by half lose my money. Where shall I find him now? D'ye know where Charles is gone, gardy?

Sir F. Gone to the devil, and you may go after him.

Mar. Ay, that I will as fast as I can. (*Going, returns.*) Have you any commands there, gardy? [*Exit.*

Sir F. What, is the fellow distracted?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir George Airy inquires for you, sir.

Sir F. Desire Sir George to walk up. [*Exit. Servant.*] Now for a trial of skill, that will make me happy, and him a fool. Ha, ha, ha! In my mind he looks like an ass already.

Enter Sir George Airy.

Well, Sir George, do you hold in the same mind, or would you capitulate? ha, ha, ha! Look, here are the guineas. (*Chinks them.*) Ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Not if they were twice the sum, Sir Francis; therefore be brief, call in the lady, and take your post.

Sir F. Agreed. Miranda! [*Exit.*

Sir G. If she's a woman, and not seduced by witchcraft, to this old rogue, I'll make his heart ache; for if she has but one grain of inclination about her, I'll vary a thousand shapes but find it.

Re-enter Sir Francis Gripe *and* Miranda.

Sir G. So from the eastern chambers breaks the sun,
Dispels the clouds, and gilds the vales below.
(*Salutes her.*)

Sir F. Hold, sir! kissing was not in our agreement.

Sir G. Oh! that's by way of prologue. Pr'ythee, old Mammon, to thy post.

Sir F. (*Takes out his watch.*) Well, young Timon, 'tis now four exactly; ten minutes, remember, is your utmost limit; not a minute more. (*Retires.*)

Sir G. Madam, whether you'll excuse or blame my love, the author of this rash proceeding, depends upon your pleasure, as also the life of your admirer; your sparkling eyes speak a heart susceptible of love, your vivacity a soul too delicate to admit the embraces of decayed mortality. Shake off this tyrant guardian's yoke; assume yourself, and dash his bold, aspiring hopes. The deity of his desires is avarice, a heretic in love, and ought to be banished by the queen of beauty. (*Kneels.*) See, madam, a faithful servant kneels, and begs to be admitted in the number of your slaves. (*Miranda gives him her hand to raise him.*)

Sir F. (*Comes forward.*) Hold, hold, hold! no palming; that's contrary to articles.

Sir G. 'Sdeath, sir! keep your distance, or I'll write another article in your guts. (*Lays his hand to his sword.*)

Sir F. (*Going back.*) A bloody-minded fellow!

Sir G. Not answer me! perhaps she thinks my address too grave: I'll be more free. (*Aside.*) Can you be so unconscionable, madam, to let me say all these fine things to you without one single compliment in return?

Sir F. (*Running up with his watch in his hand.*) There's five of the ten minutes gone, Sir George. Adad! I don't like those close conferences.

Sir G. More interruptions! You will have it, sir. (*Lays his hand to his sword.*)

Sir F. (*Going back.*) No, no; you sha'n't have her neither. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Dumb still! Sure, this old dog has enjoined her silence. I'll try another way. (*Aside.*) Madam, these few minutes cost me an hundred pounds, and, would you answer me, I could purchase the whole day so. However, madam, you must give me leave to make the best interpretation I can for my money, and take the indication of your silence for the secret liking of my person; therefore, madam, I will instruct you how to keep your word inviolate to Sir Francis, and yet answer me to every question: as for example, when I ask anything to which you would reply in the affirmative, gently nod your head, thus; (*nods*) and when in the negative, thus; (*shakes his head*) and in the doubtful, a tender sigh, thus. (*Sighs.*)

Mir. How every action charms me! But I'll fit him for signs, I warrant him. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Was it by his desire that you are dumb, madam, to all I can say? (*Miranda nods.*) Very well; she's tractable, I find. (*Aside.*) And is it possible that you can love him? (*Miranda nods.*) Miraculous! Pardon the bluntness of my questions, for my time is short. May I not hope to supplant him in your esteem? (*Miranda sighs.*) Good! she answers me as I could wish. (*Aside.*) You'll not consent to marry him then? (*Miranda sighs.*) How! doubtful in that? Undone again! Humph! but that may proceed from his power to keep her out of her estate till twenty-five: I'll try that. (*Aside.*) Come, madam, I cannot think you hesitate in this affair out of any motive but your fortune: let him keep it till those few years are expired; make me happy with your person, let him enjoy your wealth. (*Miranda holds up her hands.*) Why, what sign is that now? Nay, nay, madam, except you observe my lesson I can't understand your meauing.

Sir F. What a vengeance! are they talking by

signs? 'Ad! I may be fooled here. (*Aside.*) What do you mean, Sir George?

Sir G. To cut your throat, if you dare mutter another syllable.

Sir F. 'Od! I wish he were fairly out of my house. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Pray, madam, will you answer me to the purpose? (*Miranda shakes her head, and points to Sir Francis.*) What does she mean? She won't answer me to the purpose; or is she afraid you old cuff should understand her signs? ay, it must be that. (*Aside.*) I perceive, madam, you are too apprehensive of the promise you have made, to follow my rules, therefore, I'll suppose your mind, and answer for you. First for myself, madam; "That I am in love with you is an infallible truth." Now for you. (*Turns on her side.*) "Indeed, sir! and may I believe it?" "As certainly, madam, as that 'tis daylight, or that I die if you persist in silence. Bless me with the music of your voice, and raise my spirits to their proper heaven. (*Kneels.*) Thus low let me entreat ere I am obliged to quit this place; grant me some token of a favourable reception, to keep my hopes alive." (*Arises hastily, and turns on her side.*) "Rise, sir, and since my guardian's presence will not allow me privilege of tongue, read that, and rest assured you are not indifferent to me." (*Offers her a letter, she strikes it down.*) Ha! right woman! but no matter; I'll go on. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Ha! what's that? a letter! Ha, ha, ha! thou art balked.

Sir G. Ha! a letter! Oh! let me kiss it with the same raptures that I would do the dear hand that touched it. (*Opens it.*) Now for a quick fancy, and a long extempore. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. (*Coming up hastily.*) The time is expired, sir, and you must take your leave. There, my girl; there's the hundred pounds which thou hast won. Go; I'll be with you presently. Ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Exit Miranda.*

Sir G. Adsheart, madam! you won't leave me just in the nick, will you?

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! she has nicked you, Sir George, I think! ha, ha, ha! Have you any more hundred pounds to throw away upon courtship? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. He, he, he, he! A curse of your fleering jests! Yet, however ill I have succeeded, I'll venture the same wager she does not value thee a spoonful of snuff; nay, more, though you enjoined her silence to me, you'll never make her speak to the purpose with yourself.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Did I not tell thee thou would'st repent thy money? Did I not say she hated young fellows? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. And I am positive she is not in love with age.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! No matter for that; ha, ha! She is not taken with your youth, nor your rhetoric to boot; ha, ha!

Sir G. Whatever her reasons are for disliking of me, I am certain she can be taken with nothing about thee.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! how he swells with envy! Poor man, poor man! ha, ha, ha! I must beg your pardon, Sir George; Miranda will be impatient to have her share of mirth. Verily, we shall laugh at thee most egregiously; ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. With all my heart, faith! I shall laugh in my turn too; for if you dare marry her, old Belzebub, you will be cuckolded most egregiously: remember that, and tremble. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Sir Jealous Traffick's House.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, ISABINDA, *and* PATCH.

Sir J. What! in the balcony again; notwithstanding my positive commands to the contrary? Why don't you write a bill on your forehead to shew passengers there's something to be let?

Isa. What harm can there be in a little fresh air, sir?

Sir J. Is your constitution so hot, mistress, that it wants cooling, ha? Apply the virtuous Spanish rules; banish your taste and thoughts of flesh, feed upon roots, and quench your thirst with water.

Isa. That, and a close room, would certainly make me die of the vapours.

Sir J. No, mistress, 'tis your high-fed, lusty, rambling, rampant ladies that are troubled with the vapours: 'tis your ratafia, persico, cinnamon, citron, and spirit of clara, cause such swimming in the brain, that carries many a guinea full tide to the doctor: but you are not to be bred this way: no galloping abroad, no receiving visits at home, for in our loose country, the women are as dangerous as the men.

Patch. So I told her, sir; and that it was not decent to be seen in a balcony; but she threatened to slap my chops, and told me I was her servant, not her governess.

Sir J. Did she so? but I'll make her to know that you are her duenna. Oh! that incomparable custom of Spain! Why, here is no depending upon old women in my country, for they are as wanton at eighty as a girl of eighteen; and a man may as safely trust to Asgil's translation, as to his great-grandmother's not marrying again.

Isa. Or to the Spanish ladies' veils and duennas for the safeguard of their honour.

Sir J. Dare to ridicule the cautious conduct of that wise nation, and I'll have you locked up this fortnight, without a peep-hole.

Isa. If we had but the ghostly helps in England which they have in Spain, I might deceive you if you did. Let me tell you, sir, confinement sharpens the invention, as want of sight strengthens the other senses, and is often more pernicious than the recreation that innocent liberty allows.

Sir J. Say you so, mistress? Who the devil taught you the art of reasoning? I assure you they must have a greater faith than I pretend to, that can think any woman innocent who requires liberty; therefore, Patch, to your charge I give her; lock her up till I come back from Change. I shall have some sauntering coxcomb, with nothing but a red coat and a feather, think, by leaping into her arms, to leap into my estate; but I'll prevent them; she shall be only Signior Babinetto's.

Patch. Really, sir, I wish you would employ anybody else in this affair; I lead a life like a dog in obeying your commands. Come, madam, will you be locked up?

Isa. Ay! to enjoy more freedom than he is aware of. (*Aside.*) [*Exit with Patch.*

Sir J. I believe this wench is very true to my interest: I am happy I met with her, if I can but keep my daughter from being blown upon till Signior Babinetto arives, who shall marry her as soon as he comes, and carry her to Spain as soon as he has married her. She has a pregnant wit, and I would no more have her an English wife than the grand signior's mistress. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Outside of Sir Jealous Traffick's house.*

(*Sir J. comes from his house, looks about, then exit.*)

Enter WHISPER.

Whis. So; there goes Sir Jealous: where shall I find Mrs. Patch, now?

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, Mr. Whisper! my lady saw you out

of the window, and ordered me to bid you fly and let your master know she's now alone.

Whis. Hush! speak softly! I go, I go. But harkye, Mrs. Patch, shall not you and I have a little confabulation, when my master and your lady are engaged?

Patch. Ay, ay; farewell. (*Goes in and shuts the door. Whisper peeps after her through the key-hole.*)

Re-enter Sir Jealous Traffick.

Sir J. Sure, whilst I was talking with Mr. Tradewell, I heard my door clap. (*Seeing Whisper.*) Ha! a man lurking about my house! Who do you want there, sir?

Whis. Want—want? A plague! Sir Jealous! What must I say now? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Ay, want. Have you a letter or message for anybody there? O'my conscience! this is some he-bawd.

Whis. Letter or message, sir?

Sir J. Ay; letter or message, sir?

Whis. No, not I, sir.

Sir J. Sirrah, sirrah! I'll have you set in the stocks if you don't tell your business immediately.

Whis. Nay, sir, my business is no great matter of business neither; and yet, 'tis business of consequence too.

Sir J. Sirrah, don't trifle with me.

Whis. Trifle, sir! have you found him, sir?

Sir J. Found what, you rascal?

Whis. Why, Trifle is the very lapdog my lady lost, sir; I fancied I saw him run into this house. I am glad you have found him, sir; my lady will be overjoyed that I have found him.

Sir J. Who is your lady, friend?

Whis. My Lady Lovepuppy, sir.

Sir J. My Lady Lovepuppy, sir! then, pr'ythee, carry thyself to her, for I know of no other whelp that belongs to her; and let me catch you no more puppy hunting about my doors, lest I have you pressed into the service, sirrah!

Whis. By no means, sir: your humble servant. I must watch whether he goes or no, before I can tell my master. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Sir J. This fellow has the officious leer of a pimp, and I half suspect a design; but I'll be upon them before they think on me, I warrant them.

[*Exit into the house.*

Scene IV.—*Charles's Lodgings.*

Enter Charles *and* Marplot.

Charles. Honest Marplot, I thank thee for this supply. I expect my lawyer with a thousand pounds I have ordered him to take up, and then you shall be repaid.

Mar. Pho, pho! no more of that. Here comes Sir George Airy,

Enter Sir George Airy.

cursedly out of humour at his disappointment. See how he looks! ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Ah, Charles! I am so humbled in my pretensions to plots upon women, that I believe I shall never have courage enough to attempt a chambermaid again. I'll tell thee—

Charles. Ha, ha! I'll spare you the relation by telling you: impatient to know your business with my father, when I saw you enter I slipped back into the next room, where I overheard every syllable.

Mar. Did you, Charles? I wish I had been with you.

Sir G. That I said; but I'll be hanged if you heard her answer. But, pr'ythee, tell me, Charles, is she a fool?

Charles. I never suspected her for one; but Marplot can inform you better, if you'll allow him a judge.

Mar. A fool! I'll justify she has more wit than all the rest of her sex put together. Why, she'll rally me till I ha'n't a word to say for myself.

Charles. A mighty proof of her wit, truly!

Mar. There must be some trick in it, Sir George; egad! I'll find it out, if it cost me the sum you paid for it.

Sir G. Do, and command me.

Mar. Enough: let me alone to trace a secret.

Enter Whisper, *who speaks aside to his master.*

The devil! he here again! d—n that fellow, he never speaks out. Is this the same, or a new secret? (*Aside.*) You may speak out, here are none but friends.

Charles. Pardon me, Marplot, 'tis a secret.

Mar. A secret! ay, or, ecod! I would not give a farthing for it. Sir George, won't you ask Charles what news Whisper brings?

Sir G. Not I, sir; I suppose it does not relate to me.

Mar. Lord, lord! how little curiosity some people have! Now my chief pleasure is in knowing everybody's business. [*Exit Whisper.*

Sir G. I fancy, Charles, thou hast some engagement upon thy hands?

Mar. Have you, Charles?

Sir G. I have a little business too.

Mar. Have you, Sir George?

Sir G. Marplot, if it falls in your way to bring me any intelligence from Miranda, you'll find me at the Thatched-house, at six.

Mar. You do me much honour.

Charles. You guess right, Sir George; wish me success.

Sir G. Better than attended me. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me.

Mar. Nay, nay; what need of any excuse amongst friends? I'll go with you.

Charles. Indeed you must not.

Mar. No! then I suppose 'tis a duel; and I will go to secure you.

Charles. Well, but 'tis no duel; consequently, no danger; therefore, pr'ythee, be answered.

Mar. What is't, a mistress, then? Mum! you know I can be silent upon occasion.

Charles. I wish you could be civil too: I tell you, you neither must nor shall go with me. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Mar. Why, then, I must and will follow you. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*A Street.*

Enter Charles.

Charles. Well! here's the house which holds the lovely prize, quiet and serene: here no noisy footmen throng to tell the world that beauty dwells within; no ceremonious visit makes the lover wait, no rival to give my heart a pang. Who would not scale the window at midnight without fear of the jealous father's pistol, rather than fill up the train of a coquette, where every minute he is jostled out of place? (*Knocks softly.*) Mrs. Patch, Mrs. Patch!

Enter Patch *from the house.*

Patch. Oh! are you come, sir? All's safe.

Charles. So in, in then. (*They go in.*)

Enter Marplot.

Mar. There he goes! Who the devil lives here? Except I find out that, I am as far from knowing

his business as ever. Gad! I'll watch; it may be a bawdy-house, and he may have his throat cut. If there should be any mischief, I can make oath he went in. Well, Charles, in spite of your endeavours to keep me out of the secret, I may save your life, for aught I know. At that corner I'll plant myself; there I shall see whoever goes in or comes out. Gad! I love discoveries. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in the house of Sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter CHARLES, ISABINDA, *and* PATCH.

Isa. Patch, look out sharp; have a care of dad.

Patch. I warrant you. [*Exit.*

Isa. Well, sir, if I may judge your love by your courage, I ought to believe you sincere; for you venture into the lion's den when you come to see me.

Charles. If you'll consent, whilst the furious beast is abroad, I'd free you from the reach of his paws.

Isa. That would be but to avoid one danger by running into another; like poor wretches, who fly the burning ship, and meet their fate in the water. Come, come, Charles; I fear, if I consult my reason, confinement and plenty are better than liberty and starving. I know you would make the frolic pleasing for a little time, by saying and doing a world of tender things; but when our small substance is exhausted, and a thousand requisites for life are wanting, love, who rarely dwells with poverty, would also fail us.

Charles. Faith! I fancy not: methinks my heart has laid up a stock will last for life; to back which, I have taken a thousand pounds upon my uncle's estate; that, surely, will support us till one of our fathers relent.

Isa. There's no trusting to that, my friend: I donbt your father will carry his humour to the grave, and mine till he sees me settled in Spain.

Charles. And can you then cruelly resolve to stay till that cursed Don arrives, and suffer that youth, beauty, fire, and wit to be sacrificed to the arms of a dull Spaniard, to be immured, and forbid the sight of anything that's human.

Isa. No: when it comes to that extremity, and no stratagem can relieve us, thou shall list for a soldier, and I'll carry thy knapsack after thee.

Charles. Bravely resolved! the world cannot be more savage than our parents, and fortune generally assists the bold; therefore, consent now; why should we put it to a future hazard? who knows when we shall have another opportunity?

Isa. Oh! you have your ladder of ropes, I suppose; and the closet-window stands just where it did; and, if you ha'n't forgot to write in characters, Patch will find a way for our assignations. Thus much of the Spanish contrivance my father's severity has taught me; I thank him; though I hate the nation, I admire their management in these affairs.

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, madam! I see my master coming up the street.

Charles. Oh, the devil! Would I had my ladder now! I thought you had not expected him till night. Why—why—why—why—what shall I do, madam?

Isa. Oh! for heaven's sake, don't go that way! you'll meet him full in the teeth. Oh, unlucky moment!

Charles. Adsheart! can you shut me into no cupboard, nor ram me into a chest, eh?

Patch. Impossible, sir! he searches every hole in the house.

Isa. Undone for ever! If he sees you I shall never see you more.

Patch. I have thought on it; run you to your chamber, madam; and, sir, come you along with me; I am certain you may easily get down from the balcony.

Charles. My life, adieu! Lead on, guide.

[*Exeunt Patch and Charles.*

Isa. Heavens preserve him! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, *followed by* MARPLOT.

Sir J. I don't know what's the matter, but I have a strong suspicion all is not right within; that fellow's sauntering about my door, and his tale of a puppy, had the face of a lie, methought. By St. Jago, if I should find a man in the house I'd make mince-meat of him.

Mar. Mince-meat! Ah, poor Charles! how I sweat for thee! Egad! he's old; I fancy I might bully him, and make Charles have an opinion of my courage. Egad! I'll pluck up, and have a touch with him.

Sir J. My own key shall let me in; I'll give them no warning. (*Feeling for his key.*)

Mar. What's that you say, sir? (*Going up to Sir Jealous.*)

Sir J. What's that to you, sir? (*Turns quick upon him.*)

Mar. Yes, 'tis to me, sir; for the gentleman you threaten is a very honest gentleman. Look to it; for if he comes not as safe out of your house as he went in—

Sir J. What! is he in then?

Mar. Yes, sir, he is in then; and I say if he does not come out, I have half-a-dozen myrmidons hard by shall beat your house about your ears.

Sir J. Ah! a combination to undo me. I'll myrmidon you, ye dog, you! Thieves, thieves! (*Beats Marplot.*)

Mar. Murder, murder! I was not in your house, sir.

Enter Servant.

Serv. What's the matter, sir?

Sir J. The matter, rascal! you have let a man into my house; but I'll flay him alive. Follow me; I'll not leave a mouse-hole unsearched. If I find him, by St. Jago! I'll equip him for the opera.

[*Exit.*

Mar. A deuce of his cane! There's no trusting to age. What shall I do to relieve Charles? Egad! I'll raise the neighbourhood. Murder, murder! (*Charles drops down upon him from the balcony.*) Charles! faith, I'm glad to see thee safe out, with all my heart!

Charles. A plague of your bawling! how the devil came you here?

Mar. Egad! it's very well for you that I was here; I have done you a piece of service: I told the old thunderbolt, that the gentleman that was gone in was—

Charles. Was it you that told him, sir? (*Laying hold of him.*) 'Sdeath! I could crush thee into atoms. [*Exit.*

Mar. What! will you choke me for my kindness? Will my inquiring soul never leave searching into other people's affairs till it gets squeezed out of my body? I dare not follow him now for my blood, he's in such a passion. I'll go to Miranda; if I can discover aught that may oblige Sir George, it may be a means to reconcile me again to Charles.

Sir J. (*Within.*) Look about! search, find him out.

Mar. Oh, the devil! there's old Crabstick again. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*A Hall in the house of Sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter Sir Jealous Traffick *and his Servants.*

Sir J. Are you sure you have searched everywhere?

Serv. Yes, from the top of the house to the bottom.

Sir J. Under the beds and over the beds?

Serv. Yes, and in them too, but found nobody, sir.

Sir J. Why, what could this rogue mean?

Enter Isabinda *and* Patch.

Patch. Take courage, madam; I saw him safe out. (*Aside to Isabinda.*)

Isa. Bless me! what's the matter, sir?

Sir J. You know best. Pray, where's the man that was here just now?

Isa. What man, sir? I saw none.

Patch. Nor I, by the trust you repose in me! Do you think I would let a man come within these doors when you are absent?

Sir J. Ah, Patch! she may be too cunning for thy honesty; the very scout thathe had set togive warning discovered it to me, and threatened me with half-a-dozen myrmidons; but I think I mauled the villain. These afflictions you draw upon me, mistress. (*To Isabinda.*)

Isa. Pardon me, sir, 'tis your own ridiculous humour draws you into these vexations, and gives every fool pretence to banter you.

Sir J. No, 'tis your idle conduct, your coquettish flirting into the balcony. Oh! with what joy shall I resign thee into the arms of Don Diego Babinetto!

Isa. And with what industry shall I avoid him! (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Certainly that rogue had a message from somebody or other, but being balked by my coming popped that sham upon me. Come along, ye sots, let's see if we can find the dog again. Patch, lock her up, d'ye hear? [*Exeunt Sir J. and Servants.*

Patch. Yes, sir. Ay! walk till your heels ache, you'll find nobody, I promise you.

Isa. Who could that scout be he talks of?

Patch. Nay, I can't imagine, without it was Whisper.

Isa. Well, dear Patch! let's employ all our thoughts how to escape this horrid Don Diego; my very heart sinks at his terrible name.

Patch. Fear not, madam; Don Carlo shall be the man, or I'll lose the reputation of contriving; and then what's a chambermaid good for? [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.—*Sir Francis Gripe's House.*

Enter Sir Francis Gripe, *and* Miranda.

Mir. Well, gardy, how did I perform the dumb scene?

Sir F. To admiration! Thou dear little rogue! let me buss thee for it: nay, adad! I will, chargy, so muzzle, and tuzzle, and hug thee; I will, i'faith! I will. (*Hugging and kissing her.*)

Mir. Nay, gardy, don't be so lavish. Who would ride post when the journey lasts for life?

Sir F. Oh, I'm transported! When, when, my dear, wilt thou convince the world of the happy day? when shall we marry, eh?

Mir. There's nothing wanting but your consent, Sir Francis.

Sir F. My consent! What does my charmer mean?

Mir. Nay, 'tis only a whim; but I'll have everything according to form: therefore, when you sign an authentic paper, drawn up by an able lawyer, that I have your leave to marry, the next day makes me your's, gardy.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! a whim indeed! why is it not demonstration I give my leave when I marry thee?

Mir. Not for your reputation, gardy; the malicious world will be apt to say you trick me into marriage, and so take the merit from my choice: now I will have the act my own, to let the idle fops see how much I prefer a man loaded with years and wisdom.

Sir F. Humph! Pr'ythee, leave out years, chargy; I'm not so old, as thou shalt find. Adad! I'm young: there's a caper for ye. (*Jumps.*)

Mir. Oh! never excuse it; why, I like you the better for being old: but I shall suspect you don't love me if you refuse me this formality.

Sir F. Not love thee, chargy! Adad! I do love better than—than—than—better than—what shall I say; egad! better than money; i'faith, I do.

Mir. That's false, I'm sure. (*Aside.*) To prove it, do this then.

Sir F. Well, I will do it, chargy, provided I bring a license at the same time.

Mir. Ay! and a parson too, if you please. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think how all the young coxcombs about town will be mortified when they hear of our marriage.

Sir F. So they will, so they will! ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Well, I fancy, I shall be so happy with my gardy!

Sir F. If wearing pearls and jewels, or eating gold, as the old saying is, can make thee happy, thou shalt be so, my sweetest, my lovely, my charming, my—verily, I know not what to call thee.

Mir. You must know, gardy, that I am so eager to have this business concluded, that I employed my woman's brother, who is a lawyer in the Temple, to settle matters just to your liking; you are to give your consent to my marriage, which is to yourself you know; but, mum! you must take no notice of that. So then I will, that is, with your leave, put my writings into his hands; then to-morrow we come slap upon them with a wedding that nobody thought on, by which you seize me and my estate, and, I suppose, make a bonfire of your own act and deed.

Sir F. Nay, but, chargy, if—

Mir. Nay, gardy, no ifs. Have I refused three northern lords, two British peers, and half-a-score knights, to have you put in your ifs?

Sir F. So thou hast indeed, and I will trust to thy management. Od! I'm all of a fire.

Mir. 'Tis a wonder the dry stubble does not blaze. (*Aside.*)

Enter Marplot.

Sir F. How now! who sent for you, sir? What! is the hundred pounds gone already?

Mar. No, sir; I don't want money now, gardy.

Sir F. No! that's a miracle! but there's one thing you want, I'm sure.

Mar. Ay! what's that?

Sir F. Manners. What! had I no servants without?

Mar. None that could do my business, guardian; which is, at present, with this lady.

Mir. With me, Mr. Marplot? what is it, I beseech you?

Sir F. Ay, sir! what is it? anything that relates to her, may be delivered to me.

Mar. I deny that.

Mir. That's more than I do, sir.

Mar. Indeed, madam! Why, then, to proceed: Fame, says, you know best whether she tells truth or not, that you and my most conscionable guardian here, designed, contrived, plotted, and agreed to chouse a very civil, honest, honourable gentleman out of a hundred pounds: guilty or not?

Mir. That I contrived it?

Mar. Ay, you! you said never a word against it; so far you are guilty.

Sir F. Pray tell that civil, honest, honourable gentleman, that if he has any more such sums to fool away, they shall be received like the last; ha, ha, ha! Choused, quotha! But, harkye, let him know, at the same time, that if he dare to report I tricked him of it, I shall recommend a lawyer to him, who shall shew him a trick for twice as much. D'ye hear? tell him that.

Mar. So, and this is the way you use a gentleman, and my friend!

Mir. Is the wretch thy friend?

Mar. The wretch! lookye, madam, don't call names; egad! I won't take it.

Mir. Why, you won't beat me, will you? ha, ha!

Mar. I don't know whether I will or no.

Sir F. Sir, I shall make a servant shew you out at the window if you are saucy.

Mar. I am your most humble servant, guardian; I design to go out the same way I came in. I would only ask this lady one question: don't you think he's a fine gentleman?

Sir F. Who's a fine gentleman?

Mar. Not you, gardy, not you. Don't you think, in your soul, that Sir George Airy is a very fine gentleman?

Mir. He dresses well.

Sir F. Which is chiefly owing to his tailor and valet-de-chambre.

Mar. Well! and who is your dress owing to, eh? There's a beau, ma'am! do but look at him!

Sir F. Sirrah!

Mir. And if being a beau be a proof of his being a fine gentleman, he may be so.

Mar. He may be so! Why, ma'am, the judicious part of the world allow him wit, courage, gallantry, ay, and economy too, though I think he forfeited that character when he flung away a hundred pounds upon your dumb ladyship.

Sir F. Does that gall him? ha, ha, ha!

Mir. So, Sir George, remaining in deep discontent, has sent you, his trusty squire, to utter his complaint. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Yes, madam; and you like a cruel hard-hearted Jew, value it no more—than I would your ladyship, were I Sir George; you, you, you—

Mir. Oh, don't call names; I know you love to be employed, and I'll oblige you, and you shall carry him a message from me.

Mar. According as I like it. What is it?

Mir. Nay, a kind one you may be sure. First, tell him I have chose this gentleman, to have and to hold, and so forth. (*Taking the hand of Sir F.*)

Mar. Much good may it do you.

Sir F. Oh the dear rogue! how I dote on her! (*Aside.*)

Mir. And advise his impertinence to trouble me no more, for I prefer Sir Francis for a husband before all the universe.

Mar. Oh lord, oh lord! she's bewitched, that's certain. Here's a husband for eighteen; here's a tit-bit for a young lady; here's a shape, an air, and a grace; here's bones rattling in a leathern bag; (*Turning Sir F. about.*) here's buckram and canvas to scrub you to repentance.

Sir F. Sirrah, my cane shall teach you repentance, presently.

Mar. No, faith, I have felt its twin brother from just such a withered hand too lately.

Mir. One thing more; advise him to keep from the garden-gate on the left hand, for if he dare to saunter there, about the hour of eight, as he used to do, he shall be saluted with a pistol or a blunderbuss.

Sir F. Oh, monstrous! Why, chargy, did he use to come to the garden-gate?

Mir. The gardener described just such another man that always watched his coming out, and fain would have bribed him for his entrance; tell him he shall find a warm reception if he comes this night.

Mar. Pistols and blunderbusses! Egad, a warm reception indeed! I shall take care to inform him of your kindness, and advise him to keep further off.

Mir. I hope he will understand my meaning better than to follow your advice. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Thou hast signed, sealed, and taken possession of my heart for ever, chargy, ha, ha, ha! and for you, Mr. Saucebox, let me have no more of your messages, if ever you design to inherit your estate, gentleman.

Mar. Why, there 'tis now. Sure I shall be out of your clutches one day. Well, guardian, I say no more; but if you be not as arrant a cuckold as ever drove bargain upon the exchange, or paid attendance to a court, I am the son of a whetstone; and so your humble servant.

Mir. Mr. Marplot, don't forget the message; ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Nang, nang, nang! [*Exit.*

Sir F. I am so provoked; 'tis well he's gone.

Mir. Oh, mind him not, gardy, but let's sign articles, and then—

Sir F. And then—Adad, I believe I am metamorphosed, my pulse beats high, and my blood boils, methinks. (*Kissing and hugging her.*)

Mir. Oh, fie, gardy, be not so violent; consider the market lasts all the year. Well, I'll in, and see if the lawyer be come; you'll follow. [*Exit.*

Sir F. Ay, to the world's end, my dear. Well, Frank, thou art a lucky fellow in thy old age to have such a delicate morsel, and thirty thousand pounds, in love with thee. I shall be the envy of bachelors, the glory of married men, and the wonder of the town. Some guardians would be glad to compound for part of the estate at despatching an heiress, but I engross the whole. *O! mihi præteritos referet si Jupiter annos.* [*Exit.*

Scene VI.—*A Tavern.*

Sir George Airy *and* Charles *discovered, with wine, pens, ink and paper on the table.* Whisper *waiting.*

Sir G. Nay, pr'ythee, don't be grave, Charles; misfortunes will happen. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort to have a companion in our sufferings.

Charles. I am only apprehensive for Isabinda; her father's humour is implacable; and how far his jealousy may transport him to her undoing, shocks my soul to think.

Sir G. But since you escap'd undiscovered by him, his rage will quickly lash into a calm, never fear it.

Charles. But who knows what that unlucky dog, Marplot, told him? nor can I imagine what brought him thither; that fellow is ever doing mischief, and yet, to give him his due, he never designs it. This is some blundering adventure wherein he thought to shew his friendship, as he calls it, a curse on him!

Sir G. Then you must forgive him. What said he?

Charles. Said! nay, I had more mind to cut his throat, than to hear his excuses.

Sir G. Where is he?

Whis. Sir, I saw him go into Sir Francis Gripe's just now.

Charles. Oh! then he's upon your business, Sir George, a thousand to one but he makes some mistake there too.

Sir G. Impossible, without he huffs the lady, and makes love to Sir Francis.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Mr. Marplot is below, gentlemen, and desires to know if he may have leave to wait upon ye.

Charles. How civil the rogue is, when he has done a fault!

Sir G. Oh! desire him to walk up. [*Exit Drawer.*] Pr'ythee, Charles, throw off this chagrin, and be good company.

Charles. Nay, hang him, I'm not angry with him.

Enter Marplot.

Do but mark his sheepish look, Sir George.

Mar. Dear Charles, don't overwhelm a man already under insupportable affliction. I'm sure I always intend to serve my friends; but if my malicious stars deny the happiness, is the fault mine?

Sir G. Never mind him, Mr. Marplot; he's eat up with spleen. But tell me, what says Miranda?

Mar. Says! Nay, we are all undone there too.

Charles. I told you so; nothing prospers that he undertakes.

Mar. Why, can I help her having chose your father for better or worse?

Charles. So; there's another of fortune's strokes. I suppose I shall be edged out of my estate with twins every year, let who will get 'em.

Sir G. What! is the woman really possessed?

Mar. Yes, with the spirit of contradiction; she railed at you most prodigiously.

Sir G. That's no ill sign.

Mar. You'd say it was no good sign if you knew all.

Sir G. Why, pr'ythee?

Mar. Harkye, Sir George, let me warn you; pursue your old haunt no more; it may be dangerous. (*Charles sits down to write.*)

Sir G. My old haunt! what do you mean?

Mar. Why, in short then, since you will have it, Miranda vows if you dare approach the garden gate at eight o'clock, as you used, you shall meet with a warm reception.

Sir G. A warm reception!

Mar. Ay, a very warm reception; you shall be saluted with a blunderbuss, sir. These were her very words; nay, she bid me tell you so too.

Sir G. Ha! the garden-gate at eight, as I used to do! There must be meaning in this. Is there such a gate, Charles?

Mar. Is there such a gate, Charles?

Charles. Yes, yes, it opens into the Park; I suppose her ladyship has made many a scamper through it.

Sir G. It must be an assignation then. Ha! my heart springs for joy; 'tis a propitious omen. My dear Marplot, let me embrace thee; thou art my friend, my better angel.

Mar. What do you mean, Sir George?

Sir G. No matter what I mean. Here, take a bumper to the garden-gate, you dear rogue, you!

Mar. You have reason to be transported, Sir George; I have saved your life.

Sir G. My life! thou hast saved my soul, man. Charles, if thou dost not pledge this health, may'st thou never taste the joys of love.

Charles. Whisper, be sure you take care how you deliver this. (*Gives him a letter.*) Bring me the answer to my lodgings.

Whis. I warrant you, sir. (*To Charles.*)

Mar. Whither does that letter go? Now dare I not ask for my blood; that fellow knows more secrets than I do. (*Aside, following Whisper as he is going.*) Whisper! Whisper!

Whis. Sir. (*Aside to Mar.*)

Mar. Whisper, here's half a crown for you. (*Aside to Whis.*)

Whis. Thank ye, sir. (*Aside to Mar.*)

Mar. Now, where is that letter going? (*Aside to Whis.*)

Whis. Into my pocket, sir. (*Aside to Mar.*) [*Exit.*

Charles. Now I'm for you.

Sir G. To the garden-gate at the hour of eight, Charles.—Allons; huzza!

Charles. I begin to conceive you.

Mar. That's more than I do, egad. To the garden-gate, huzza! (*Drinks.*) But I hope you design to keep far enough off on't Sir George.

Sir G. Ay, ay, never fear that; she shall see I despise her frowns; let her use the blunderbuss against the next fool; she sha'n't reach me with the smoke, I warrant her, ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Ah, Charles! if you could receive a disappointment thus, *en cavalier*, one should have some comfort in being beat for you.

Charles. The fool comprehends nothing. (*Aside to Sir G.*)

Sir G. Nor would I have him. Pr'ythee, take him along with thee. (*Aside to Charles.*)

Charles. Enough. (*Aside to Sir G.*)

Sir G. I kiss both your hands; and now for the garden-gate.

It's beauty gives the assignation there,
And love too powerful grows t'admit of fear.
[*Exit.*

Charles. Come, you shall go home with me.

Mar. Shall I? and are we friends, Charles? I am glad of it.

Charles. Come along. [*Exit.*

Mar. Egad, Charles's asking me to go home with him, gives me a shrewd suspicion there's more in the garden-gate than I comprehend. Faith, I'll give him the drop, and away to gardy's and find it out. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*The Outside of Sir Jealous Traffick's house: Patch peeping out of the door.*

Enter Whisper.

Whis. Ha! Mrs. Patch, this is a lucky minute, to find you so readily; my master dies with impatience.

Patch. My lady imagined so, and by her orders I have been scouting this hour in search of you, to inform you that Sir Jealous has invited some friends to supper with him to-night, which gives an opportunity to your master to make use of his ladder of ropes. The closet window shall be open, and Isabinda ready to receive him. Bid him come immediately.

Whis. Excellent! he'll not disappoint, I warrant him;—but hold, I have a letter here which I'm to carry an answer to. I cannot think what language the direction is.

Patch. Pho! 'tis no language, but a character which the lovers invented to avert discovery. Ha! I hear my old master coming down stairs; it is impossible you should have an answer. Away, and bid him come himself for that. Be gone, we're ruined if you're seen, for he has doubled his care since the last accident.

Whis. I go, I go. [*Exit.*

Patch. There, go thou into my pocket. (*Puts it aside, and it falls down.*) Now, I'll up the back stairs, lest I meet him. Well, a dexterous chambermaid is the ladies' best utensil, I say. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, *with a letter in his hand.*

Sir J. So, this is some comfort; this tells me that Signior Don Diego Babinetto is safely arrived. He shall marry my daughter the minute he comes. Ha, ha! what's here? (*Takes up the letter Patch dropped.*) A letter! I don't know what to make of the superscription. I'll see what's within-side. (*Opens it.*) Humph! 'tis Hebrew, I think. What can this mean? There must be some trick in it. This was certainly designed for my daughter; but I don't know that she can speak any language but her mother tongue. No matter for that; this may be one of love's hieroglyphics; and I fancy I saw Patch's tail sweep by; that wench may be a slut, and instead of guarding my honour, betray it. I'll find it out, I'm resolved. Who's there?

Enter Servant.

What answer did you bring from the gentlemen I sent you to invite?

Serv. That they'd all wait on you, sir, as I told you before; but I suppose you forgot, sir.

Sir J. Did I so, sir? but I sha'n't forget to break your head if any of them come, sir.

Serv. Come, sir! why, did not you send me to desire their company, sir?

Sir J. But I send you now to desire their absence. Say I have something extraordinary fallen out, which calls me abroad, contrary to expectation, and ask their pardon; and, d'ye hear, send the butler to me.

Serv. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Enter Butler.

Sir J. If this paper has a meaning I'll find it.—Lay the cloth in my daughter's chamber, and bid the cook send supper thither presently.

But. Yes, sir. Heyday! what's the matter now? [*Exit.*

Sir J. He wants the eyes of Argus, that has a young handsome daughter in this town; but my comfort is, I shall not be troubled long with her. He that pretends to rule a girl once, in her teens, had better be at sea in a storm, and would be in less danger. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Isabinda's Chamber.*

Enter ISABINDA *and* PATCH.

Isa. Are you sure nobody saw you speak to Whisper?

Patch. Yes, very sure, madam; but I heard Sir Jealous coming down stairs, so clapped his letter into my pocket. (*Feels for the letter.*)

Isa. A letter! give it me quickly.

Patch. Bless me! what's become on't. I'm sure I put it—(*Searching still.*)

Isa. Is it possible thou could'st be so careless? Oh, I'm undone for ever if it be lost.

Patch. I must have dropp'd it upon the stairs. But why are you so much alarmed? If the worst happens nobody can read it, madam, nor find out whom it was designed for.

Isa. If it falls into my father's hands the very figure of a letter will produce ill consequences. Run and look for it upon the stairs this moment.

Patch. Nay, I'm sure it can be no where else. (*Going.*)

Enter Butler.

How now, what do you want?

But. My master ordered me to lay the cloth here for supper.

Isa. Ruined past redemption. (*Aside.*)

Patch. You mistake, sure. What shall we do?

Isa. I thought he expected company to-night.—Oh, poor Charles, oh, unfortunate Isabinda! (*Aside.*)

But. I thought so, too, madam; but I suppose he has altered his mind. [*Lays the cloth, and exit.*

Isa. The letter is the cause. This heedless action has undone me. Fly and fasten the closet window, which will give Charles notice to retire. Ha! my father! Oh, confusion!

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

Sir J. Hold, hold, Patch; whither are you going? I'll have nobody stir out of the room till after supper.

Patch. Sir, I was going to reach your easy chair. Oh, wretched accident! (*Aside.*)

Sir J. I'll have nobody stir out of the room. I don't want my easy chair.

Isa. What will be the event of this? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Harkye, daughter, do you know this hand?

Isa. As I suspected. (*Aside.*) Hand, do you call it, sir? 'tis some schoolboy's scrawl.

Patch. Oh, invention! thou chambermaid's best friend, assist me. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Are you sure you don't understand it? (*Patch feels in her bosom, and shakes her cloaths.*)

Isa. Do you understand it, sir?

Sir J. I wish I did.

Isa. Thank heaven you do not. (*Aside.*) Then I know no more of it than you do, indeed, sir.

Patch. O lord, O lord! what have you done, sir? Why, the paper is mine; I dropp'd it out of my bosom. (*Snatching it from him.*)

Sir J. Ha! yours, mistress?

Patch. Yes sir, it is.

Sir J. What is it? Speak.

Patch. Yes sir, it is a charm for the tooth-ache, I have worn it these seven years; 'twas given me by an angel for aught I know, when I was raving with the pain, for nobody knew from whence he came nor whither he went. He charged me never to open it, lest some dire vengeance befall me, and heaven knows what will be the event. Oh, cruel misfortune! that I should drop it and you should open it.

Sir J. Plague of your charms and whims for me! if that be all, 'tis well enough: there, there, burn it, and I warrant you no vengeance will follow.

Patch. So, all's right again thus far. (*Aside.*)

Isa. I would not lose Patch for the world; I'll take courage a little. (*Aside.*) Is this usage for your daughter, sir? must my virtue and conduct be suspected for every trifle? You immure me like some dire offender here, and deny me all the recreations which my sex enjoy, and the custom of the country and modesty allow; yet not content with that, you make my confinement more intolerable by your mistrusts and jealousies. Would I were dead, so I were free from this.

Sir J. To-morrow rids you of this tiresome load; Don Diego Babinetto will be here, and then my care ends and his begins.

Isa. Is he come, then? Oh, how shall I avoid this hated marriage! (*Aside.*)

Enter Servants, with supper.

Sir J. Come, will you sit down?

Isa. I can't eat, sir.

Patch. No, I dare swear he has given her supper enough. I wish I could get into the closet. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Well, if you can't eat, then give me a song whilst I do.

Isa. I have such a cold I can scarce speak, sir, much less sing. How shall I prevent Charles's coming in? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. I hope you have the use of your fingers,

madam. Play a tune upon your spinnet whilst your woman sings me a song.

Patch. I'm as much out of tune as my lady, if he knew all. (*Aside.*)

Isa. I shall make excellent music. (*Sits down to play.*)

Patch. Really, sir, I am so frightened about your opening this charm that I can't remember one thing.

Sir J. Pish! hang your charm! come, come, sing anything.

Patch. Yes, I'm likely to sing, truly. (*Aside.*) Humph, humph! bless me, I can't raise my voice, my heart pants so.

Sir J. Why, what, does your heart pant so that you can't play neither? Pray, what key are you in, eh?

Patch. Ah, would the key was turned on you once. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Why don't you sing, I say?

Patch. When madam has put her spinnet in tune, sir; humph, humph!

Isa. I cannot play, sir, whatever ails me. (*Rising.*)

Sir J. Zounds! sit down and play me a tune, or I'll break the spinnet about your ears.

Isa. What will become of me? (*Sits down and plays.*)

Sir J. Come, mistress. (*To Patch.*)

Patch. Yes, sir. (*Sings, but horridly out of tune.*)

Sir J. Hey, hey! why, you are a-top of the house, and you are down in the cellar. What is the meaning of this? Is it on purpose to cross me, eh?

Patch. Pray, madam, take it a little lower; I cannot reach that note, nor any note I fear.

Isa. Well, begin. Oh, Patch, we shall be discovered. (*Aside.*)

Patch. I sink with apprehension, madam. (*Aside.*) Humph, humph! (*Sings. Charles opens the closet door.*)

Charles. Music and singing! Death! her father there! (*The women shriek.*) Then I must fly.

[*Exit into the closet. Sir J. rises up hastily, seeing Charles slip back into the closet.*

Sir J. Hell and furies! A man in the closet!

Patch. Ah! a ghost! a ghost! He must not enter the closet. (*Isabinda throws herself down before the closet door, as in a swoon.*)

Sir J. The devil! I'll make a ghost of him, I warrant you. (*Strives to get by.*)

Patch. Oh, hold, sir, have a care; you'll tread upon my lady. Who waits there? Bring some water. Oh, this comes of your opening the charm. Oh, oh, oh! (*Weeps aloud.*)

Sir J. I'll charm you, housewife. Here lies the charm that conjured this fellow in, I'm sure on't. Come out, you rascal, do. Zounds! take her from the door, or I'll spurn her from it, and break your neck down stairs. Where are you, sirrah? Villain! robber of my honour! I'll pull you out of your nest. (*Goes into the closet.*)

Patch. You'll be mistaken, old gentleman; the bird is flown.

Isa. I'm glad I have escaped so well; I was almost dead in earnest with the fright.

Re-enter Sir Jealous *out of the closet.*

Sir J. Whoever the dog was, he has escaped out of the window, for the sash is up; but though he is got out of my reach, you are not. And first, Mrs. Pander, with your charms for the tooth-ache, get out of my house, go, troop; yet hold, stay, I'll see you out of doors myself; but I'll secure your charge ere I go.

Isa. What do you mean, sir? was she not a creature of your own providing?

Sir J. She was of the devil's providing, for aught I know.

Patch. What have I done, sir, to merit your displeasure?

Sir J. I don't know which of you have done it, but you shall both suffer for it, till I can discover whose guilt it is. Go, get in there; I'll move you from this side of the house. (*Pushes Isabinda in at the door and locks it, puts the key in his pocket.*) I'll keep the key myself; I'll try what ghost will get into that room; and now, forsooth, I'll wait on you down stairs.

Patch. Ah, my poor lady! Down stairs, sir! but I won't go out, sir, till I have locked up my clothes, and that's flat.

Sir J. If thou wert as naked as thou wert born, thou shouldst not stay to put on a rag, and that's flat. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*The Street.*

Sir J. (*Putting Patch out of the door.*) There, go, and come no more within sight of my habitation these three days, I charge you. (*Slaps the door after her.*)

Patch. Did ever anybody see such an old monster?

Enter Charles.

Oh, Mr. Charles! your affairs and mine are in an ill posture.

Charles. I am inured to the frowns of fortune; but what has befallen thee?

Patch. Sir Jealous, whose suspicious nature is always on the watch, nay, even while one eye sleeps the other keeps sentinel, upon sight of you flew into such a violent passion, that I could find no stratagem to appease him, but in spite of all arguments he locked his daughter into her own apartment, and turned me out of doors.

Charles. Ha! Oh, Isabinda!

Patch. And swears she shall see neither sun nor moon, till she is Don Diego Babinetto's wife, who arrived last night, and is expected with impatience.

Charles. He dies; yes, by all the wrongs of love, he shall; here will I plant myself, and through my breast he shall make his passage, if he enters.

Patch. A most heroic resolution; there might be ways found out more to your advantage; policy is often preferred to open force.

Charles. I apprehend you not.

Patch. What think you of personating this Spaniard, imposing upon the father, and marrying your mistress, by his own consent?

Charles. Say'st thou so, my angel! Oh, could that be done, my life to come would be too short to recompense thee; but how can I do that when I neither know what ship he came in, nor from what part of Spain; who recommends him, or how attended.

Patch. I can solve all this. He is from Madrid, his father's name is Don Pedro Questo Portento Babinetto. Here's a letter of his to Sir Jealous, which he dropped one day. You understand Spanish, and the hand may be counterfeited. You conceive me sir?

Charles. My better genius! thou hast revived my drooping soul. I'll about it instantly. Come to my lodgings, and we'll concert matters.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.—*A Garden-gate open; Scentwell waiting within.*

Enter Sir George Airy.

Sir G. So, this is the gate, and most invitingly open. If there should be a blunderbuss here, now, what a dreadful ditty would my fall make for fools, and what a jest for the wits; how my name would

be roared about the streets! Well, I'll venture all.

Scent. Hist! hist! Sir George Airy. (*Comes forward.*)

Sir G. A female voice! thus far I'm safe. My dear,—

Scent. No, I'm not your dear, but I'll conduct you to her. Give me your hand; you must go through many a dark passage and dirty step before you arrive—

Sir G. I know I must before I arrive at paradise; therefore be quick, my charming guide.

Scent. For aught you know. Come, come, your hand, and away.

Sir G. Here, here, child; you can't be half so swift as my desires. [*Exeunt through the gate.*

SCENE V.—*The House.*

Enter MIRANDA.

Mir. Well, let me reason a little with my mad self. Now, don't I transgress all rules to venture upon a man without the advice of the grave and wise? But then a rigid, knavish guardian who would have married me—to whom? even to his nauseous self, or nobody. Sir George is what I have tried in conversation, inquired into his character, and am satisfied in both. Then his love! who would have given a hundred pounds only to have seen a woman he had not infinitely loved? So I find my liking him has furnished me with arguments enough of his side; and now the only doubt remains, whether he will come or no.

Enter SCENTWELL *and* SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Scent. That's resolved, madam, for here's the knight. [*Exit.*

Sir G. And do I once more behold that lovely object whose idea fills my mind, and forms my pleasing dreams?

Mir. What, beginning again in heroics? Sir George, don't you remember how little fruit your last prodigal oration produced? Not one bare single word in answer.

Sir G. Ha! the voice of my incognita! Why did you take ten thousand ways to captivate a heart your eyes alone had vanquished?

Mir. No more of these flights. Do you think we can agree on that same terrible bugbear, matrimony, without heartily repenting on both sides?

Sir G. It has been my wish since first my longing eyes beheld you.

Mir. And your happy ears drank in the pleasing news I had thirty thousand pounds.

Sir G. Unkind! Did I not offer you, in those purchased minutes, to run the risk of your fortune, so you would but secure that lovely person to my arms?

Mir. Well, if you have such love and tenderness, since our wooing has been short, pray reserve it for our future days, to let the world see we are lovers after wedlock; 'twill be a novelty.

Sir G. Haste then, and let us tie the knot, and prove the envied pair—

Mir. Hold, not so fast; I have provided better than to venture on dangerous experiments headlong. My guardian, trusting to my dissembled love, has given up my fortune to my own disposal, but with this proviso, that he to-morrow morning weds me. He is now gone to Doctor's Commons for a licence.

Sir G. Ha! a licence!

Mir. But I have planted emissaries that infallibly take him down to Epsom, under a pretence that a brother usurer of his is to make him his executor, the thing on earth he covets.

Sir G. 'Tis his known character.

Mir. Now my instruments confirm him this man is dying, and he sends me word he goes this minute. It must be to-morrow ere he can be undeceived; that time is ours.

Sir G. Let us improve it then, and settle on our coming years endless happiness.

Mir. I dare not stir till I hear he's on the road; then I, and my writings, the most material point, are soon removed.

Sir G. I have one favour to ask; if it lies in your power you would be a friend to poor Charles; though the son of this tenacious man, he is as free from all his vices as nature and a good education can make him; and, what now I have vanity enough to hope will induce you, he is the man on earth I love.

Mir. I never was his enemy, and only put it on as it help'd my designs on his father. If his uncle's estate ought to be in his possession, which I shrewdly suspect, I may do him a singular piece of service.

Sir G. You are all goodness.

Enter SCENTWELL.

Scent. Oh, madam! my master and Mr. Marplot are just coming into the house.

Mir. Undone, undone; if he finds you here in this crisis, all my plots are unravelled.

Sir G. What shall I do? Can't I get back into the garden?

Scent. Oh no! he comes up those stairs.

Mir. Here, here, here! Can you condescend to stand behind this chimney-board, Sir George?

Sir G. Anywhere, anywhere, dear madam, without ceremony.

Scent. Come, come, sir, lie close. (*They put him behind the chimney-board.*)

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE *and* MARPLOT; *Sir Francis peeling an orange.*

Sir F. I could not go, though 'tis upon life and death, without taking leave of dear chargy. Besides, this fellow buzzed in my ears that thou might'st be so desperate as to shoot that wild rake that haunts the garden-gate, and that would bring us into trouble, dear.

Mir. So Marplot brought you back then?

Mar. Yes, I brought him back.

Mir. I'm obliged to him for that, I'm sure. (*Frowning at Marplot aside.*)

Mar. By her looks she means she's not obliged to me. I have done some mischief now, but what I can't imagine. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Well, chargy, I have had three messengers to come to Epsom to my neighbour Squeezum's, who, for all his vast riches, is departing. (*Sighs.*)

Mar. Ay, see what all you usurers must come to.

Sir F. Peace, you young knave! Some forty years hence I may think on't; but, chargy, I'll be with thee to-morrow before those pretty eyes are open; I will, I will, chargy; I'll rouse you, i'faith. Here Mrs. Scentwell, lift up your lady's chimney-board, that I may throw my peel in, and not litter her chamber.

Mir. Oh, my stars! what will become of us now? (*Aside.*)

Scent. Oh, pray, sir, give it me; I love it above all things in nature, indeed I do.

Sir G. No, no, hussy; you have the green pip already; I'll have no apothecary's bills. (*Goes towards the chimney.*)

Mir. Hold, hold, hold, dear gardy! I have a,—a,—a monkey shut up there; and if you open it before the man comes that is to tame it, 'tis so wild 'twill break all my china or get away, and that would break my heart; for I'm fond on't to

distraction, next thee, dear gardy? (*In a flattering tone.*)

Sir F. Well, well, chargy, I won't open it; she shall have her monkey, poor rogue! Here, throw this peel out of the window. [*Exit Scentwell.*

Mar. A monkey! Dear madam let me see it; I can tame a moukey as well as the best of them all. Oh, how I love the little miniatures of man.

Mir. Be quiet, mischief; and stand further from the chimney. You shall not see my monkey—who sure—(*Striving with him.*)

Mar. For heaven's sake, dear madam, let me but peep, to see if it be as pretty as Lady Fiddle-faddle's. Has it got a chain?

Mir. Not yet; but I design it one shall last its life-time. Nay, you shall not see it. Look, gardy,—how he teazes me!

Sir F. (*Getting between him and the chimney.*) Sirrah, sirrah, let my chargy's monkey alone, or my bamboo shall fly about your ears. What, is there no dealing with you?

Mar. Pugh! plague of the monkey! here's a rout! I wish he may rival you.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, they have put two more horses to the coach, as you ordered, and 'tis ready at the door.

Sir F. Well, I am going to be executor; better for thee, jewel. B'ye, chargy; one buss. I'm glad thou has got a monkey to divert thee a little.

Mir. Thaukye, dear gardy! Nay, I'll see you to the coach.

Sir F. That's kind, adad!

Mir. Come along, impertinence! (*To Marplot.*)

Mar. (*Stepping back.*) 'Egad, I will see the monkey now. (*Lifts up the board and discovers Sir George.*) O lord! O lord! thieves, thieves! murder!

Sir G. D—n ye, you unlucky dog! 'tis I. Which way shall I get out? Shew me instantly, or I'll cut your throat.

Mar. Undone, undone! At that door there. But hold, hold; break that china, and I'll bring you off. (*He runs off at the corner, and throws down some china.*)

Re-enter Sir Francis Gripe, Miranda, *and* Scentwell.

Sir F. Mercy on me! what's the matter?

Mir. O, you toad! what have you done?

Mar. No great harm; I beg of you to forgive me. Longing to see this monkey, I did but just raise up the board, and it flew over my shoulders, scratched all my face, broke your china, and whisked out of the window.

Sir F. Where, where is it, sirrah?

Mar. There, there, Sir Francis, upon your neighbour Parmazan's pantiles.

Sir F. Was ever such an unlucky rogue! Sirrah, I forbid you my house. Call the servants to get the monkey again. Pug, pug, pug! I would stay myself to look for it, but you know my earnest business.

Scent. Oh, my lady will be best to lure it back: all them creatures love my lady extremely.

Mir. Go, go, dear gardy! I hope I shall recover it.

Sir F. B'ye, b'ye, dearee! Ah, mischief! how you look now! B'ye, b'ye. [*Exit.*

Mir. Scentwell, see him in the coach, and bring me word.

Scent. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Mir. So, sir, you have done your friend a signal piece of service, I suppose.

Mar. Why, look you, madam, if I have committed a fault, thank yourself; no man is more serviceable when I am let into a secret, and none more unlucky at finding it out. Who could divine your meaning? when you talked of a blunderbuss, who thought of a rendezvous? and when you talked of a monkey, who the devil dreamt of Sir George?

Mer. A sign you converse but little with our sex, when you can't reconcile contradictions.

Re-enter Scentwell.

Scent. He's gone, madam, as fast as the coach and six can carry him.

Re-enter Sir George Airy.

Sir G. Then I may appear.

Mar. Here's pug, madam. Dear Sir George, make my peace, on my soul I never took you for a monkey before.

Sir G. I dare swear thou didst not. Madam, I beg you to forgive him.

Mir. Well, Sir George, if he can be secret.

Mar. 'Odsheart, madam! I'm as secret as a priest when trusted.

Sir G. Why 'tis with a priest our business is at present.

Scent. Madam, here's Mrs. Isabinda's woman to wait on you.

Mir. Bring her up.

Enter Patch.

How do ye, Mrs. Patch? What news from your lady?

Patch. That's for your private ear, madam. Sir George, there's a friend of yours has an urgent occasion for your assistance.

Sir G. His name.

Patch. Charles.

Mar. Ha! then there's something a-foot that I know nothing of. (*Aside.*) I'll wait on you, Sir George.

Sir G. A third person may not be proper, perhaps. As soon as I have despatched my own affairs I am at his service. I'll send my servant to tell him I'll wait on him in half an hour.

Mir. How came you employed in this message, Mrs. Patch?

Patch. Want of business, madam; I am discharged by my master, but hope to serve my lady still.

Mir. How, discharged! you must tell me the whole story within.

Patch. With all my heart, madam.

Mar. Tell it here, Mrs. Patch. Pish! plague! I wish I were fairly out of the house. I find marriage is the end of this secret; and now I'm half mad to know what Charles wants him for. (*Aside.*)

Sir G. Madam, I'm doubly pressed by love and friendship. This exigence admits of no delay. Shall we make Marplot of the party?

Mir. If you'll run the hazard, Sir George; I believe he means well.

Mar. Nay, nay, for my part I desire to be let into nothing; I'll be gone, therefore pray don't mistrust me.

Sir G. So, now he has a mind to be gone to Charles: but not knowing what affairs he may have upon his hands at present, I'm resolved he shan't stir. (*Aside.*) No, Mr. Marplot, you must not leave us; we want a third person. (*Takes hold of him.*)

Mar. I never had more mind to be gone in my life.

Mir. Come along then; if we fail in the voyage, thank yourself for taking this ill-starr'd gentleman on board.

Sir G. That vessel never can unsuccessful prove,
Whose freight is beauty, and whose pilot's love.
[*Exeunt, with Miranda.*

Mar. Tyty ti, tyty ti. (*Steals off the other way.*)

Re-enter Sir George.

Sir G. Marplot! Marplot!

Mar. (*Entering.*) Here! I was coming, Sir George. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*A Room in Sir Francis Gripe's House.*

Enter Miranda, Patch, *and* Scentwell.

Mir. Well, Patch, I have done a strange bold thing; my fate is determined, and expectation is no more. Now to avoid the impertinence and roguery of an old man, I have thrown myself into the extravagance of a young one; if he should despise, slight, or use me ill, there's no remedy from a husband but the grave, and that's a terrible sanctuary to one of my age and constitution.

Patch. Oh! fear not, madam; you'll find your account in Sir George Airy; it is impossible a man of sense should use a woman ill, endued with beauty, wit, and fortune. It must be the lady's fault if she does not wear the unfashionable name of wife easy, when nothing but complaisance and good humour is requisite on either side to make them happy.

Mir. I long till I am out of this house, lest an accident should bring my guardian back. Scentwell, put my best jewels into the little casket, slip them into thy pocket, and let us march off to Sir Jealous.

Scent. It shall be done, madam. [*Exit.*

Patch. Sir George will be impatient, madam. If their plot succeeds, we shall be well received; if not, he will be able to protect us. Besides, I long to know how my young lady fares.

Mir. Farewell, old Mammon, and thy detested walls! 'Twill be no more sweet Sir Francis! I shall be compelled to the odious task of dissembling no longer to get my own, and coax him with the wheedling names of my precious, my dear, dear gardy! O heavens!

Enter Sir Francis Gripe.

Sir F. Ah, my sweet chargy! don't be frighted; (*She starts.*) but thy poor gardy has been abused, cheated, fooled, betrayed; but nobody knows by whom.

Mir. Undone, past redemption. (*Aside.*)

Sir F. What won't you speak to me, chargy?

Mir. I am so surprised with joy to see you, I know not what to say.

Sir F. Poor dear girl! But do you know that my son, or some such rogue, to rob or murder me, or both, contrived this journey? for upon the road I met my neighbour Squeezum well, and coming to town.

Mir. Good lack, good lack! what tricks are there in this world!

Re-enter Scentwell, *with a diamond necklace in her hand, not seeing Sir Francis.*

Scent. Madam, be pleased to tie this necklace on, for I can't get in to the—(*Seeing Sir Francis.*)

Mir. The wench is a fool, I think! Could you not have carried it to be mended without putting it in the box.

Sir F. What's the matter?

Mir. Only, dearee,—I bid her, I bid her—Your ill-usuage has put every thing out of my head. But won't you go, gardy, and find out these fellows, and have them punished, and, and—

Sir F. Where should I look for them, child? no, I'll sit me down contented with my safety, nor stir out of my own doors till I go with thee to a parson.

Mir. If he goes into his closet I am ruined. (*Aside.*) Oh, bless me! In this fright I had forgot Mrs. Patch.

Patch. Ay, madam, and I stay for your speedy answer.

Mir. I must get him out of the house. Now assist me, fortune! (*Aside.*)

Sir F. Mrs. Patch! I profess I did not see you: how dost thou do, Mrs. Patch? Well, don't you repent leaving my chargy?

Patch. Yes, every body must love her; but I come now—Madam, what did I come for? my invention is at the last ebb. (*Aside to Miranda.*)

Sir F. Nay, never whisper, tell me.

Mir. She came, dear gardy! to invite me to her lady's wedding, and you shall go with me, gardy; 'tis to be done this moment, to a Spanish merchant. Old sir Jealous keeps on his humour: the first minute he sees her, the next he marries her.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha! I'd go if I thought the sight of matrimony would tempt chargy to perform her promise. There was a smile, there was a consenting look, with those pretty twinklers, worth a million! 'Ods-precious! I am happier than the great mogul, the emperor of China, or all the potentates that are not in the wars. Speak, confirm it, make me leap out of my skin.

Mir. When one has resolved, 'tis in vain to stand shilly-shally. If ever I marry, positively this is my wedding-day.

Sir F. Oh! happy, happy man. Verily, I will beget a son the first night shall disinherit that dog Charles. I have estate enough to purchase a barony, and be the immortalizing the whole family of the Gripes.

Mir. Come then, gardy, give me thy hand; let's to this house of Hymen.
My choice is fixed, let good or ill betide;

Sir F. The joyful bridegroom I,

Mir. And I the happy bride. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*An Apartment in the House of Sir Jealous Traffick.*

Enter Sir Jealous Traffick, *meeting a Servant.*

Serv. Sir, here's a couple of gentlemen inquire for you; one of them calls himself Signior Diego Babinetto.

Sir J. Ha! Signior Babinetto! admit 'em instantly,—joyful minute; I'll have my daughter married to-night.

Enter Charles, *in a Spanish habit, with* Sir George Airy, *dressed like a merchant.*

Senhor, beso las manos: vuestra merced es muy bien venido en esta tierra.

Charles. Senhor, soy muy humi lde, y muy obligado cryado de vuestra merced: mi padre embia a vuestra merced, los mas profondos de sus respetos; y a commissionado este mercadel Ingles, de concluyr un negocio, que me haze el mas dichos shombre del mundo, haziendo me su yerno.

Sir J. I am glad on't, for I find I have lost much of my Spanish. Sir, I am your most humble servant. Signior Don Diego Babinetto has informed me that you are commissioned by Signior Don Pedro, &c. his worthy father—

Sir G. To see an affair of marriage consummated between a daughter of yours and Signior Diego Babinetto his son here. True, sir, such a trust is reposed in me, as that letter will inform you. I hope it will pass upon him. (*Aside.*) (*Gives him a letter.*)

Sir J. Ay, 'tis hand. (*Seems to read.*)

Sir G. Good, you have counterfeited to a nicety, Charles. (*Aside to Charles.*)

Sir J. Sir, I find by this that you are a man of honour and probity; I think, sir, he calls you Meanwell.

Sir G. Meanwell is my name, sir.

Sir J. A very good name, and very significant. For to mean well is to be honest, and to be honest is the virtue of a friend, and a friend is the delight and support of human society.

Sir G. You shall find that I'll discharge the part of a friend in what I have undertaken, sir Jealous. Therefore, sir, I must entreat the presence of your fair daughter, and the assistance of your chaplain; for Signior Don Pedro strictly enjoined me to see the marriage rites performed as soon as we should arrive, to avoid the accidental overtures of Venus.

Sir J. Overtures of Venus!

Sir G. Ay, sir; that is those little hawking females, that traverse the park and the playhouse to put off their damaged ware; they fasten upon foreigners like leeches, and watch their arrival as carefully as the Kentish men do a shipwreck: I warrant you they have heard of him already.

Sir J. Nay, I know this town swarms with them.

Sir G. Ay, and then you know the Spaniards are naturally amorous, but very constant; the first face fixes 'em; and it may be very dangerous to let him ramble ere he is tied.

Sir J. Pat to my purpose. Well, sir, there is but one thing more, and they shall be married instantly.

Charles. Pray heaven that one thing more won't spoil all. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Don Pedro wrote me word, in his last but one, that he designed the sum of five thousand crowns by way of jointure for my daughter, and that it should be paid into my hand upon the day of marriage—

Charles. Oh, the devil! (*Aside.*)

Sir J. In order to lodge it in some of our funds in case she should become a widow, and return to England.

Sir G. Plague on't! this is an unlucky turn. What shall I say? (*Aside.*)

Sir J. And he does not mention one word of it in this letter.

Sir G. Humph! True, sir Jealous, he told me such a thing, but, but, but, but—he, he, he, he—he did not imagine that you would insist upon the very day; for, for, for, for money, you know, is dangerous returning by sea, an, an, an—

Charles. Zounds! say we have brought it in commodities. (*Aside to Sir G.*)

Sir G. And so, sir, he has sent it in merchandize; tobacco, sugars, spices, lemons, and so forth, which shall be turned into money with all expedition; in the mean time, sir, if you please to accept of my bond for performance—

Sir J. It is enough, sir; I am so pleased with the countenance of Signior Diego, and the harmony of your name, that I'll take your word, and will fetch my daughter this moment. Within there!

Enter Servant.

Desire Mr. Tackum, my neighbour's chaplain, to walk hither.

Serv. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir J. Gentlemen, I'll return in an instant. [*Exit.*

Sir G. 'Egad, that five thousand crowns had like to have ruined the plot.

Charles. But that's over; and if fortune throws no more rubs in our way—

Sir G. Thou'lt carry the prize—But hist! here he comes.

Re-enter Sir Jealous Traffick, *dragging in* Isabinda.

Sir J. Come along, you stubborn beggage, you! come along.

Isa. Oh! hear me, sir, hear me but speak one word;
Do not destroy my everlasting peace;
My soul abhors this Spaniard you have chose.

Sir J. How's that?

Isa. Let this posture move your tender nature. (*Kneels.*)
For ever will I hang upon these knees,
Not loose my hands till you cut off my hold,
If you refuse to hear me, sir.

Sir J. Did you ever see such a perverse slut? Off, I say. Mr. Meanwell, pray help me a little.

Sir G. Rise, madam, and do not disoblige your father, who has provided a husband worthy of you, one that will love you equal with his soul, and one that you will love, when once you know him.

Isa. Oh! never, never!
Could I suspect that falsehood in my heart,
I would this moment tear it from my breast,
And straight present him with the treach'rous part.

Sir J. Falsehood! why, who the devil are you in love with? Don't provoke me, for by St. Jago I shall beat you, housewife.

Sir G. Sir Jealous, you are too passionate. Give me leave, I'll try by gentle words to work her to your purpose.

Sir J. I pray do, Mr. Meanwell, I pray do; she'll break my heart. (*Weeps.*) There is in that casket, jewels of the value of three thousand pounds, which were her mother's, and a paper, wherein I have settled one half of my estate upon her now, and the whole when I die, but provided she marries this gentleman, else by St. Jago, I'll turn her out of doors to beg or starve. Tell her this, Mr. Meanwell, pray do.

Sir G. Ha! this is beyond expectation. (*Aside.*) Trust to me, sir, I'll lay the dangerous consequence of disobeying you at this juncture before her, I warrant you. Come, madam, do not blindly cast your life away just in the moment you would wish to save it.

Isa. Pray cease your trouble, sir: I have no wish but death to free me from this hated Spaniard. If you are his friend, inform him what I say.

Sir G. Suppose this Spaniard, which you strive to shun, should be the very man to whom you'd fly?

Isa. Ha!

Sir G. Would you not blame your rash resolve, and curse your eyes that would not look on Charles?

Isa. On Charles! Where is he? (*Rises.*)

Sir G. Hold, hold, hold. 'Sdeath! madam, you'll ruin all. Your father believes him to be signior Babinetto. Compose yourself a little, pray madam. (*He runs to Sir Jealous.*) She begins to hear reason, sir; the fear of being turned out of doors has done it. Speak gently to her, sir; I'm sure she'll yield; I see it in her face.

Sir J. Well, Isabinda, can you refuse to bless a father whose only care is to make you happy.

Isa. Oh, sir! do with me what you please; I am all obedience.

Sir J. And wilt thou love him?

Isa. I will endeavour it, sir.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is Mr. Tackum.

Sir J. Shew him into the parlour. [*Exit Servant.*] Senhor tome vind sueipora; cette momento les junta les manos. (*Gives her to Charles.*)

Charles. Senhor, yo la recibo como se deve un tesora tan grande. (*Embraces her.*)

Sir J. Now, Mr. Meanwell, let's to the parson,
Who, by his art, will join this pair for life,
Make me the happiest father, her the happiest wife.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*A Street before Sir Jealous Traffick's house.*

Enter Marplot.

Mar. I have hunted all over the town for Charles, but can't find him, and by Whisper's scouting at the end of the street, I suspect he must be in the house again. I am informed too that he has borrowed a Spanish habit out of the playhouse: what can it mean?

Enter a Servant of Sir Jealous Traffick's to him out of the house.

Harkye, sir, do you belong to this house?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Mar. Isn't your name Richard?

Serv. No, sir; Thomas.

Mar. Oh, ay, Thomas. Well, Thomas, there's a shilling for you.

Serv. 'Thank you, sir.

Mar. Pray, Thomas, can you tell if there be a gentleman in it in a Spanish habit?

Ser. There's a Spanish gentleman within, that is just a-going to marry my young lady, sir.

Mar. Are you sure he is a Spanish gentleman?

Serv. I'm sure he speaks no English that I hear of.

Mar. Then that can't be him I want, for 'tis an English gentleman that I inquire after; he may be dressed like a Spaniard, for aught I know.

Serv. Ha! who knows but this may be an impostor? I'll inform my master, for if he should be imposed upon, he'll beat us all round. (*Aside.*) Pray come in, sir, and see if this be the person you inquire for.

Mar. Ay, I'll follow you. Now for it.
[*Exeunt into the house.*

Scene IV.—*The Inside of the house.*

Enter Marplot, *and Servant.*

Serv. Sir, please to stay here; I'll send my master to you. [*Exit.*

Mar. So this was a good contrivance. If this be Charles now, he will wonder how I found him out.

Re-enter Servant, and Sir Jealous Traffick.

Sir J. What is your earnest business, blockhead! that you must speak to me before the ceremony's past! Ha! who's this?

Serv. Why this gentleman, sir, wants another gentleman in a Spanish habit he says.

Sir J. In a Spanish habit! 'tis some friend of Signior Don Diego's, I warrant. (*Aside.*) Sir, your servant.

Mar. Your servant, sir.

Sir J. I suppose you would speak with signior Babinetto.

Mar. Sir?

Sir J. I say, I suppose you would speak with Signior Babinetto?

Mar. Hey-day! what the devil does he say now? (*Aside.*) Sir, I don't understand you.

Sir J. Don't you understand Spanish, sir?

Mor. Not I indeed, sir.

Sir J. I thought you had known Signior Babinetto.

Mar. Not I, upon my word, sir.

Sir J. What, then, you'd speak with his friend, the English merchant, Mr. Meanwell?

Mar. Neither, sir, not I; I don't mean any such thing.

Sir J. Why, who are you then, sir? and what do you want?

Mar. Nay nothing at all, not I, sir. Plague on him! I wish I were out; he begins to exalt his voice! I shall be beaten again. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Nothing at all, sir! Why then what business have you in my house, ha?

Serv. You said you wanted a gentleman in a Spanish habit.

Mar. Why ay, but his name is neither Babinetto nor Meanwell.

Sir J. What is his name then, sirrah? Ha! now I look at you again, I believe you are the rogue that threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—

Mar. Me, sir! I never saw your face in all my life before.

Sir J. Speak, sir; who is it you look for? or, or—

Mar. A terrible old dog! (*Aside.*) Why, sir, only an honest young fellow of my acquaintance—I thought that there might be a ball, and that he might have been here in a masquerade. 'Tis Charles, Sir Francis Gripe's son,—because I know he used to come hither sometimes.

Sir J. Did he so?—Not that I know of, I'm sure. Pray heaven that this be Don Diego. If I should be tricked now—Ha! my heart misgives me plaguily. Within there! stop the marriage. Run, sirrah, call all my servants! I'll be satisfied that this is Signior Pedro's son ere he has my daughter.

Mar. Ha! Sir George! what have I done now?

Enter Sir George Airy, *with a drawn sword.*

Sir G. Ha! Marplot here! oh! the unlucky dog! What's the matter Sir Jealous?

Sir J. Nay, I don't know the matter, Mr. Meanwell.

Mar. Upon my soul, Sir George— (*Going up to Sir George.*)

Sir J. Nay then, I'm betrayed, ruined, undone. Thieves, traitors, rogues! (*Offers to go in.*) Stop the marriage, I say—

Sir G. I say go on, Mr. Tackum—Nay, no entering here; I guard this passage, old gentleman: the act and the deed were both your own, and I'll see them signed, or die for't.

Enter Servant.

Sir J. A plague on the act and deed!—Fall on, sir, knock him down.

Sir G. Ay, come on, scoundrels! I'll prick your jackets for you.

Sir J. Zounds! sirrah, I'll be revenged on you. (*Beats Marplot.*)

Sir G. Ay, there your vengeance is due. Ha, ha!

Mar. Why, what do you beat me for? I han't married your daughter.

Sir J. Rascals! why don't you knock him down?

Serv. We are afraid of his sword, sir; if you'll take that from him, we'll knock him down presently.

Enter Charles *and* Isabinda.

Sir J. Seize her, then.

Charles. Rascals, retire, she's my wife; touch her if you dare; I'll make dogs'-meat of you.

Mar. Ay, I'll make dogs'-meat of you, rascals.

Sir J. Ah! downright Englishman.—Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Enter Sir Francis Gripe, *and* Miranda.

Sir F. Into the house of joy we enter without knocking.—Ha! I think 'tis the house of sorrow, Sir Jealous.

Sir J. Oh, Sir Francis, are you come? What! was this your contrivance, to abuse, trick, and chouse me out of my child?

Sir F. My contrivance! what do you mean?

Sir J. No, you don't know your son there in a Spanish habit?

Sir F. How! my son in a Spanish habit! Sirrah, you'll come to be hanged. Get out of my sight, ye dog! get out my sight.

Sir J. Get out of your sight, sir! get out with your bags. Let's see what you'll give him now to maintain my daughter on.

Sir F. Give him! he shall never be the better for a penny of mine; and you might have looked after your daughter better, Sir Jealous. Tricked, quotha! Egad, I think you design to trick me: but look ye, gentlemen, I believe I shall trick you both. This lady is my wife, do you see, and my estate shall descend only to her children.

Sir G. I shall be extremely obliged to you, sir Francis.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha! poor Sir George! does not your hundred pounds stick in your stomach? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. No faith, Sir Francis, this lady has given me a cordial for that. (*Takes her by the hand.*)

Sir F. Hold, sir, you have nothing to say to this lady.

Sir G. Nor you nothing to do with my wife, sir.

Sir F. Wife, sir!

Mir. Ay, really, guardian, 'tis even so. I hope you'll forgive my first offence.

Sir F. What, have you choused me out of my consent and your writings then, mistress, ha?

Mir. Out of nothing but my own, guardian.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort at least to see you are over-reached as well as myself. Will you settle your estate upon your son now.

Sir F. He shall starve first.

Mir. That I have taken care to prevent. There, sir, are the writings of your uncle's estate, which have been your due these three years. (*Gives Charles papers.*)

Charles. I shall study to deserve this favour.

Mar. Now, how the devil could she get those writings, and I know nothing of it?

Sir F. What, have you robbed me too, mistress? 'Egad, I'll make you restore 'em—hussy, I will so.

Sir J. Take care I don't make you pay the arrears, sir. 'Tis well 'tis no worse, since 'tis no better. Come, young man, seeing thou hast outwitted me, take her, and bless you both!

Charles. I hope, sir, you'll bestow your blessing too; 'tis all I ask. (*Kneels.*)

Mar. Do, gardy, do.

Sir F. Confound you all! [*Exit.*

Mar. Mercy upon us, how he looks!

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! never mind his curses, Charles; thou'lt thrive not one jot the worse for 'em. Since this gentleman is reconciled, we are all made happy.

Sir J. I always loved precaution, and took care to avoid dangers; but when a thing was past, I ever had philosophy to be easy.

Charles. Which is the true sign of a great soul. I loved your daughter, and she me, and you shall have no reason to repent her choice.

Isa. You will not blame me, sir, for loving my own country best.

Mar. So, here's every body happy, I find, but poor Pilgarlick. I wonder what satisfaction I shall have for being cuffed, kicked, and beaten in your service!

Sir J. I have been a little too familiar with you as things are fallen out; but since there's no help for it, you must forgive me.

Mar. 'Egad I think so; but provided that you be not so familiar for the future.

Sir G. Thou hast been an unlucky rogue.

Mar. But very honest.

Charles. That I'll vouch for, and freely forgive thee.

Sir G. And I'll do you one piece of service more, Marplot; I'll take care Sir Francis makes you master of your estate.

Mar. That will make me as happy as any of you.

Sir J. Now let us in, and refresh ourselves with a cheerful glass, in which we'll bury all animosities; and

By my example let all parents move,
And never strive to cross their childen's love;
But still submit that care to Providence above.

[*Exeunt.*

THE CARELESS HUSBAND;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY COLLEY CIBBER.



Act V.—Scene 5.

CHARACTERS.

LORD FOPPINGTON	SIR CHARLES EASY	LADY GRAVEAIRS	MRS. EDGING
LORD MORELOVE	LADY BETTY MODISH	LADY EASY	SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Sir Charles Easy's Lodgings.*

Enter LADY EASY.

Lady E. Was ever woman's spirit, by an injurious husband, broken like mine? Must he bring home his follies, too? wrong me with my own servant? Oh! how tedious a relief is patience! and yet, in my condition, 'tis the only remedy: for to reproach him with my wrongs, is taking upon myself the means of a redress, bidding defiance to his falsehood, and but naturally provokes him to undo me. The uneasy thought of my continued jealousy may tease him to a fixed aversion; and, hitherto, though he neglects, I cannot think he hates me. It must be so; since I want power to please him, he never shall upbraid me with an attempt of making him uneasy. My eyes and tongue shall yet be blind and silent to my wrongs; nor would I have him think my virtue could suspect him, till by some gross, apparent proof of his misdoing, he forces me to see, and to forgive it.

Enter MRS. EDGING, *hastily.*

Mrs. E. Oh, madam!

Lady E. What's the matter?

Mrs. E. I have the strangest thing to shew your ladyship—such a discovery!

Lady E. You are resolved to make it without much ceremony, I find: what's the business, pray?

Mrs. E. The business, madam! I have not patience to tell you; I am out of breath at the very thoughts of it; I shall not be able to speak this half-hour.

Lady E. Not to the purpose, I believe; but, methinks, you talk impertinently with a great deal of ease.

Mrs. E. Nay, madam, perhaps not so impertinent as your ladyship thinks; there's that that will speak to the purpose, I am sure. A base man! (*Gives a letter.*) [comes it?

Lady E. What's this, an open letter! Whence

Mrs. E. Nay, read it, madam; you'll soon guess. If these are the tricks of husbands, keep me a maid still, say I.

Lady E. (*Looking on the superscription.*) "*To Sir Charles Easy.*" Ha! too well I know this hateful hand. Oh! my heart! but I must veil my jealousy, which 'tis not fit this creature should suppose I am acquainted with. (*Aside.*) This direction is to your master; how came you by it?

Mrs. E. Why, madam, as my master was lying down, after he came in from hunting, he sent me into his dressing-room to fetch his snuff-box out of his waistcoat-pocket; and so, as I was searching for the box, madam, there I found this wicked letter from a mistress; which I had no sooner read, but, I declare it, my very blood rose at him again; methought I could have torn him and her to pieces.

Lady E. Intolerable! This odious thing's jealous of him herself, and wants me to join with her in a revenge upon him. Sure, I am fallen indeed! but 'twere to make me lower yet, to let her think I understand her. (*Aside.*) [of patience at it.

Mrs. E. Nay, pray, madam, read it; you'll be out

Lady E. You are bold, mistress. Has my indulgence, or your master's good humour, flattered you into the assurance of reading his letters? A liberty I never gave myself. Here, lay it where you had it immediately. Should he know of your sauciness, it would not be my favour could protect you. [*Exit.*

Mrs. E. Your favour! marry come up! Sure, I don't depend upon your favour! Here's my master; I'll try whether I am to be huffed by her, or no. (*Walks behind.*)

Enter SIR CHARLES EASY.

Sir C. So, the day is come again! Life but rises to another stage, and the same dull journey is before us. How like children do we judge of happiness! When I was stinted in my fortune, almost everything was a pleasure to me, because most things then being out of my reach, I had always the pleasure of hoping for them; now fortune's in my hand, she's as insipid as an old acquaintance. It's

mighty silly, 'faith! Just the same thing by my wife, too; I am told she's extremely handsome; nay, and have heard a great many people say she is certainly the best woman in the world. Why, I don't know but she may; yet I could never find that her person or good qualities gave me any concern: in my eye, the woman has no more charms than my mother.

Mrs. E. Humph! he takes no notice of me yet: I'll let him see, I can take as little notice of him. (*As she is walking by him, he lays hold of her.*) Pray, sir—

Sir C. A pretty pert air that; I'll humour it. (*Aside.*) What's the matter, child? Are not you well? Kiss me, hussy.

Mrs. E. No; the deuce fetch me, if I do.

Sir C. Has anything put you out of humour, love?

Mrs. E. No, sir; 'tis not worth my being out of humour at; though if ever you have anything to say to me again, I'll be burned.

Sir C. Somebody has belied me to you.

Mrs. E. No, sir; 'tis you have belied yourself to me. Did not I ask you when you first made a fool of me, if you would be always constant to me, and did not you say, I might be sure you would? And here, instead of that, you are going on in your old intrigue with my Lady Graveairs.

Sir C. So!

Mrs. E. Besides, don't you suffer my lady to huff me every day, as if I were her dog, or had no more concern with you—I declare I won't bear it, and she sha'n't think to huff me; for aught I know, I am as agreeable as she; and though she dares not take any notice of your baseness to her, you sha'n't think to use me so; and so, pray take your nasty letter—I know the hand well enough—for my part, I won't stay in the family to be abused at this rate. I that have refused lords and dukes for your sake: I'd have you to know, sir, I have had as many blue and green ribands after me, for aught I know, as would have made me an apron.

Sir C. My Lady Graveairs!—my nasty letter!—and I won't stay in the family! Death! I'm in a pretty condition. (*Aside.*) [as you do your wife?

Mrs. E. I suppose, sir, you think to use everybody

Sir C. My wife! ah! Come hither, Mrs. Edging; harkye, drab! (*Seizing her.*)

Mrs. E. Oh!

Sir C. When you speak of my wife, you are to say your lady; and you are never to speak of your lady to me in any regard of her being my wife: I only give you leave to be saucy with me. In the next place, you are never to suppose there is any such person as my Lady Graveairs; and lastly, my pretty one, how came you by this letter?

Mrs. E. It's no matter, perhaps.

Sir C. Ay, but if you should not tell me quickly, how are you sure I won't take a great piece of flesh out of your shoulder. (*Shakes her.*)

Mrs. E. Oh, lud! oh, lud! I will tell you, sir.

Sir C. Quickly, then.

Mrs. E. Oh! I took it out of your pocket, sir.

Sir C. When? [your snuff-box.

Mrs. E. Oh! this morning, when you sent me for

Sir C. And your ladyship's pretty curiosity has looked it over, I presume, eh? (*Shakes her again.*)

Mrs. E. Oh, lud!—dear sir,—don't be angry—indeed I'll never touch one again.

Sir C. I don't believe you will; and I'll tell you how you may be sure you never will.

Mrs. E. Yes, sir.

Sir C. By steadfastly believing, that the next time you offer it, you will have your pretty white neck twisted behind you.

Mrs. E. Yes, sir. (*Courtesying.*)

Sir C. And you will be sure to remember every-

Mrs. E. Yes, sir. [thing I have said to you?

Sir C. And now, child, I was not angry with your person, but your follies; but let me hear no more of your lady, child.

Mrs. E. No, sir.

Sir C. Here she comes. Begone.

Mrs. E. Yes, sir. Oh! I was never so frightened in my life. [*Aside, and exit.*

Sir C. So! good discipline makes good soldiers. It often puzzles me to think, from my own carelessness, and my wife's continual good humour, whether she really knows anything of the strength of my forces: I'll sift her a little. [*Enter* Lady Easy.] My dear, how do you do? You are dressed very early to day; are you going out?

Lady E. Only to church, my dear.

Sir C. Well, child, how does Windsor air agree with you? Do you find yourself any better yet? or have you a mind to go to London again?

Lady E. No, indeed, my dear; the air is so very pleasant, that if it were a place of less company, I could be content to end my days here.

Sir C. Pr'ythee, my dear, what sort of company would most please you?

Lady E. When business would permit it, your's; and in your absence, a sincere friend, that were truly happy in an honest husband, to sit a cheerful hour, and talk in mutual praise of our condition.

Sir C. Are you, then, really very happy, my dear?

Lady E. Why should you question it? (*Smiling.*)

Sir C. Because I fancy I am not so good to you as I should be.

Lady E. Psha!

Sir C. Nay, the deuce take me if I don't really confess myself so bad, that I have often wondered how any woman of your sense, rank, and person, could think it worth her while to have so many useless good qualities.

Lady E. Fie! my dear.

Sir C. By my soul, I'm serious.

Lady E. I can't boast of my good qualities, nor if I could, do I believe you think them useless.

Sir C. Nay, I submit to you—Don't you find 'em so? Do you perceive that I am one tittle the better husband for your being so good a wife?

Lady E. Psha! you jest with me.

Sir C. Upon my life I don't. Tell me truly, were you never jealous of me?

Lady E. Did I ever give you any sign of it.

Sir C. Humph! that's true. But do you really think I never gave you occasion? [you had?

Lady E. That's an odd question. But suppose

Sir C. Why, then, what good has your virtue done you, since all the good qualities of it could not keep me to yourself?

Lady E. What occasion have you given me to suppose I have not kept you to myself?

Sir C. I given you occasion! Fie! my dear; you may be sure—I—lookye, that is not the thing; but still a—Death, what a blunder have I made! (*Aside.*)—Still, I say, madam, you sha'n't make me believe you have never been jealous of me; not that you ever had any real cause, but I know women of your principle have more pride than those that have no principle at all; and where there is pride, there must be some jealousy; so, that if you are jealous, my dear, you know you wrong me, and—

Lady E. Why, then, upon my word, my dear, I don't know that ever I wronged you that way in my life. [be jealous, how would you do, then?

Sir C. But suppose I had given a real cause to

Lady E. It must be a very substantial one that makes me jealous.

Sir C. Say it were a substantial one. Suppose, now, I were well with a woman of your own acquaintance, that under pretence of frequent visits to you, should only come to carry on an affair with me: suppose now my Lady Graveairs and I were great—

Lady E. Would I could not suppose it. (*Aside.*)

Sir C. If I come off here, I believe I am pretty safe. (*Aside.*) Suppose, I say, my lady and I were so very familiar, that not only yourself, but half the town should see it?

Lady E. Then I should cry myself sick in some

dark closet, and forget my tears when you spoke kindly to me.

Sir C. The most convenient piece of virtue, sure, that ever wife was mistress of. (*Aside.*)

Lady E. But pray, my dear, did you ever think I had any ill thoughts of my Lady Graveairs?

Sir C. Oh, fie! child; only you know she and I used to be a little free sometimes, so I had a mind to see if you thought there was any harm in it: but since I find you so very easy, I think myself obliged to tell you, that, upon my soul, my dear, I have so little regard to her person, that the deuce take me, if I would not as soon have an affair with your own woman. [pect you with one as t'other.

Lady E. Indeed, my dear, I should as soon sus-

Sir C. Poor dear! shouldst thou? Give me a kiss.

Lady E. Psha! you don't care to kiss me.

Sir C. By my soul, I do. I wish I may die if I don't think you a very fine woman.

Lady E. I only wish you would think me a good wife. (*Kisses him.*) But pray, my dear, what has made you so very inquisitive?

Sir C. Inquisitive! Why—a—I don't know; one's always saying one foolish thing or another—Tol de rol. (*Sings and talks.*) My dear, what! are we never to have any ball here? Tol de rol. I fancy I could recover my dancing again, if I would but practise. Tol lol lol!

Lady E. This excess of carelessness to me excuses half his vices. If I can make him once think seriously, time yet may be my friend. (*Aside.*)

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Lord Morelove gives his service.

Sir C. Lord Morelove! where is he?

Serv. At the chocolate-house. He called me to him, as I went by, and bid me tell your honour he'll wait upon you presently.

Lady E. I thought you had not expected him here again this season, my dear?

Sir C. I thought so, too; but you see there's no depending upon the resolution of a man that's in love.

Lady E. Is there a chair?

Serv. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Lady E. I suppose Lady Betty Modish has drawn him hither. [am afraid so.

Sir C. Ay, poor soul! for all his bravery, I

Lady E. Well, my dear, I haven't time to ask my lord how he does now; you'll excuse me to him, but I hope you'll make him dine with us.

Sir C. I'll ask him. If you see Lady Betty at prayers, make her dine, too; but don't take any notice of my lord's being in town.

Lady E. Very well. If I should not meet her there, I'll call at her lodgings.

Sir C. Do so.

Lady E. My dear, your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir C. My dear, I'm your's. Well, one way or other, this woman will certainly bring about her business with me at last; for though she can't make me happy in her own person, she lets me be so intolerably easy with the woman that can, that she has at least brought me in a fair way of being as weary of them, too.

Enter a Servant and Lord Morelove.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Morelove. [*Exit.*

More. Dear Charles!

Sir C. My dear lord, this is an happiness undreamt of; I little thought to have seen you at Windsor again this season; I concluded, of course, that books and solitude had secured you till winter.

More. Nay, I did not think of coming myself; but I found myself not very well in London, so I thought—a—little hunting, and this air—

Sir C. Ha, ha, ha!

More. What do you laugh at?

Sir C. Only because you should not go on with your story. If you did but see how a man fumbles for an excuse, when he's a little ashamed of being in love, you would not wonder what I laugh at. Ha, ha, ha!

More. Thou art a very happy fellow; nothing touches you; always easy. Then you conclude I follow Lady Betty again?

Sir C. Yes, 'faith, do I: and to make you easy, my lord, I cannot see why a man that can ride fifty miles after a poor stag, should be ashamed of running twenty in chase of a fine woman, that, in all probability, will make him so much the better sport, too.

More. Dear Charles, don't flatter my distemper; I own I still follow her. Do you think her charms have power to excuse me to the world?

Sir C. Ay, ay! a fine woman's an excuse for anything; and the scandal of her being in jest, is a jest itself; we are all forced to be their fools, before we can be their favourites.

More. You are willing to give me hope; but I can't believe she has the least degree of inclination for me.

Sir C. I don't know that; I am sure her pride likes you, and that's generally your fine lady's darling passion. [rent, it would touch her?

More. Do you suppose if I could grow indiffe-

Sir C. Sting her to the heart. Will you take my advice?

More. I have no relief but that. Had I not you now and then to talk an hour, my life were insupportable.

Sir C. I am sorry for that, my lord. But mind what I say to you. But bold! first let me know the particulars of your late quarrel with her.

More. Why—about three weeks ago, (when I was last here at Windsor,) she had for some days treated me with a little more reserve, and another with more freedom, than I found myself easy at.

Sir C. Who was that other?

More. One of my Lord Foppington's gang; the pert coxcomb that's just come to a small estate and a great periwig; he that sings himself among the women—what d'ye call him?—He won't speak to a commoner when a lord's in company—you always see him with a cane dangling at his button, his breast open, no gloves, one eye tucked under his hat, and a tooth-pick—Startup, that's his name. [on.

Sir C. Oh! I have met him on a visit. But, pray go

More. So, disputing with her about the conduct of women, I took the liberty to tell her how far I thought she erred in hers; she told me I was rude, and that she would never believe any man could love a woman, that thought her wrong in anything she had a mind to, at least, if he dared to tell her so. This provoked me into her whole character, with as much spite and civil malice as I have seen her bestow upon a woman of true beauty, when the men first toasted her; so, in the middle of my wisdom, she told me, she desired to be alone, that I would take my odious proud heart along with me, and trouble her no more. I bowed very low; and, as I left the room, vowed I never would, and that my proud heart should never be humbled by the outside of a fine woman. About an hour after, I whipped into my chaise for London, and have never seen her since.

Sir C. Very well. And how did you find your proud heart by the time you got to Hounslow?

More. I am almost ashamed to tell you: I found her so much in the right, that I cursed my pride for contradicting her at all; and began to think, according to her maxim, that no woman could be in the wrong to a man that she had in her power.

Sir C. Ha, ha! Well, I'll tell you what you shall do—You can see her without trembling, I hope?

More. Not if she receives me well.

Sir C. If she receives you well, you will have no occasion for what I am going to say to you. First, you shall dine with her.

More. How? where? when?

Sir C. Here, here! at two o'clock.

More. Dear Charles!

Sir C. My wife's gone to invite her. When you see her first, be neither too humble nor too stubborn; let her see, by the ease in your behaviour, you are

still pleased in being near her, while she is upon reasonable terms with you. This will neither open the door of an *eclaircissement*, or quite shut it against you; and if she is still resolved to keep you out—

More. Nay, if she insults me, then perhaps I may recover pride enough to rally her by an over-acted submission.

Sir C. Why, you improve, my lord; this is the very thing I was going to propose to you.

More. Was it, 'faith! Harkye! dare you stand by me?

Sir C. Dare I! ay, to my last drop of assurance, against all the insolent airs of the proudest beauty in Christendom.

More. Nay, then, defiance to her. We two—you have inspired me; I find myself as valiant as a flattered coward. [her.

Sir C. Courage, my lord; I'll warrant we beat

More. My blood stirs at the very thought of it; I long to be engaged.

Sir C. She'll certainly give ground, when she once sees you are thoroughly provoked.

More. Dear Charles, thou art a friend indeed.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Foppington gives his service; and if your honour's at leisure, he'll wait upon you as soon as he's dressed.

More. Lord Foppington! is he in town?

Sir C. Yes; I heard last night he was come. Give my service to his lordship, and tell him I shall be glad if he'll do me the honour of his company here at dinner. [*Exit Servant.*] We may have occasion for him in our design upon Lady Betty.

More. What use can we make of him?

Sir C. We'll see when he comes; at least, there's no danger in him; not but I suppose you know he's

More. Psha! a coxcomb. [your rival.

Sir C. Nay, don't despise him, neither: he's able to give you advice; for though he's in love with the same woman, yet to him she has not charms enough to give a moment's pain.

More. Pr'ythee, what sense has he of love?

Sir C. 'Faith! very nearly as much as a man of sense ought to have. I grant you, he knows not how to value a woman truly deserving, but he has a pretty just esteem for most ladies about town.

More. That he follows, I grant you; for he seldom visits any of extraordinary reputation.

Sir C. Have a care, I have seen him at Lady Betty Modish's.

More. To be laughed at.

Sir C. Don't be too confident of that; the women now begin to laugh with him, not at him: for he really sometimes rallies his own humour with so much ease and pleasantry, that a great many women begin to think he has no follies at all, and those he has, have been as much owing to his youth, and a great estate, as want of natural wit: 'tis true, he's often a bubble to his pleasures, but he has always been wisely vain enough to keep himself from being too much the ladies' humble servant in love.

More. There, indeed, I almost envy him.

Sir C. The easiness of his opinion upon the sex, will go near to pique you. We must have him.

More. As you please. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Lady Betty Modish's Lodgings.*

LADY BETTY MODISH *and* LADY EASY, *meeting.*

Lady B. Oh! my dear, I am overjoyed to see you! I am strangely happy to-day; I have just received my new scarf from London, and you are most critically come to give me your opinion of it.

Lady E. Oh! your servant, madam; I am a very indifferent judge, you know. What, is it with sleeves?

Lady B. Oh! 'tis impossible to tell you what it is! 'tis all extravagance, both in mode and fancy, my dear; I believe there are six thousand yards of edging in it. Then such an enchanting slope from the elbow; something so new, so lively, so noble, and charming—But you shall see it, my dear.

Lady E. Indeed I won't, my dear; I am resolved to mortify you for being so wrongly fond of a trifle.

Lady B. Nay, now, my dear, you are ill-natured.

Lady E. Why, truly, I'm half angry to see a woman of your sense so warmly concerned in the care of her outside; for when we have taken our best pains about it, 'tis the beauty of the mind alone that gives us lasting value.

Lady B. Ah! my dear, my dear! you have been a married woman to a fine purpose, indeed, that know so little of the taste of mankind: take my word, a new fashion, upon a fine woman, is often a greater proof of her value, than you are aware of.

Lady E. That I can't comprehend; for you see among the men, nothing's more ridiculous than a new fashion. Those of the first sense are always the last to come into it.

Lady B. That is, because the only merit of a man is his sense; but, doubtless, the greatest value of a woman is her beauty. An homely woman, at the head of a fashion, would not be allowed in it by the men, and, consequently, not followed by the women: so, that to be successful in one's fancy, is an evident sign of one's being admired; and I always take admiration for the best proof of beauty, and beauty certainly is the source of power, as power in all creatures is the height of happiness.

Lady E. At this rate, you would rather be thought beautiful than good.

Lady B. As I had rather command than obey. The wisest homely woman can't make a man of sense of a fool; but the veriest fool of a beauty shall make a fool of a statesman; so that, in short, I can't see a woman of spirit has any business in this world but to dress, and make the men like her.

Lady E. Do you suppose this is a principle the men of sense will admire you for?

Lady B. I do suppose, that when I suffer any man to like my person, he sha'n't dare to find fault with my principle. [humbled.

Lady E. But men of sense are not so easily

Lady B. The easiest of any; one has ten thousand times the trouble with a coxcomb.

Lady E. Nay, that may be; for I have seen you throw more good humour in hopes of a *tendresse* from my Lord Foppington, who loves all women alike, than would have made my Lord Morelove perfectly happy, who loves only you.

Lady B. The men of sense, my dear, make the best fools in the world; their sincerity and good breeding throws them so entirely into one's power, and gives one such an agreeable thirst of using them ill, that 'tis impossible not to quench it.

Lady E. But, methinks, my Lord Morelove's manner to you might move any woman to a kinder sense of his merit.

Lady B. Ay; but would it not be hard, my dear, for a poor, weak woman to have a man of his quality and reputation in her power, and not let the world see him there? Would any creature sit newly-dressed all day in her closet? Could you bear to have a sweet-fancied suit, and never shew it at the play, or the drawing-room?

Lady E. But one would not ride in it, methinks, or harass it out, when there's no occasion.

Lady B. Pooh! my Lord Morelove's a mere Indian damask, one can't wear him out; on my conscience, I must give him to my woman at last; I begin to be known by him! Had I not best leave him off, my dear? for (poor soul!) I believe I have a little fretted him of late.

Lady E. Now 'tis to me amazing, how a man of his spirit can bear to be used like a dog, for four or five years together. But nothing's a wonder in love: but, pray, when you found you could not like him at first, why did you ever encourage him?

Lady B. Why, what would you have one do? for my part, I could no more choose a man by my eye, than a shoe; one must draw them on a little to see if they are right to one's feet.

Lady E. But I'd no more fool on with a man I could not like, than I'd wear a shoe that pinched me.

Lady B. Ay; but then a poor wretch tells one, he'll widen them, or do anything; and is so civil and silly, that one does not know how to turn such a trifle, as a pair of shoes or a heart, upon a fellow's hands again.

Lady E. Well, I confess you are very happily distinguished amongst most women of fortune, to have a man of my Lord Morelove's sense and quality so long and honourably in love with you: for, now-a-days, one hardly ever hears of such a thing as a man of quality in love with the woman he would marry. To be in love now, is only having a design upon a woman; a modish way of declaring war against her virtue, which they generally attack first, by toasting up her vanity.

Lady B. Ay, but the world knows that is not the case between my lord and I.

Lady E. Therefore, I think you happy.

Lady B. Now I don't see it; I'll swear I'm better pleased to know there are a great many foolish fellows of quality, that take occasion to toast me frequently.

Lady E. I vow I should not thank any gentleman for toasting me; and I have often wondered how a woman of your spirit could bear to have so many other freedoms I have seen some men take with you.

Lady B. As how, my dear? come, pr'ythee, be free with me; for you must know, I love dearly to hear my faults. Who is't you have observed to be too free with me?

Lady E. Why, there's my Lord Foppington; could any woman but you bear to see him with a respectful fleer stare full in your face, draw up his breath, and cry, "'Gad! you're handsome."

Lady B. My dear, fine fruit will have flies about it; but, poor things! they do it no harm: for if you observe, people are generally most apt to choose that which the flies have been busy with. Ha, ha!

Lady E. Thou art a strange, giddy creature.

Lady B. That may be from so much circulation of thought, my dear.

Lady E. But my Lord Foppington's married, and one would not fool with him for his lady's sake; it may make her uneasy, and—

Lady B. Poor creature! her pride, indeed, makes her carry it off without taking any notice of me; though I know she hates me in her heart. I can't endure malicious people; so I used to dine with her once a week, purely to give her the disorder—if you had but seen when my lord and I fooled a little, the creature looked so ugly.

Lady E. I should not think my reputation safe; my Lord Foppington's a man that talks often of his amours, but seldom speaks of favours that are refused him.

Lady B. Psha! Will anything a man says make a woman the less agreeable? Will his talking spoil one's complexion, or put one's hair out of order? And for reputation, lookye, my dear; take it for a rule, that as amongst the lower rank of people, no woman wants beauty that has fortune; so, amongst people of fortune, no woman wants virtue that has beauty: but an estate and beauty joined, are of an unlimited, nay, a power pontifical; makes one not only absolute, but infallible. A fine woman's never in the wrong; or if she is, 'tis not the strength of a poor creature's reason that can unfetter him. Oh! how I love to hear a wretch curse himself for loving on, or now and then coming out with a—

"Yet for the plague of human race,
This devil has an angel's face."

Lady E. At this rate, I don't see you allow reputation to be at all essential to a fine woman.

Lady B. Just as much as honour to a great man. Power is always above scandal. Indeed, my dear, that jewel reputation is a very fanciful business; one shall not see a homely creature in town, but wears it in her mouth as monstrously as Indians do bobs at their lips.

Lady E. Have a care, my dear, of trusting too far to power alone: for nothing is more ridiculous than the fall of pride; and a woman's pride at best may be suspected to be more a distrust, than a real contempt of mankind: for when we have said all we can, a deserving husband is certainly our best happiness; and I don't question but my Lord Morelove's merit, in a little time, will make you think so, too; for whatever airs you give yourself to the world, I'm sure your heart don't want good nature.

Lady B. You are mistaken; I am very ill-natured, though your good humour won't let you see it.

Lady E. Then to give me a proof of it, let me see you refuse to go immediately and dine with me, after I have promised Sir Charles to bring you.

Lady B. Pray, don't ask me.

Lady E. Why?

Lady B. Because, to let you see I hate good nature, I'll go without asking, that you may not have the malice to say I did you a favour. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Sir Charles Easy's Lodgings.*

LORD MORELOVE *and* SIR CHARLES EASY *at piquet.*

Sir C. Come, my lord, one single game for the *tout*, and so have done.

More. No, hang 'em, I have enough of 'em; ill cards are the dullest company in the world. How much is it?

Sir C. Three parties.

More. Fifteen pounds—very well. (*While Lord M. counts out his money, a Servant gives Sir C. a letter, which he reads to himself.*)

Sir C. (*To the Servant.*) Give my service; say I have company dines with me; if I have time, I'll call there in the afternoon. Ha, ha, ha; [*Exit Serv.*

More. What's the matter?—there—(*Paying the money.*)

Sir C. The old affair; my Lady Graveairs.

More. Oh! pr'ythee, how does that go on?

Sir C. As agreeably as a chancery suit: for now it's come to the intolerable plague of my not being able to get rid of't; as you may see. (*Gives the letter.*)

More. (*Reads.*) "*Your behaviour, since I have been at Windsor, has convinced me of your villany, without my being surprised, or angry at it: I desire you will let me see you at my lodgings immediately, where I shall have a better opportunity to convince you, that I never can, nor positively will be, as I have been,—Your's, &c.*" A very whimsical letter! 'Faith! I think she has had hard luck with you; if a man were obliged to have a mistress, her person and condition seem to be cut out for the ease of a lover; for she's a young, handsome, wild, well-jointured widow. But what's your quarrel?

Sir C. Nothing; she sees the coolness happens to be first on my side, and her business with me now, I suppose, is to convince me how heartily she's vexed that she was not beforehand with me.

More. Her pride, and your indifference, must occasion a pleasant scene, sure. What do you intend to do?

Sir C. Treat her with a cool familiar air, till I pique her to forbid me her sight, and then take her at her word.

More. Very gallant and provoking.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Foppington. [*Exit.*

Sir C. Oh! now, my lord, if you have a mind to be let into the mystery of making love without pain, here's one that's master of the art, and shall declaim to you.—[*Enter* LORD FOPPINGTON.]—My dear Lord Foppington!

Fop. My dear agreeable! My lord, I am your lordship's most obedient humble servant.

More. My lord, I kiss your hand. I hope we shall have you here some time; you seem to have laid in a stock of health to be in at the diversions of the place. You look extremely well.

Fop. To see one's friends look so, my lord, may easily give a *vermeille* to one's complexion.

Sir C. Lovers in hope, my lord, always have a visible *brillant* in their eyes and air.

Fop. What dost thou mean, Charles?

Sir C. Come, come, confess what really brought you to Windsor, now you have no business here?

Fop. Why, two hours, and six of the best nags in Christendom, or the devil drive me.

More. You make haste, my lord.

Fop. My lord, I always fly when I pursue: but they are well kept, indeed. I love to have creatures go as I bid 'em. You have seen 'em Charles; but so has all the world. Foppington's long-tails are known in every road in England.

Sir C. Well, my lord, but how came they to bring you this road? You don't use to take these irregular jaunts without some design in your head of having more than nothing to do.

Fop. Psha! pr'ythee, Charles, thou knowest I am a fellow *sans consequence*, be where I will.

Sir C. Nay, nay; this is too much among friends, my lord; come, come, we must have it; your real business here?

Fop. Why then, *entre nous*, there is a certain *fille de joie* about the court here, that loves winning at cards better than all the fine things I have been able to say to her; so I have brought an odd thousand bill in my pocket that I design *tête-à-tête*, to play off with her at piquet, or so; and now the business is out. [lord.

Sir C. Ah! and a very good business, too, my

Fop. If it be well done, Charles— [lord.

Sir C. That's as you manage your cards, my

More. This must be a woman of consequence, by the value you set upon her favours. [woman.

Sir C. Oh! nothing's above the price of a fine

Fop. Nay, lookye, gentlemen; the price may not happen to be altogether so high, neither; for I fancy I know enough of the game, to make it but an even bet I get her for nothing.

More. How so, my lord?

Fop. Because, if she happen to lose a good sum to me, I shall buy her with her own money.

More. That's new, I confess.

Fop. You know, Charles, 'tis not impossible but I may be five hundred pounds deep with her; then bills may fall short, and the devil's in't if I want assurance to ask her to pay me some way or other.

Sir C. And a man must be a churl, indeed, that won't take a lady's personal security. Ha, ha!

Fop. He, he, he! thou art a devil, Charles.

More. Death! how happy is this coxcomb. (*Aside.*)

Fop. But to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I had another pressing temptation that brought me hither, which was—my wife.

More. That's kind, indeed; my lady has been here this month; she'll be glad to see you.

Fop. That I don't know; for I design this afternoon to send her to London. [that would be cruel.

More. What the same day you come, my lord?

Fop. Ay, but it will be mighty convenient, for she is positively of no manner of use in my amours.

More. That's your fault; the town thinks her a very deserving woman.

Fop. If she were a woman of the town, perhaps I should think so, too; but she happens to be my wife, and when a wife is once given to deserve more than her husband's inclinations can pay, in my mind she has no merit at all. [prudent conduct.

More. She's extremely well bred, and of very

Fop. Um—ay, the woman's proud enough.

More. Add to this, all the world allows her handsome.

Fop. The world's extremely civil, my lord; and I should take it as a favour done to me, if they could find an expedient to unmarry the poor woman from the only man in the world that can't think her handsome.

More. I believe there are a great many in the world that are sorry 'tis not in their power to unmarry her.

Fop. I am a great many in the world's very humble servant; and whenever they find 'tis in their power, their high and mighty wisdoms may command me at a quarter of an hour's warning.

More. Pray, my lord, what did you marry for?

Fop. To pay my debts at play, and disinherit my younger brother.

More. But there are some things due to a wife.

Fop. And there are some debts I don't care to pay; to both which I plead husband and my lord.

More. If I should do so, I should expect to have my own coach stopped in the street, and to meet my wife with the windows up in a hackney.

Fop. Then would I put in bail, and order a separate maintenance. [married for nothing.

More. So, pay double the sum of the debt, and be

Fop. Now I think deferring a dun, and getting rid of one's wife, are two of the most agreeable sweets in the liberties of an English subject.

More. If I were married, I would as soon part from my estate as my wife.

Fop. Now I would not; sun-burn me if I would!

More. Death! But since you are thus indifferent, my lord, why would you needs marry a woman of so much merit? Could not you have laid out your spleen upon some ill-natured shrew, that wanted the plague of an ill husband, and have let her alone to some plain, honest man of quality that would have deserved her.

Fop. Why 'faith, my lord, that might have been considered; but I really grew so passionately fond of her fortune, that, curse catch me! I was quite blind to the rest of her good qualities.

Sir C. Ay, ay, my lord; virtue in a wife is good for nothing but to make her proud, and put the world in mind of her husband's faults.

Fop. Right, Charles; the women of virtue are now grown perfect idiots in love.

More. But I thought, my lord, your chief business now at Windsor had been your design upon a woman of quality.

Fop. That's true, my lord; though I don't think your fine lady the best dish myself, yet a man of quality can't be without such things at his table.

More. Oh! then you only desire the reputation of an affair with her.

Fop. I think the reputation is the most inviting part of an amour with most women of quality.

More. Why so, my lord?

Fop. Why who the devil would run through all the degrees of form and ceremony, that lead one up to the last favour, if it were not for the reputation of understanding the nearest way to get over the difficulty.

More. But, my lord, does not the reputation of your being so general an undertaker, frighten the women from engaging with you? For they say, no man can love but one at a time.

Fop. That's just one more than ever I came up to: for, stap my breath! if ever I loved one in my life.

More. How do you get 'em, then?

Fop. Why sometimes as they get other people; I dress, and let them get me.

More. The shame or scandal of a repulse, always made me afraid of attempting a woman of condition.

Sir C. Ha, ha! Egad! my lord, you deserve to be ill used; your modesty's enough to spoil any woman in the world; but my lord and I understand the sex a little better; we see, plainly, that women are only cold, as some men are brave, from the modesty or fear of those that attack them.

Fop. Right, Charles; a man should no more give up his heart to a woman, than his sword to a bully; they are both as insolent as the devil after it.

Sir C. How do you like that, my lord? (*Aside to Lord M.*)

More. 'Faith, I envy him. (*Aside to Sir C.*) But, my lord, suppose your inclination should stumble upon a woman truly virtuous, would not a severe repulse from such an one put you strangely out of countenance?

Fop. Not at all, my lord; for if a man don't mind a box o'the ear in a fair struggle with a fresh country-girl, why should he be concerned at an impertinent frown for an attack upon a woman of quality?

More. Then you've no notion of a lady's cruelty?

Fop. Ha, ha! let me blood, if I think there's a greater jest in nature. I am ready to crack my sides with laughing to see a senseless flirt (because the creature happens to have a little pride that she calls virtue about her) give herself such insolent airs of resentment and disdain to an honest fellow. Ha, ha! It puts me in mind of an affair of mine, so impertinent— [let's hear it.

More. Oh! that's impossible, my lord. Pray,

Fop. Why, I happened once to be very well in a man of quality's family, and his wife liked me.

More. How do you know she liked you?

Fop. Why, from the very moment I told her I liked her, she never durst trust herself at the end of a room with me.

More. That might be her not liking you.

Fop. My lord, women of quality don't use to speak the thing plain: but to satisfy you, I did not want encouragement; I never came there in my life, but she immediately smiled, and borrowed my snuff-box.

More. She liked your snuff, at least. Well, but how did she use you?

Fop. By all that's infamous, she jilted me!

More. How jilt you? Pray, let's hear.

Fop. When I was pretty well convinced she had a mind to me, I one day made her a hint of an appointment; upon which, with an insolent frown, (which made her look as ugly as the devil,) she told me, that if ever I came there again, her lord should know that she had forbidden me the house before. Did you ever hear of such a slut?

Sir C. Intolerable!

More. But how did her answer agree with you?

Fop. Oh! passionately well; for I stared full in her face, and bursted out a-laughing; at which she turned upon her heel, and gave a crack with her fan like a coach-whip, and bridled out of the room with the air and complexion of an incensed turkey-cock.

More. What did you, then?

Fop. I looked after her, gaped, threw up the sash, and fell a-singing out of the window; so that, you see, my lord, while a man is not in love, there's no great affliction in missing one's way to a woman.

Sir C. Ay, ay; you talk this very well, my lord; but now let's see how you dare behave yourself upon action. Dinner's served, and the ladies stay for us. There's one within has been too hard for as brisk a man as yourself.

More. I guess who you mean. Have a care, my lord; she'll prove your courage for you.

Fop. Will she? then she's an undone creature: for, let me tell you, gentlemen, courage is the whole mystery of making love, and of more use than conduct is in war; for the bravest fellow in Europe may beat his brains out against the stubborn walls of a town; but

"Women, born to be controll'd,
Stoop to the forward and the bold." [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Sir Charles Easy's Lodgings.*

Enter LORD MORELOVE *and* SIR CHARLES EASY.

More. Did not I bear up bravely?

Sir C. Admirably! With the best bred insolence in nature, you insulted like a woman of quality, when her country-bred husband's jealous of her in the wrong place.

More. Ha, ha! Did you observe, when I first came into the room, how carelessly she brushed her eyes over me; and when the company saluted me, stood all the while with her face to the window?

Sir C. What astonished airs she gave herself, when you asked her "what made her so grave upon her old friends?"

More. And whenever I offered anything in talk, what affected care she took to direct her observations of it to a third person?

Sir C. If you keep your temper she's undone.

More. Provided she stick to her pride, I believe I may.

Sir C. Ah! never fear her; I warrant in the humour she is in, she would as soon part with her sense of feeling.

More. Well, what's to be done next?

Sir C. Only observe her motions; for, by her behaviour at dinner, I am sure she designs to gall you with my Lord Foppington; if so, you must even stand her fire, and then play Lady Graveairs upon her, whom I will immediately pique and prepare for your purpose.

More. I understand you: the most proper woman in the world, too; for she'll certainly encourage the least offer from me, in hopes of revenging her slights upon you.

Sir C. Right; and the very encouragement she gives you, at the same time, will give me a pretence to widen the breach of my quarrel with her.

More. Besides, Charles, I own I am fond of any attempt that will forward a misunderstanding there, for your lady's sake. A woman so truly good in her nature, ought to have something more from a man, than bare occasion to prove her goodness.

Sir C. Why, then, upon honour, my lord, to give you proof that I am positively the best husband in the world, my wife never yet found me out.

More. That may be her being the best wife in the world; perhaps, she won't find you out.

Sir C. Nay, if she won't tell a man of his faults, when she sees them, how the dence should he mend them? But, however, you see I am going to leave them off as fast as I can.

More. Being tired of a woman is, indeed, a pretty tolerable assurance of a man's not designing to fool on with her. Here she comes; and, if I don't mistake, brimfull of reproaches. You can't take her in a better time. I'll leave you.

Enter LADY GRAVEAIRS.

Your ladyship's most humble servant. Is the company broken up, pray?

Lady G. No, my lord: they are just talking of basset; my Lord Foppington has a mind to tally, if your lordship would encourage the table.

More. Oh! madam, with all my heart. But Sir Charles, I know, is hard to be got to it: I'll leave your ladyship to prevail with him. [*Exit.*

Lady G. Sir Charles, I sent you a note this morning.

Sir C. Yes, madam; but there were some passages I did not expect from your ladyship: you seem to tax me with things that—

Lady G. Lookye, sir; 'tis not at all material whether I taxed you with anything or no. I don't in the least desire to hear you clear yourself; upon my word, you may be very easy as to that matter: for my part, I am very well satisfied that things are as they are. All I have to say to you is, that you need not give yourself the trouble to call at my lodgings this afternoon, if you should have time, as you were pleased to send me word: and so, your servant, sir. That's all. (*Going.*)

Sir C. Hold, madam!

Lady G. Lookye, Sir Charles; 'tis not your calling me back that will signify anything, I can assure you.

Sir C. Why this extraordinary haste, madam?

Lady G. In short, I have taken a great many things from you of late, that you know I have often told you I would positively bear no longer. But I see things are in vain; and the more people strive to oblige people, the less they are thanked for it. And since there must be an end of one's ridiculous conduct one time or other, I don't see any time so proper as the present; therefore, sir, I desire you'd think of things accordingly. Your servant. (*Going, Sir C. lays hold of her.*)

Sir C. Nay, madam, let's start fair, however; you ought at least to stay till I'm as ready as your ladyship; and then, if we must part,—

"*Adieu, ye silent grots and shady groves;*
Ye soft amusements of our growing loves;
Adieu, ye whisper'd sighs that fann'd the fire,
And all the thrilling joys of young desire."

Lady G. Oh! mighty well, sir. I am very glad we have, at last, come to a right understanding; the only way I have long wished for; not but I'd have you to know, I see your design through all your painted ease of resignation: I know you'd give your soul to make me uneasy now.

Sir C. Oh! fie, madam! upon my word, I would not make you uneasy, if it were in my power.

Lady G. Oh! dear sir, you need not take such care; upon my word, you'll find I can part with you without the least disorder: I'll try, at least; and so, once more, and for ever, sir, your servant: not but you must give me leave to tell you, as my last thought of you, too, that I do think—you are a villain. [*Exit, hastily.*

Sir C. Oh! your very humble servant, madam.—Ah! *Re-enter* Lady Graveairs.

Lady G. Lookye, Sir Charles! don't presume upon the uneasiness of my temper; for to convince you that I am positively in earnest in this matter, I desire you will let me have what letters you have had of mine since you came to Windsor; and I expect you'll return the rest, as I will your's, as soon as we come to London.

Sir C. Upon my faith, madam, I never keep any; I always put snuff in them, and so they wear out.

Lady G. Sir Charles, I must have them; for, positively, I won't stir without them.

Sir C. Ha! then I must be civil, I see. (*Aside.*) Perhaps, madam, I have no mind to part with them or you.

Lady G. Lookye, sir; all those sort of things are in vain, now there's an end of everything between us. If you say you won't give them, I must e'en get them as well as I can.

Sir C. Ha! that won't do, then, I find. (*Aside.*)

Lady G. Who's there—Mrs. Edging?—Your keeping a letter, sir, won't keep me, I'll assure you.

Enter Mrs. Edging.

Mrs. E. Did your ladyship call me, madam?

Lady G. Ay, child; pray do me the favour to fetch my scarf out of the dining-room.

Mrs. E. Yes, madam.

Sir C. Oh! then there's hope again. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. E. Ha! she looks as if my master had quarrelled with her. I hope she's going away in a huff; she sha'n't stay for her scarf, I warrant her. This is pure. [*Aside, and exit.*

Lady G. Pray, Sir Charles, before I go, give me leave now, after all, to ask you why you have used me thus?

Sir C. What is it you call usage, madam?

Lady G. Why, then, since you will have it, how comes it you have been so grossly careless and neglectful of me, of late? Only tell me seriously wherein I have deserved this.

Sir C. Why, then, seriously, madam—

Re-enter Mrs. Edging, *with the scarf.*

Mrs. E. Here's your ladyship's scarf, madam.

Lady G. Thankye, Mrs. Edging.—Oh, la! pray, will you let somebody get me a chair to the door?

Mrs. E. Humph! she might have told me that before, if she had been in such haste to go.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Sir C. Then, seriously, I am, of late, grown so very lazy in my pleasures, that I had rather lose a woman than go through the plague and trouble of having or keeping her: and, to be free, I have found so much even in my acquaintance with you, (whom I confess to be a mistress in the art of pleasing,) that I am, from henceforth, resolved to follow no pleasure that rises above the degree of amusement; and that woman that expects I should make her my business, why, like my business, is then in a fair way to be forgotten. When once she comes to reproach me with vows, and usage, and stuff, I would as soon hear her talk of bills, bonds, and ejectments; her passion becomes as troublesome as a law-suit, and I would as soon converse with my solicitor: in short, I shall never care sixpence for any woman that won't be obedient.

Lady G. I'll swear, sir, you have a very free way of treating people; I am glad I am so well acquainted with your principles, however.—And you would have me obedient?

Sir C. Why not? my wife's so; and I think she has as much pretence to be proud as your ladyship.

Lady G. Lard! is there no chair to be had?

Enter Mrs. Edging.

Mrs. E. Here's a chair, madam.

Lady G. 'Tis very well, Mrs. Edging. Pray, will you let somebody get me a glass of fair water?

Mrs. E. Humph! her huff's almost over, I suppose: I see he's a villain still. [*Aside, and exit.*

Lady G. Well, that was the prettiest fancy about obedience, surely, that ever was! Certainly, a woman of condition must be infinitely happy under the dominion of so generous a lover! But how came you to forget kicking and whipping all this while? Methinks you should not have left so fashionable an article out of your scheme of government.

Sir C. Humph!—No, there's too much trouble in that; though I have known them of admirable use in the reformation of some humorsome ladies.

Lady G. But one thing more, and I have done. Pray, what degree of spirit must the lady have, that is to make herself happy under so much freedom, order, and tranquillity.

Sir C. Oh! she must at least have as much spirit as your ladyship, or she'd give me no pleasure in breaking it.

Lady G. No; that would be troublesome. You had better take one that's broken to your hand.

Sir C. Lookye, madam; I have loved you a great while; now you would have me love you better and longer, which is not in my power to do; and I don't think there's any plague upon earth like a dun that comes for more money than one's ever likely to be able to pay.

Lady G. A dun! do you take me for a dun, sir? do I come a dunning to you? [pany.

Sir C. Hist! don't expose yourself. Here's com-

Lady G. I care not. A dun! you shall see, sir, I can revenge an affront, though I despise the wretch that offers it. A dun! oh! I could die with laughing at the fancy. [*Exit.*

Sir C. So! she's in admirable order. Here comes my lord, and I'm afraid in the very nick of his occasion for her.

Enter Lord Morelove.

More. Oh! Charles, undone again! all's lost and

Sir C. What's the matter now? [ruined.

More. I have been playing the fool yonder, even to contempt. My senseless jealousy has confessed a weakness I never shall forgive myself: she has insulted on it to that degree, too—I can't bear the thought. Oh! Charles, this devil still is mistress of my heart; and I could dash my brains to think how grossly, too, I have let her know it.

Sir C. Ah! how it would tickle her if she saw you in this condition. Ha, ha, ha!

More. Pr'ythee, don't torture me: think of some present ease, or I shall burst.

Sir C. Well, well, let's hear. Pray, what has she done to you? Ha, ha!

More. Why, ever since I left you, she treated me with so much coolness and ill-nature, and that thing of a lord with so much laughing ease, such an acquainted, such a spiteful familiarity, that, at the last, she saw and triumphed in my uneasiness.

Sir C. Well, and so you left the room in a pet?

More. Oh! worse, worse still; for, at last, with half shame and anger in my looks, I thrust my-

self between my lord and her, pressed her by the hand, and, in a whisper, tremblingly begged her in pity of herself and me, to shew her good humour only where she knew it was truly valued; at which she broke from me with a cold smile, sat herself down by the peer, whispered him, and burst into a loud laughter in my face.

Sir C. Ha, ha! then would I have given fifty pounds to have seen your face. Why what, in the name of common sense, had you to do with humility? Will you never have enough of't? Death! 'twas setting a lighted match to gunpowder to blow yourself up.

More. I see my folly, now, Charles. But what shall I do with the remains of life that she's left me.

Sir C. Oh! throw it at her feet, by all means; put on your tragedy face; catch fast hold of her petticoat; whip out your handkerchief; and, in point blank verse, desire her, one way or other, to make an end of the business.

More. What a fool dost thou make me?

Sir C. I only shew you as you came out of her hands, my lord.

More. How contemptibly have I behav'd myself!

Sir C. That's according as you bear her behaviour.

More. Bear it! no, I thank thee, Charles; thou hast awakened me, now; and if I bear it—What have you done with my Lady Gravesairs?

Sir C. Your business, I believe. She's ready for you; she's just gone down stairs. Make haste after her; for I expect her back again, presently, with a knife or pistol.

More. I'll go this minute.

Sir C. No; stay a little; here comes my lord: we'll see what we can get out of him first.

More. Methinks I now could laugh at her.

Enter Lord Foppington.

Fop. Nay, pr'ythee, Sir Charles, let's have a little of thee: we have been so *chagrin* without thee, that, stap my breath! the ladies have gone, half asleep, to church, for want of thy company.

Sir C. That's hard, indeed, while your lordship was among them. Is Lady Betty gone, too?

Fop. She was just upon the wing; but I caught her by the snuff-box, and she pretends to stay to see if I'll give it her again or no.

More. Death! 'tis that I gave her, and the only present she would ever receive from me. Ask him how he came by it? (*Apart to Sir C.*)

Sir C. Pr'ythee, don't be uneasy. (*Apart to Lord Morelove.*)—Did she give it to you, my lord?

Fop. 'Faith, Charles, I can't say she did, or she did not; but we were playing the fool, and I took it *à-la*—Psha! I can't tell you in French neither; but Horace touches it to a nicety—'twas "*Pignus direptum male pertinacia.*"

More. So! but must I bear it! (*Aside.*)—If your lordship has a mind to the box, I'll stand by you in the keeping of it.

Fop. My lord, I am passionately obliged to you; but I am afraid I cannot answer your hazarding so much of the lady's favour.

More. Not at all, my lord: 'tis possible I may not have the same regard to her frown that your lordship has.

Fop. That's a bite, I am sure. He'd give a joint of his little finger to be as well with her as I am. (*Aside.*)—But here she comes. Charles, stand by me. Must not a man be a vain coxcomb, now, to think this creature followed one?

Sir C. Nothing so plain, my lord.

Enter Lady Betty Modish.

Lady B. Psha! my Lord Foppington, pr'ythee, don't play the fool, now; but give me my snuff-box. Sir Charles, help me to take it from him.

Sir C. You know I hate trouble, madam.

Lady B. Pooh! you'll make me stay till prayers are half over, now. [give it to you.

Fop. If you'll promise me not to go church, I'll

Lady B. I'll promise nothing at all; for, positively, I will have it. (*Struggling with Lord F.*)

Fop. Then, comparatively, I won't part with it. Ha, ha!

Lady B. Oh! you devil! you have killed my arm. Oh!—Well, if you'll let me have it, I'll give you a better.

More. Oh! Charles, that has a view of distant kindness in it. (*Apart to Sir C.*)

Fop. Nay, now I keep it superlatively. I find there's a secret value in it.

Lady B. Oh, dismal! Upon my word, I am only ashamed to give it you. Do you think I would offer such an odious fancied thing to anybody I had the least value for?

Sir C. Now it comes a little nearer, methinks it does not seem to be any kindness at all. (*Apart to Lord More.*)

Fop. Why really, madam, upon second view, it has not extremely the mode of a lady's utensil. Are you sure it never held anything but snuff?

Lady B. Oh! you monster!

Fop. Nay, I only ask; because it seems to me to have very much the air and fancy of Monsieur Smoakandsot's tobacco-box.

More. (*Apart to Sir C.*) I can bear no more.

Sir C. (*Apart to Lord M.*) Why don't, then. I'll step into the company, and return to your relief immediately. [*Exit.*

More. Come, madam, will your ladyship give me leave to end the difference? Since the slightness of the thing may let you bestow it without any mark of favour, shall I beg it of your ladyship?

Lady B. Oh! my lord, nobody sooner. I beg you'll give it to my lord. (*Looking earnestly on Lord Foppington, who gives it to Lord Morelove.*)

More. Only to have the honour of restoring it to your lordship: and if there be any other trifle of mine your lordship has a fancy to, (though it were a mistress,) I don't know any person in the world that has so good a claim to my resignation.

Fop. Oh! my lord, this generosity will distract me.

More. My lord, I do but common justice. But from your conversation, I had never known the true value of the sex: you positively understand them the best of any man breathing; therefore, I think every one of common prudence ought to resign to you.

Fop. Then, positively, your lordship is the most obliging person in the world; for I'm sure your judgment can never like any woman that is not the finest creature in the universe. (*Bows to Lady B.*)

More. Oh! your lordship does me too much honour. I have the worst judgment in the world: no man has been more deceived it.

Fop. Then your lordship, I presume, has been apt to choose in a mask, or by candle-light.

More. In a mask, indeed, my lord; and of all masks the most dangerous.

Fop. Pray, what's that, my lord?

More. A bare face.

Fop. Your lordship will pardon me, if I don't so really comprehend how a woman's bare face can bide her face.

More. It often hides her heart, my lord; and, therefore, I think it sometimes a more dangerous mark than a piece of velvet: that's rather a mark than a disguise of an ill woman; but the mischiefs skulking behind a beauteous form, give no warning, as they are always sure, fatal, and innumerable.

Lady B. Oh! barbarous aspersion! My Lord Foppington, have you nothing to say for the poor women?

Fop. I must confess, madam, nothing of this nature ever happened in my course of amours: I always judge the beauteous form of a woman to be the most agreeable part of her composition; and when once a lady does me the honour to toss that

into my arms, I think myself obliged in good nature not to quarrel about the rest of her equipage.

Lady B. Why ay, my lord, there's some good humour in that, now.

More. He's happy in a plain English stomach, madam; I could recommend a dish that's perfectly to your lordship's gust, where beauty's the only sauce to it.

Fop. My lord, when my wine's right, I never care it should be zested. [that opinion.

More. I know some ladies would thank you for

Lady B. My Lord Morelove's really grown such a churl to the women, I don't only think he is not, but can't conceive how he ever could be in love.

More. Upon my word, madam, I once thought I was. (*Smiling.*)

Lady B. Fie, fie! How could you think so? I fancy, now, you had only a mind to domineer over some poor creature, and so you thought you were in love. Ha, ha!

More. The lady I loved, madam, grew so unfortunate in her conduct, that she, at last, brought me to treat with her with the same indifference and civility as I now pay your ladyship.

Lady B. And ten to one, just at that time, she never thought you such tolerable company.

More. That I can't say, madam; for, at that time, she grew so affected, there was no judging of her thoughts at all. (*Mimicking her.*)

Lady B. What, and so you left the poor lady? Oh! you inconstant creature!

More. No, madam; to have loved her on, had been inconstancy; for she was never two hours together the same woman. (*Talks apart with Lady B.*)

Fop. (*Aside.*) Ha, ha, ha! I see he has a mind to abuse her; so I'll e'en give him an opportunity of doing his business at once with her for ever.—My lord, I perceive your lordship's going to be good company to the lady; and, for her sake, I don't think it good manners in me to disturb you.

Enter Sir Charles Easy.

Sir C. My Lord Foppington.

Fop. Oh! Charles, I was just wanting you. Harkye! I have three thousand secrets for you. I have made such discoveries! To tell you in one word—Morelove's as jealous as the devil. He, he!

Sir C. Is't possible! Has she given him any occasion?

Fop. Only rallied him to death upon my account. She told me within, just now, she'd use him like a dog; and begged me to draw off for an opportunity.

Sir C. Oh! keep in while the scent lies, and she's your own, my lord.

Fop. I can't tell that, Charles; but I'm sure she's fairly unharboured; and when once I throw off my inclinations, I usually follow them till the game has enough of it: and, between you and I, she's pretty well blown, too; she can't stand long, I believe; for, curse catch me! if I have not ridden down half a thousand pounds after her already.

Sir C. What do you mean?

Fop. I have lost five hundred to her at piquet since dinner.

Sir C. You are a fortunate man, 'faith: you are resolved not to be thrown out, I see.

Fop. Hang it! what should a man come out for, if he does not keep up to the sport?

Sir C. Well pushed, my lord.

Fop. Tally-ho! Have at her. [hanches!

Sir C. Down, down, my lord! Ah! 'ware,

Fop. Ah, Charles! (*Embracing him.*) Pr'ythee, let's observe a little. There's a foolish cur; now I have run her to a stand, he has a mind to be at her by himself; and you will see she won't stir out of her way for him. (*They stand aside.*)

More. Ha, ha! your ladyship's very grave of a sudden; you look as if your lover had insolently recovered his common senses.

Lady B. And your lordship is so very gay, and unlike yourself, one would swear you were just come from the pleasure of making your mistress afraid of you.

More. No, 'faith, quite the contrary: for, do you know, madam, I have just found out, that, upon your account, I have made myself one of the most ridiculous puppies upon the face of the earth: I have upon my faith! nay, and so extravagantly such—ha, ha, ha!—that it's at last become a jest even to myself; and I can't help laughing at it, for the soul of me. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. I want to cure him of that laugh, now. (*Aside.*) My lord, since you are so generous, I'll tell you another secret: do you know, too, that I still find (spite of all your great wisdom and my contemptible qualities, as you are pleased now and then to call them)—do you know, I say, that I see, under all this, you still love me with the same helpless passion? and can your vast foresight imagine I won't use you accordingly, for these extraordinary airs you are pleased to give yourself?

More. Oh! by all means, madam; 'tis fit you should; and I expect it, whenever it is in your power.—Confusion. (*Aside.*)

Lady B. My lord, you have talked to me this half-hour, without confessing pain. (*Affects to gape.*) Only remember it.

More. Hell and tortures!

Lady B. What did you say, my lord?

More. Fire and furies!

Lady B. Ha, ha! he's disordered. Now I am easy. (*Aside.*)—My Lord Foppington, have you a mind to your revenge at piquet?

Fop. I have always a mind to an opportunity of entertaining your ladyship, madam. (*Lady B. coquets with Lord F.*)

More. Oh! Charles, the insolence of this woman might furnish out a thousand devils. (*Apart.*)

Sir C. And your temper is enough to furnish out a thousand such women. Come away; I have business for you upon the terrace.

More. Let me but speak one word to her.

Sir C. Not a syllable: the tongue's a weapon you'll always have the worst at; for I see you have no guard, and she carries a devilish edge.

Lady B. (*To Lord M.*) My lord, don't let anything I've said frighten you away; for if you have the least inclination to stay and rail, you know the old conditions; 'tis but your asking me pardon next day, and you may give your passion any liberty you may think fit.

More. Daggers and death! (*Apart.*)

Sir C. Are you mad? (*Apart.*)

More. Let me speak to her now, or I shall burst.

Sir C. Upon condition you'll speak no more of her to me, my lord, do as you please. [do.

More. Pr'ythee, pardon me; I know not what to

Sir C. Come along; I'll set you to work, I warrant you. Nay, nay, none of your parting ogles. Will you go?

More. Yes; and I hope for ever. [*Exit with Sir C.*

Fop. Ha, ha, ha! Did ever mortal monster set up for a lover with such unfortunate qualifications?

Lady B. Indeed, my Lord Morelove has something strangely singular in his manner.

Fop. I thought I should have burst to see the creature pretend to rally, and give himself the airs of one of us. But, run me through, madam, your ladyship pushed like a fencing-master; that last thrust was a *coup de grace*, I believe. I'm afraid his honour will hardly meet your ladyship in haste again.

Lady B. Not unless his second, Sir Charles, keeps him better in practice, perhaps. Well, the humour of this creature has done me signal service to-day, I must keep it up for fear of a second engagement. (*Aside.*)

Fop. Never was poor wit so foiled at his own weapon, sure.

Lady B. Wit! Had he ever any pretence to it?

Fop. Ha, ha! he has not much in love, I think,

though he wears the reputation of a very pretty, young fellow among some sort of people; but, strike me stupid! if ever I could discover common sense in all the progress of his amours. He expects a woman should like him for endeavouring to convince her that she has not one good quality belonging to the whole composition of her soul and body.

Lady B. That, I suppose, is only in a modest hope, that she'll mend her faults, to qualify herself for his vast merit. Ha, ha!

Fop. Poor Morelove! I see she can't endure him. (*Aside.*)

Lady B. Or if one really had those faults, he does not consider, that sincerity in love is as much out of fashion as sweet snuff; nobody takes it now.

Fop. Oh! no mortal, madam; unless it be here, and there a 'squire that's making his lawful court to the cherry-cheek charms of my lord bishop's great fat daughter in the country.

Lady B. Oh! what a surfeiting couple has he put together. (*Throwing her hand carelessly upon his.*)

Fop. Fond of me, by all that's tender! Poor fool! I'll give thee ease immediately. (*Aside.*)—But, madam, you were pleased, just now, to offer me my revenge at piquet; now, here's nobody within, and I think we can't make use of a better opportunity.

Lady B. Oh! no; not now, my lord: I have a favour I would fain beg of you first.

Fop. But time, madam, is very precious in this place; and I shall not easily forgive myself, if I don't take him by the forelock.

Lady B. But I have a great mind to have a little more sport with my Lord Morelove first, and would fain beg your assistance.

Fop. Oh! with all my heart: and, upon second thoughts, I don't know but piquing a rival in public may be as good sport, as being well with a mistress in private; for, after all, the pleasure of a fine woman is like that of her own virtue—not so much in the thing, as the reputation of having it. (*Aside.*) Well, madam, how can I serve you in this affair?

Lady B. Why, methought, as my Lord Morelove went out, he shewed a stern resentment in his look, that seemed to threaten me with rebellion, and downright defiance; now I have a great fancy, that you and I should follow him to the terrace, and laugh at his resolution before he has time to put it into practice. [it. Ha, ha, ha!

Fop. And so punish his fault before he commits

Lady B. Nay, we won't give him time if his courage should fail to repent it. [be at it.

Fop. Ha, ha, ha! let me blood, if I don't long to

Lady B. Oh! 'twill be such diversion to see him bite his lips, and broil within, only with seeing us ready to split our sides in laughing at nothing.

Fop. Ha, ha! I see the creature does really like me. (*Aside.*)—And, then, madam, to hear him hum a broken piece of a tune, in affectation of his not minding us: 'twill be so foolish when we know he loves us to death all the while. Ha, ha!

Lady B. And if, at last, his sage mouth should open, (in surly contradiction of our humour,) then will we, in pure opposition to his, immediately fall foul upon everything that is not gallant and fashionable: constancy shall be the mark of age and ugliness; virtue a jest; we'll rally discretion out of doors; lay gravity at our feet; and only love, free love! disorder, liberty, and pleasure, be our standing principles.

Fop. Madam, you transport me: for if ever I was obliged to nature for any one tolerable qualification, 'twas positively the talent of being exuberantly pleasant upon this subject. I am impatient; my fancy's upon the wing already; let's fly to hail him.

Lady B. No, no; stay till I am just got out; our going together won't be so proper.

Fop. As your ladyship pleases, madam: but when this affair is over, you won't forget that I have a certain revenge due.

Lady B. Ay, ay; after supper I am for you. Nay, you sha'n't stir a step, my lord.

Fop. Only to tell you, you have fixed me your's to the last existence of my soul's eternal entity.

Lady B. Oh! your servant. [*Exit.*

Fop. Ha, ha! Stark mad for me, by all that's handsome! Poor Morelove! That a fellow who has ever been abroad should think a woman of her spirit is to be taken as the confederates do towns, by a regular siege, when so many of the French successes might have shewn him the surest way is to whisper the governor. How can a coxcomb give himself the fatigue of bombarding a woman's understanding, when he may, with so much ease, make a friend of her constitution? I'll see if I can shew him a little French play with Lady Betty: let me see—ay, I'll make an end of it the old way: get her into piquet at her own lodgings; not mind one tittle of my play, give her every game before she's half up, that she may judge the strength of my inclination by my haste of losing up to her price; then, of a sudden, with a familiar leer, cry, "Rat piquet!" sweep counters, cards, and money all upon the floor, *et donc, l'affaire est faite.* [*Exit.*

ACT IV.—Scene I.—*The Castle-terrace.*

Enter Lady Betty Modish *and* Lady Easy.

Lady E. My dear, you really talk to me as if I were your lover, and not your friend; or else I am so dull, that, by all you've said, I can't make the least guess at your real thoughts. Can you be serious for a moment? [oblige you.

Lady B. Not easily: but I would do more to

Lady E. Then, pray, deal ingenuously, and tell me without reserve, are you sure you don't love my Lord Morelove?

Lady B. Then, seriously, I think not. But, because I won't be positive, you shall judge by the worst of my symptoms. First, I own I like his conversation; his person has neither fault nor beauty—well enough; I don't remember I ever secretly wished myself married to him, or that I ever seriously resolved against it.

Lady E. Well, so far you are tolerably safe. But come, as to his manner of addressing you, what effect has that had?

Lady B. I am not a little pleased to observe few men follow a woman with the same fatigue and spirit that he does me; am more pleased when he lets me use him ill; and if ever I have a favourable thought of him, 'tis when I see he can't bear that usage.

Lady E. Have a care; that last is a dangerous symptom. He pleases your pride, I find.

Lady B. Oh! perfectly: in that, I own, no mortal ever can come up to him.

Lady E. But now, my dear, now comes the main point—jealousy! Are you sure you have never been touched with it? Tell me that with a safe conscience, and then I pronounce you clear.

Lady B. Nay, then, I defy him; for, positively, I was never jealous in my life.

Lady E. How, madam! have you never been stirred enough to think a woman strangely forward for being a little familiar in talk with him? Or are you sure his gallantry to another never gave you the least disorder? Were you never, upon no accident, in an apprehension of losing him?

Lady B. Ah! Why, madam—Bless me!—why, sure, you don't call this jealousy, my dear?

Lady E. Nay, nay, that is not the business. Have you ever felt anything of this nature, madam?

Lady B. Lard! don't be so hasty, my dear: anything of this nature! Oh, lud! I swear, I don't like it. Dear creature, bring me off here; for I am half frightened out of my wits.

Lady E. Nay, if you can't rally upon it, your wound is not over deep, I'm afraid.

Lady B. Well, that's comfortably said, however.

Lady E. But come, to the point: how far have you been jealous?

Lady B. Why—Oh, bless me! He gave the mu-

sic, one night, to my Lady Languish here upon the terrace; and, (though she and I were very good friends,) I remember, I could not speak to her in a week for't. Oh!

Lady E. Nay, now you may laugh if you can; for, take my word, the marks are upon you. But come; what else?

Lady B. Oh! nothing else, upon my word, my dear.

Lady E. Well, one word more, and then I give sentence: suppose you were heartily convinced that he actually followed another woman?

Lady B. But, pray, my dear, what occasion is there to suppose any such thing at all?

Lady E. Guilty, upon my honour!

Lady B. Psha! I defy him to say that ever I owned any inclination for him. [to guess it.

Lady E. No; but you have given him terrible leave

Lady B. If ever you see us meet again, you'll have but little reason to think so, I can assure you.

Lady E. That I shall see presently; for here comes Sir Charles, and I'm sure my lord can't be far off. [*Enter* Sir Charles Easy.]

Sir C. Servant, Lady Betty; my dear, how do you do?

Lady E. At your service, my dear. But, pray, what have you done with my Lord Morelove?

Lady B. Ay, Sir Charles, pray, how does your pupil do? Have you any hopes of him?

Sir C. Well, madam, to confess your triumph over me, as well as him, I own my hopes of him are lost. I offered what I could to his instruction, but he's incorrigibly your's, and undone; the news, I presume, does not displease your ladyship.

Lady B. Fie, fie! Sir Charles, you disparage your friend; I am afraid you don't take pains with him.

Sir C. Ah! I fancy, Lady Betty, your good nature won't let you sleep. Don't you love dearly to hurt people?

Lady B. Oh! your servant; then, without a jest, the man is so unfortunate in his want of patience, that, let me die, if I don't often pity him.

Sir C. Ah! Strange goodness! Oh! that I were your lover for a month or two!

Lady B. What then?

Sir C. I would make that pretty heart's blood of your's ache in a fortnight.

Lady B. Ugh! I should hate you; your assurance would make your address intolerable.

Sir C. I believe it would, for I'd never address

Lady B. Oh! you clown, you! [you at all.

Sir C. Why, what to do? to feed a diseased pride, that's eternally breaking out in the affectation of an ill nature, that, in my conscience, I believe is but affectation.

Lady B. You nor your friend have no great reason to complain of my fondness, I believe. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir C. Thou insolent creature! How can you make a jest of a man, whose whole life's but one continued torment from your want of common gratitude? [him as easy as you are.

Lady B. Torment! For my part, I really believe

Sir C. Poor, intolerable affectation! You know the contrary, you know him blindly your's; you know your power, and the whole pleasure of your life is the poor and low abuse of it. [power?

Lady B. Pray, how do I abuse it—if I have any

Sir C. You drive him to extremes that make him mad, then punish him for acting against his reason. You've almost turned his brain; his common judgment fails him. He's now, at this very moment, driven by his despair, upon a project, (in hopes to free himself from your power,) that I am sensible, (and so must any one be that has his sense,) of course, must ruin him with you for ever. I almost blush to think of it, yet your unreasonable disdain has forced him to it; and should he now suspect I offer'd but a hint of it to you, and in contempt of his design, I know he'd call my life to answer it. But I have no regard to men in madness; I rather choose, for once, to trust in your good-nature, in hopes the man, whom your unwary beauty has made miserable, your generosity would scorn to make ridiculous.

Lady B. Sir Charles, you charge me very home; I never had it in my inclination to make anything ridiculous that did not deserve it. Pray, what is this business you think so extravagant in him?

Sir C. Something so absurdly rash and bold, you'll hardly forgive even me that tell it you.

Lady B. Oh, fie! If it be a fault, Sir Charles, I shall consider it as his, not your's. Pray, what is it?

Lady E. I long to know, methinks.

Sir C. You may be sure he did not want my

Lady B. Let's hear it. [dissuasions from it.

Sir C. Why, this man, whom I have known to love you with such excess of generous desire; whom I have heard in his ecstatic praises on your beauty talk till from the soft head of his distilling thoughts the tears have fallen—

Lady B. Oh! Sir Charles—

Sir C. Nay, grudge not, since 'tis past, to hear what was (though you condemned it) once his merit; but now I own that merit ought to be forgotten.

Lady B. Pray, sir, be plain.

Sir C. This man, I say, whose unhappy passion has so ill succeeded with you, at last, has forfeited all his hopes (into which, pardon me, I confess my friendship had lately flattered him) of even deserving now your lowest pity or regard.

Lady B. You amaze me! for I can't suppose his utmost malice dares assault my reputation. And what—

Sir C. No; but he maliciously presumes the world will do it for him; and, indeed, he has taken no unlikely means to make them busy with their tongues; for he is this moment upon the open terrace, in the highest public gallantry with my Lady Graveairs. "And to convince the world and me," he said, "he was not that tame lover we fancied him; he'd venture to give her the music to-night." Nay, I heard him, before my face, speak to one of the hautboys to engage the rest, and desired they would all take their directions only from my Lady Graveairs.

Lady B. My Lady Graveairs! Truly, I think my lord's very much in the right on't: for my part, Sir Charles, I don't see anything in this that's so very ridiculous, nor, indeed, that ought to make me think either the better or worse of him for it.

Sir C. Psha, psha! madam, you and I know 'tis not in his power to renounce you; this is but the poor disguise of a resenting passion vainly ruffled to a storm, which the least gentle look from you can reconcile at will, and laugh into a calm again.

Lady B. Indeed, Sir Charles, I sha'n't give myself that trouble, I believe.

Sir C. So I told him, madam. "Are not all your complaints," said I, "already owing to her pride? and can you suppose this public defiance of it (which, you know, you can't make good, too,) won't incense her more against you?"—"That's what I'd have," said he, starting wildly; "I care not what becomes of me, so I but live to see her piqued at it."

Lady B. Upon my word, I fancy my lord will find himself mistaken: I sha'n't be piqued, I believe. I must first have a value for the thing I lose, before it piques me. Piqued! Ha, ha, ha!

Sir C. Madam, you've said the very thing I urged to him. "I know her temper so well," said I, "that though she doted on you, if you once stood out against her, she'd sooner burst than shew the least motion of uneasiness."

Lady B. I can assure you, Sir Charles, my lord won't find himself deceived in your opinion. Piqued!

Sir C. She has it. (*Aside.*)

Lady E. Alas! poor woman! how little do our passions make us! (*Aside.*)

Lady B. Not but I would advise him to have a little regard to my reputation in this business: I would have him take heed of publicly affronting me.

Sir C. Right, madam; that's what I strictly

warned him of; for, among friends, whenever the world sees him follow another woman, the malicious tea-tables will be apt to be very free with your ladyship.

Lady B. I'd have him consider that, methinks.

Sir C. But, alas! madam, 'tis not in his power to think with reason: his mad resentment has destroyed even his principles of common honesty: he considers nothing but a senseless, proud revenge, which, in his fit of lunacy, 'tis impossible that either threats or danger can dissuade him from.

Lady B. What! does he defy me, 'threaten me? Then he shall see, that I have passions, too; and know, as well as he, to stir my heart against any pride that dares insult me. Does he suppose I fear him? fear the little malice of a slighted passion, that my own scorn has stung into a despised resentment? Fear him! Oh! it provokes me to think he dare have such a thought: [so.

Lady E. Dear creature, don't disorder yourself

Lady B. Let me but live to see him once more within my power, and I'll forgive the rest of fortune.

Lady E. Well, certainly, I am very ill-natured; for though I see this news has disturbed my friend, I can't help being pleased with the hopes of my Lady Graveairs being otherwise disposed of. (*Aside.*) My dear, I am afraid you have provoked her a little too far. (*Apart to Sir C.*)

Sir C. Oh! not at all. You shall see: I'll sweeten her, and she'll cool like a dish of tea. (*Apart to Lady E.*) [again.

Lady B. I may see him with his complaining face

Sir C. I am sorry, madam, you so wrongly judge of what I've told you; I was in hopes to have stirred your pity, not your anger; I little thought your generosity would punish him for faults, which you yourself resolved he should commit. Yonder he comes, and all the world with him. Might I advise you, madam, you should not resent the thing at all: I would not so much as stay to see him in his fault; nay, I'd be the last that heard of it. Nothing can sting him more, or so justly punish his folly, as your utter neglect of it.

Lady E. Come, dear creature, be persuaded, and go home with me; indeed, it will shew more indifference to avoid him.

Lady B. No, madam; I'll oblige his vanity, for once, and stay to let him see how strangely he has piqued me.

Sir C. (*Aside.*) Oh! not at all to speak of; you had as good part with a little of that pride of your's, or I shall yet make it a very troublesome companion to you.

Enter Lord Morelove, Lord Foppington, Lady Graveairs, *and Ladies.* (*Sir C. whispers to Lord Morelove.*)

Fop. Ladies, your servant. Oh! we have wanted you beyond reparation. Such diversion!

Lady B. Well, my lord, have you seen my Lord Morelove?

Fop. Seen him! Ha, ha, ha! Oh! I have such things to tell you: madam, you'll die—

Lady B. Oh! pray, let's hear them! I was never in a better humour to receive them.

Fop. Harkye! (*They whisper.*)

More. So! she's engaged already. (*To Sir C.*)

Sir C. So much the better; make but a just advantage of my success, and she's undone.

Fop. and Lady B. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir C. (*Apart to More.*) You see already what ridiculous pains she's taking to stir your jealousy, and

Fop. and Lady B. Ha, ha, ha! [cover her own.

More. Oh! never fear me; for, upon my word, it now appears ridiculous even to me. (*Apart to Sir C.*)

Sir C. And harkye! (*Whispers More.*)

Lady B. And so, the widow was as full of airs as his lordship? (*To Fop.*)

Sir C. Only observe that, and 'tis impossible you can fail. (*Apart.*) [me, and I thank you.

More. (*Apart.*) Dear Charles, you have convinced

Lady G. My Lord Morelove, what, do you leave us? [just—

More. Ten thousand pardons, madam, I was but

Lady G. Nay, nay, no excuses, my lord; so you will but let us have you again.

Sir C. (*Aside to Lady G.*) I see you have good humour, madam, when you like your company.

Lady G. And you see, for all your mighty thirst of dominion, you could stoop to be obedient, if one thought it worth one's while to make you so.

Sir C. Ah! Power would make her an admirable tyrant. (*Aside.*)

Lady E. (*Observing Sir C. and Lady G.*) So! there's another couple have quarrelled, too, I find. Those airs to my Lord Morelove look as if designed to recover Sir Charles into jealousy: I'll endeavour to join the company, and may be, that will let me into the secret. (*Aside.*) My Lord Foppington, I vow this is very uncomplaisant, to engross so agreeable a part of the company to yourself.

Sir C. Nay, my lord, this is not fair, indeed, to enter into secrets among friends. Ladies, what say you? I think we ought to declare against it.

Ladies. Oh! no secrets, no secrets!

Lady B. Well, ladies, I ought only to ask your pardon; my lord's excusable, for I would pull him into a corner.

Fop. I swear, 'tis very hard, though. I observe two people of extreme condition can no sooner grow particular, but the multitude of both sexes are immediately up, and think their property's invaded.

Lady G. Oh! my lord, we women have all reason to be jealous of Lady Betty Modish's power.

More. (*To Lady B.*) As the men, madam, all have of my Lord Foppington; beside, favourites of great merit discourage those of an inferior class for their prince's service: he has already lost you one of your retinue, madam.

Lady B. Not at all, my lord; he has only made room for another: one must, sometimes, make vacancies, or there could be no preferments.

Lady E. Ha, ha! Ladies' favours, my lord, like places at court, are not always held for life, you know.

Lady B. No, indeed; if they were, the poor fine women would be all used like their wives, and no more minded than the business of the nation.

Lady E. Have a care, madam; an undeserving favourite has been the ruin of many a prince's empire.

Fop. Ha, ha! Upon my soul, Lady Betty, we must grow more discreet; for, positively, if we go on at this rate, we shall have the world throw you under the scandal of constancy, and I shall have all the swords of condition at my throat for a monopolist.

More. Oh! there's no great fear of that, my lord; though the men of sense give it over, there will be always some idle fellows vain enough to believe their merit may succeed as well as your lordship's.

Lady B. Or, if they should not, my lord, cast lovers, you know, need not fear being long out of employment, while there are so many well-disposed people in the world. There are, generally, neglected wives, maids, or charitable widows always ready to relieve the necessities of a disappointed passion. And, by the way—harkye! Sir Charles—

More. (*Aside.*) So, she's stirred, I see, for all her pains to hide it: she would hardly have glanced an affront at a woman she was not piqued at.

Lady G. (*Aside.*) That wit was thrown at me, I suppose; but I'll return it.

Lady B. (*Apart to Sir C.*) Pray, how came you all this while to trust your mistress so easily?

Sir C. (*Apart to Lady B.*) One is not so apt, madam, to be alarmed at the liberties of an old acquaintance as, perhaps, your ladyship ought to be at the resentment of a hardly-used, honourable lover.

Lady B. (*Apart.*) Suppose I were alarmed, how does that make you easy?

Sir C. (*Apart.*) Come, come, be wise at last; my trusting them together, may easily convince you, that (as I told you before) I know his addresses to

her are only outward, and 'twill be your fault now, if you let him go on till the world thinks him in earnest, and a thousand busy tongues are set upon malicious inquiries into your reputation.

Lady B. (*Apart.*) Why, Sir Charles, do you suppose while he behaves himself as he does, that I won't convince him of my indifference?

Sir C. (*Apart.*) But hear me, madam—

Lady G. (*Aside.*) The air of that whisper looks as if the lady had a mind to be making her peace again; and 'tis possible, his worship's being so busy in the matter, too, may proceed as much from his jealousy of my lord with me, as friendship to her; at least, I fancy so; therefore, I'm resolved to keep her still piqued, and prevent it, though it be only to gall him.—Sir Charles, that is not fair to take a privilege you just now declared against in my Lord

More. Well observed, madam. [Foppington.

Lady G. Besides, it looks so affected to whisper, when everybody guesses the secret.

More. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. Oh! madam, your pardon in particular; but 'tis possible you may be mistaken: the secrets of people that have any regard to their actions, are not so soon guessed as theirs that have made a con-

Fop. Ha, ha, ha! [fidant of the whole town.

Lady G. A coquet, in her affected airs of disdain to a revolted lover, I am afraid, must exceed your ladyship in prudence, not to let the world see, at the same time, she'd give her eyes to make peace

More. Ha, ha, ha! [with him. Ha, ha!

Lady B. 'Twould be a mortification, indeed, if it were in the power of a fading widow's charms to prevent it; and the man must be miserably reduced, surely, that could bear to live buried in woollen, or take up with the motherly comforts of a swan-skin petticoat. Ha, ha!

Lady G. Widows, it seems, are not so squeamish to their interest; they know their own minds and take the man they like; though it happens to be one that a froward, vain girl has disobliged, and is pining to be friends with.

More. Nay, though it happens to be one that confesses he was once fond of a piece of folly, and afterwards ashamed of it. [two of you.

Lady B. Nay, my lord, there's no standing against

Fop. No, 'faith! that's odds at tennis, my lord: not but, if your ladyship pleases, I'll endeavour to keep your back-hand a little; though, upon my soul, you may safely set me up at the line; for, knock me down! if ever I saw a rest of wit better played than that last, in my life: what say you, madam, shall we engage?

Lady B. As you please, my lord. [*mi lor.*

Fop. Ha, ha, ha! *Allons! Tout de bon! Joues,*

More. Oh! pardon me, sir; I shall never think myself, in anything, a match for the lady.

Fop. To you, madam.

Lady B. That's much, my lord, when the world knows you have been so many years teasing me to play the fool with you.

Fop. Ah! *bien joüe!* Ha, ha, ha!

More. At that game, I confess, your ladyship has chosen a much more proper person to improve your hand with.

Fop. To me, madam! My lord, I presume whoever the lady thinks fit to play the fool with, will, at least, be able to give as much envy as the wise person that had not wit enough to keep well with her when he was so.

Lady G. Oh! my lord, both parties must needs be greatly happy; for I dare swear, neither will have any rivals to disturb them.

Lady B. None that will disturb them, I dare swear. (*Company laugh.*)

Sir C. I don't know, gentlefolks, but you are all in extremely good humour, methinks; I hope there's none of it affected.

Lady E. I should be loth to answer for any but my Lord Foppington. (*Aside.*)

Lady B. Mine is not, I'll swear.

More. Nor mine, I'm sure.

Lady G. Mine's sincere, depend upon it.

Fop. And may the eternal frowns of the whole sex doubly d— me, if mine is not!

Lady E. Well, good people, I am mightily glad to hear it. You have all performed extremely well: but, if you please, you shall even give over your wit now, while it is well.

Lady B. (*Aside.*) Now I see his humour, I'll stand it out, if I were sure to die for it.

Sir C. You should not have proceeded so far with my Lord Foppington, after what I had told you. (*Apart to Lady B.*)

Lady B. (*Apart.*) Pray, Sir Charles, give me leave to understand myself a little.

Sir C. (*Apart.*) Your pardon, madam; I thought a right understanding would have been for both your interest and reputation.

Lady B. (*Apart.*) For his, perhaps.

Sir C. (*Apart.*) Nay, then, madam, it is time for me to take care of my friend.

Lady B. (*Apart.*) I never in the least doubted your friendship to him in anything that was to shew yourself my enemy.

Sir C. (*Apart.*) Since I see, madam, you have so ungrateful a sense of my Lord Morelove's merit, and my service, I shall never be ashamed of using my power, henceforth, to keep him entirely out of your ladyship's.

Lady B. Was ever anything so insolent! I could find in my heart to run the hazard of a downright compliance, if it were only to convince him that my power, perhaps, is not inferior to his. (*Aside.*)

Lady E. My Lord Foppington, I think you generally lead the company upon these occasions. Pray, will you think of some prettier sort of diversion for us than parties and whispers?

Fop. What say you, ladies; shall we step and see what's done at the basset-table?

Lady B. With all my heart. Lady Easy—

Lady E. I think it is the best thing we can do; and because we won't part to-night, you shall all sup where you dined. What say you, my lord?

More. Your ladyship may be sure of me, madam.

Fop. Ay, ay, we'll all come.

Lady E. Then, pray, let's change parties a little. My Lord Foppington, you shall 'squire me.

Fop. Oh! you do me honour, madam.

Lady B. My Lord Morelove, pray, let me speak

More. Me, madam? [with you.

Lady B. If you please, my lord.

More. Ah! that look shot through me! What can this mean? (*Apart.*)

Lady B. (*Apart.*) This is no proper place to tell you what it is, but there is one thing I'd fain be truly answered in: I suppose you'll be at my Lady Easy's by-and-by, and if you'll give me leave there—

More. (*Apart.*) If you please to do me that honour, madam, I shall certainly be there.

Lady B. (*Apart.*) That's all, my lord.

More. Is not your ladyship for walking?

Lady B. If your lordship dare venture with me.

More. Oh! madam. (*Taking her hand.*) How my heart dances! what heavenly music is in her voice, when softened into kindness! (*Aside.*)

Lady B. (*Aside.*) Ah! his hand trembles! Sir Charles may be mistaken.

[*Exit with Lord M. and Lady E.*

Fop. My Lady Graveairs, you won't let Sir Charles leave us?

Lady G. No, my lord; we'll follow you. Stay a little. (*To Sir C.*)

Sir C. (*Apart to Lady G.*) I thought your ladyship designed to follow them.

Lady G. (*Apart.*) Perhaps I'd speak with you.

Sir C. (*Apart.*) But, madam, consider, we shall certainly be observed.

Lady G. Lud, sir! If you think it such a favour!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*The Castle Terrace.*

Enter SIR CHARLES EASY *and* LORD MORELOVE.

Sir C. Come a little this way. My Lady Graveairs had an eye upon me, as I stole off, and I am apprehensive will make use of any opportunity to talk with me.

More. Oh! we are pretty safe here. Well, you were speaking of my Lady Betty.

Sir C. Ay, my lord: I say, notwithstanding all this sudden change of her behaviour, I would not have you yet be too secure of her: for, between you and I, since, as I told you, I have professed myself an open enemy to her power with you, 'tis not impossible but this new air of good humour may very much proceed from a little woman's pride, of convincing me you are not yet out of her power.

More. Not unlikely: but still, can we make no advantage of it?

Sir C. That's what I have been thinking of. Look ye!—Death! my Lady Graveairs!

More. Ha! she will have audience, I find.

Sir C. There's no avoiding her: the truth is, I have owed her a little good nature, a great while. I see there is but one way of getting rid of her; I must even appoint her a day of payment, at last. If you'll step into my lodgings, my lord, I'll just give her an answer, and be with you in a moment.

More. Very well; I'll stay there for you. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY GRAVEAIRS.

Lady G. Sir Charles—

Sir C. Come, come, no more of these reproachful looks; you'll find, madam, I have deserved better of you than your jealousy imagines. Is it a fault to be tender of your reputation? Fie, fie! This may be a proper time to talk, and of my contriving, too. You see, I just now shook off my Lord Morelove

Lady G. May I believe you? [on purpose.

Sir C. Still doubting my fidelity, and mistaking my discretion for want of good-nature.

Lady G. Don't think me troublesome; for, I confess, 'tis death to think of parting with you: since the world sees, for you I have neglected friends and reputation, have stood the little insults of disdainful prudes, that envied me, perhaps, your friendship; have borne the freezing looks of near and general acquaintance: since this is so, don't let them ridicule me, too, and say my foolish vanity undid me; don't let them point at me as a cast mistress.

Sir C. You wrong me to suppose the thought: When shall you be at leisure?

Lady G. I confess, I would see you once again; if what I have more to say prove ineffectual, perhaps it may convince me, then, 'tis my interest to part with you. Can you come to-night?

Sir C. You know we have company, and I am afraid they'll stay too late: can't it be before supper? What's o'clock now?

Lady G. It is almost six.

Sir C. At seven, then, be sure of me; till then, I'd have you go back to the ladies to avoid suspicion, and about that time have the vapours.

Lady G. May I depend upon you? [*Exit.*

Sir C. Depend on everything. A very troublesome business this: send me once fairly rid of't, if ever I am caught in an honourable affair again—a debt, now, that a little ready civility, and away, would satisfy, a man might bear with; but to have a rent-charge upon one's good-nature, with an unconscionable long scroll of arrears, too, that would eat out the profits of the best estate in Christendom—ah! intolerable! Well, I'll even to my lord, and shake off the thoughts of it. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY BETTY MODISH *and* LADY EASY.

Lady B. I observe, my dear, you have usually this great fortune at play; it were enough to make one suspect your good luck with a husband.

Lady E. Truly, I don't complain of my fortune either way.

Lady B. Pr'ythee, tell me, (you are often advising me to it,) are there those real, comfortable advantages in marriage, that our old aunts and grandmothers would persuade us of?

Lady E. Upon my word, if I had the worst husband in the world, I should still think so.

Lady B. Ay, but then, the hazard of not having a good one, my dear.

Lady E. You may have a good one, I dare say, if you don't give airs till you spoil him.

Lady B. Can there be the same dear, full delight in giving ease, as pain? Oh! my dear, the thought of parting with one's power is insupportable!

Lady E. And the keeping it till it dwindles into no power at all, is most ruefully foolish.

Lady B. But still to marry before one's heartily in love!

Lady E. Is not half so formidable a calamity. But, if I have any eyes, my dear, you'll run no great hazard of that, in venturing upon my Lord Morelove. You don't know, perhaps, that within this half-hour, the tone of your voice is strangely softened to him. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. My dear, you are, positively, one or other, the most censorious person in the world: and so, I see it's in vain to talk with you. Pray, will you go back to the company?

Lady E. Ah! poor Lady Betty! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Sir Charles Easy's Lodgings.*

Enter SIR CHARLES EASY *and* LORD MORELOVE.

More. Charles, you have transported me! you have made my part in the scene so very easy, too, 'tis impossible I should fail in it.

Sir C. That's what I considered; for, now, the more you throw yourself into her power, the more I shall be able to force her into your's.

More. After all, (begging the ladies' pardon,) your fine women, like bullies, are only stout when they know their men: a man of an honest courage may fright them into anything. Well, I am fully instructed, and will about it instantly: won't you go along with me?

Sir C. That may not be so proper; besides, I have a little business upon my hands.

More. Oh! your servant, sir. Good b'ye! you sha'n't stir.

Sir C. My lord, your servant. [*Exit Lord M.*] So! now to dispose of myself, till 'tis time to think of my Lady Graveairs. Humph! I have no great mind to that business, methinks; I don't find myself in humour enough to come up to the civil things that are usually expected in the making up of an old quarrel. [MRS. EDGING *crosses the stage.*] There goes a warmer temptation by half. Ha! into my wife's bed-chamber, too! I question if the jade has any great business there; I have a fancy she has only a mind to be taking the opportunity of nobody's being at home, to make her peace with me. Let me see; ay, I shall have time enough to go to her ladyship afterwards: besides, I want a little sleep, I find. Your young fops may talk of their women of of quality; but to me, now, there is a strange agreeable convenience in a creature one is not obliged to say much to upon these occasions. (*Going.*)

Enter MRS. EDGING.

Mrs. E. Did you call me, sir?

Sir C. Ha! all's right. (*Aside.*) Yes, madam, I did call you. (*Sits down.*)

Mrs. E. What would you please to have, sir?

Sir C. Have! why, I would have you grow a good girl, and know when you are well used, hussy.

Mrs. E. Sir, I don't complain of anything, not I.

Sir C. Well, don't be uneasy; I am not angry with you, now. Come and kiss me.

Mrs. E. Lard, sir!

Sir C. Don't be a fool, now: come hither.

Mrs. E. Psha! (*Goes to him.*)

Sir C. No wry face; so, sit down. I won't have you look grave, neither: let me see you smile, you jade you.

Mrs. E. Ha, ha! (*Laughs and blushes.*)

Sir C. Ah! you melting rogue!

Mrs. E. Come, don't be at your tricks, now. Lard! can't you sit still and talk with one? I am sure there are ten times more love in that, and fifty times the satisfaction, people may say what they will.

Sir C. Well, now you're good, you shall have your own way. I am going to lie down in the next room; and since you love a little chat, come and throw my night-gown over me, and you shall talk me to sleep. [*Exit.*

Mrs. E. Yes, sir: for all his way, I see he likes me still. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*The Castle Terrace.*

Enter Lady Betty Modish, Lady Easy, *and* Lord Morelove.

More. Nay, madam, there you are too severe upon him; for, bating now and then a little vanity, my Lord Foppington does not want wit sometimes to make him a very tolerable woman's man.

Lady B. But such eternal vanity grows tiresome.

Lady E. Come, if he were not so loose in his morals, his vanity, methinks, might be easily excused, considering how much it is in fashion: for, pray, observe, what's half the conversation of most of the fine young people about town, but a perpetual affectation of appearing foremost in the knowledge of manners, new modes, and scandal? and in that I don't see anybody comes up to him.

More. Nor I, indeed; and here he comes. Pray, madam, let's have a little more of him; nobody shews him to more advantage than your ladyship.

Lady B. Nay, with all my heart; you'll second me, my lord.

More. Upon occasion, madam.

Lady E. Engaging upon parties, my lord? (*Aside and smiling at Lord M.*)

Enter Lord Foppington.

Fop. So, ladies, what's the affair now?

Lady B. Why, you were, my lord; I was allowing you a great many good qualities; but Lady Easy says you are a perfect hypocrite: and that, whatever airs you give yourself to the women, she's confident you value no woman in the world equal to your own lady.

Fop. You see, madam, how I am scandalized upon your account. But it's so natural for a prude to be malicious, when a man endeavours to be well with anybody but herself. Did you never observe she was piqued at that before? Ha, ha!

Lady B. I'll swear you are a provoking creature.

Fop. Let us be more familiar upon it, and give her disorder. Ha, ha!

Lady B. Ha, ha, ha!

Fop. Stap my breath! but Lady Easy is an admirable discoverer. Marriage is, indeed, a prodigious security of one's inclination: a man is likely to take a world of pains in an employment, where he can't be turned out for his idleness.

Lady B. I vow, my lord, that's vastly generous to all the fine women; you are for giving them a despotic power in love, I see, to reward and punish as they think fit.

Fop. Ha, ha! Right, madam, what signifies beauty without power? and a fine woman, when she's married, makes as ridiculous a figure as a beaten general marching out of a garrison.

Lady E. I am afraid, Lady Betty, the greatest danger, in your use of power, would be from a too heedless liberality: you would more mind the man than his merit.

Fop. Piqued again, by all that's fretful! (*Aside.*) Well, certainly, to give envy is a pleasure inexpressible. (*Apart to Lady B.*)

Lady B. Ha, ha!

Lady E. Does not she shew him well, my lord? (*Aside to Lord M.*)

More. Perfectly; and me to myself; for now I almost blush to think I ever was uneasy at him. (*To Lady E.*)

Fop. Lady Easy, I ask ten thousand pardons, I am afraid I am rude all this while.

Lady E. Oh! not at all, my lord; you are always good company, when you please: not but in some things, indeed, you are apt to be like other fine gentlemen, a little too loose in your principles.

Fop. Oh! madam, never to the offence of the ladies; I agree in any community with them; nobody is a more constant churchman, when the fine ladies are there.

Lady E. Oh, fie! my lord, you ought not to go for their sake at all. And I wonder you, that are for being such a good husband of your virtues, are not afraid of bringing your prudence into a lampoon or a play. [things to be laughed at.

Lady B. Lampoons and plays, madam, are only

More. Plays now, indeed, one need not be so much afraid of; for since the late short-sighted view of them, vice may go on and prosper, the stage dares hardly shew a vicious person speaking like himself, for fear of being called prophane for exposing him.

Lady E. 'Tis hard, indeed, when people won't distinguish between what's meant for contempt, and what's for example.

Fop. Odso! ladies, the court's coming home, I see; shall not we make our bows?

Lady B. Oh! by all means.

Lady E. Lady Betty, I must leave you; for I'm obliged to write letters, and I know you won't give me time after supper.

Lady B. Well, my dear, I'll make a short visit, and be with you. [*Exit Lady E.*] Pray, what's become of my Lady Graveairs?

More. Oh! I believe she's gone home, madam; she seemed not to be very well.

Fop. And where's Sir Charles, my lord?

More. I left him at his own lodgings.

Lady B. He's upon some ramble, I'm afraid.

Fop. Nay, as for that matter, a man may ramble at home sometimes. But here come the chaises; we must make a little more haste, madam. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.—*Sir Charles Easy's Lodgings.*

Enter Lady Easy *and a Servant.*

Lady E. Is your master come home?

Serv. Yes, madam.

Lady E. Where is he?

Serv. I believe, madam, he's laid down to sleep.

Lady E. Where's Edging? Bid her get me some wax and paper—stay, it's no matter, now I think on it; there's some above upon my toilet. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.—*A Room.*

Sir Charles Easy *discovered, without his periwig, and* Mrs. Edging *by him, both asleep. Enter* Lady Easy.

Lady E. Ha! (*Starts and trembles.*)
Protect me virtue, patience, reason!
Teach me to bear this killing sight, or let
Me think my dreaming senses are deceiv'd!
For, sure, a sight like this might raise the arm
Of duty, ev'n to the breast of love! At least
I'll throw this vizor of my patience off;
Now wake him in his guilt,
And barefac'd front him with my wrongs.
I'll talk to him till he blushes, nay, till he—
Frowns on me, perhaps; and then,
I'm lost again. The ease of a few tears
Is all that's left to me;
And duty, too, forbids me to insult,
When I have vow'd obedience. Perhaps,
The fault's in me, and nature has not form'd
Me with the thousand little requisites
That warm the heart to love.
Somewhere there is a fault;
But heav'n best knows what both of us deserve.—
Ha! bare-headed, and in so sound a sleep! [air,
Who knows, while thus expos'd to th' unwholesome
But heav'n, offended, may o'ertake his crime,
And, in some languishing distemper, leave him,
A severe example of its violated laws.
Forbid it mercy, and forbid it love!
This may prevent it. (*Puts a handkerchief on his head.*)

And if he should awake offended at my too busy care, let my heart-breaking patience, duty, and fond affection plead my pardon. [*Exit. A bell rings.*

Mrs. E. Oh!

Sir C. How now! what's the matter?

Mrs. E. Oh! bless my soul! my lady's come home.

Sir C. Go, go, then. (*Bell rings.*)

Mrs. E. Oh, lud! my head's in such a condition, too. (*Runs to the glass.*) I am coming, madam! Oh, lud! here's no powder, neither. Here, madam! [*Exit.*

Sir C. How now! (*Feeling the handkerchief upon his head.*) What's this? How came it here? (*Puts on his wig.*) Did not I see my wife wear this today? Death! she can't have been here, sure. It could not be jealousy that brought her home; for my coming was accidental; so, too, I fear, might her's. How careless have I been not to secure the door, neither! 'Twas foolish—It must be so! she certainly has seen me here sleeping with her woman: if so, how low an hypocrite to her must that sight have proved me! The thought has made me despicable even to myself. How mean a vice is lying! and how often have those empty pleasures lulled my honour and my conscience to a lethargy, while I grossly have abused her, poorly skulking behind a thousand falsehoods! Now I reflect, this has not been the first of her discoveries. How contemptible a figure must I have made to her! A crowd of recollected circumstances confirms me now, she has been long acquainted with my follies; and yet with what amazing prudence has she borne the secret pangs of injured love, and worn an everlasting smile to me! This asks a little thinking: something should be done. I'll see her instantly, and be resolved from her behaviour. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—*A Room.*

Enter LADY EASY *and* MRS. EDGING.

Lady E. Where have you been, Edging?

Mrs. E. Been, madam! I—I—I came as soon as I heard you ring, madam.

Lady E. How guilt confounds her! but she's below my thought. (*Aside.*) Fetch my last new scarf hither; I have a mind to alter it a little.

Mrs. E. Yes, madam. I see she does not suspect anything. [*Aside, and exit.*

Lady E. Heigho! (*Sitting down.*) I had forgot—but I am unfit for writing now. 'Twas a hard conflict; yet, it's a joy to think it over: a secret pride, to tell my heart my conduct has been just. How low are vicious minds that offer injuries! how much superior innocence that bears them! Still there's a pleasure even in the melancholy of a quiet conscience. Away, my fears! it is not yet impossible; for while his human nature is not quite shook off, I ought not to despair.

Re-enter MRS. EDGING *with the scarf.*

Mrs. E. Here's the scarf, madam.

Lady E. So, sit down there; and, let me see: here, rip off all that silver.

Mrs. E. Indeed, I always thought it would become your ladyship better without it. But, now suppose, madam, you carried another row of gold round the scollops, and then you take and lay this silver plain all along the gathers, and your ladyship will perfectly see, it will give the thing ten thousand times another air. [bid you.

Lady E. Pr'ythee, don't be impertinent; do as I

Mrs. E. Nay, madam, with all my heart; your ladyship may do as you please.

Lady E. This creature grows so confident; and I dare not part with her, lest he should think it jealousy. (*Aside.*)

Enter SIR CHARLES EASY.

Sir C. So, my dear! what, at work? How are you employed, pray?

Lady E. I was thinking to alter this scarf here.

Sir C. What's amiss? methinks it's very pretty.

Mrs. E. Yes, sir, it's pretty enough, for that matter; but my lady has a mind it should be proper, too.

Sir C. Indeed!

Lady E. I fancy plain gold and black would become me better.

Sir C. That's a grave thought, my dear.

Mrs. E. Oh, dear! sir, not at all; my lady's much in the right; I am sure, as it is, it's fit for nothing

Sir C. Leave the room. [but a girl.

Mrs. E. Lard! sir, I can't stir; I must stay to—

Sir C. Go. (*Angrily.*)

Mrs. E. If ever I speak to him again I'll be burned! [*Aside, and exit.*

Sir C. Sit still, my dear. I came to talk with you; and, which you may well wonder at, what I have to say is of importance, too; but 'tis in order to my hereafter always talking kindly to you.

Lady E. Your words were never disobliging, nor can I charge you with a look that ever had the appearance of unkindness.

Sir C. The perpetual spring of your good-humour, lets me draw no merit from what I have appeared to be; which makes me curious now to know your thoughts of what I really am: and never having asked you this before, it puzzles me; nor can I (my strange negligence considered) reconcile to reason your first thoughts of venturing upon marriage with

Lady E. I never thought it such a hazard. [me.

Sir C. How could a woman of your restraint in principles, sedateness, sense, and tender disposition, propose to see a happy life with one (now I reflect) that hardly took an hour's pains, even before marriage, to appear but what I am? A loose, unheeded wretch; absent in all I do; civil, and as often rude, without design; unseasonably thoughtful; easy to a fault; and, in my best of praise, but carelessly good-natured: how shall I reconcile your temper with having made so strange a choice?

Lady E. Your own words may answer you. Your having never seemed to be but what you really were; and through that carelessness of temper, there still shone forth to me an undesigning honesty, I always doubted of in smoother faces: thus while I saw you took least pains to win me, you pleased and wooed me most; nay, I have thought, that such a temper could never be deliberately unkind; or, at the worst, I knew that errors from want of thinking might be borne; at least, when, probably, one moment's serious thought would end them: these were my worst of fears; and these, when weighed by growing love against my solid hopes, were nothing.

Sir C. My dear, your understanding startles me, and justly calls my own in question: I blush to think I've worn so bright a jewel in my bosom, and till this hour, have scarcely been curious enough once to look upon its lustre.

Lady E. You set too high a value on the common qualities of an easy wife.

Sir C. Virtues, like benefits, are double when concealed: and, I confess, I yet suspect you of a higher value than I have as yet spoken of you.

Lady E. I understand you not.

Sir C. I'll speak more plainly to you. Be free and tell me—where did you leave this handkerchief?

Lady E. Ha! [question.

Sir C. What is't you start at? You hear the

Lady E. What shall I say? my fears confound me.

Sir C. Be not concerned, my dear; be easy in the truth, and tell me.

Lady E. I cannot speak; and I could wish you would not oblige me to it: 'tis the only thing I ever yet refused you; and though I want a reason for my will, let me not answer you.

Sir C. Your will, then, be a reason; and since I see you are so generously tender of reproaching me, 'tis fit I should be easy in my gratitude, and make what ought to be my shame, my joy; let me be, therefore, pleased to tell you now, your wondrous conduct has awakened me to a sense of your disquiet past, and resolution never to disturb it more: and (not that I offer it as a merit, but yet in blind

compliance to my will) let me beg you would immediately discharge your woman.

Lady E. Alas! I think not of her. Oh! my dear, distract me not with this excess of goodness. (*Weeping.*)

Sir C. Nay, praise me not, lest I reflect how little I have deserved it. I see you're in pain to give me this confusion: come, I will not shock your softness by my untimely blush for what is past, but rather soothe you to a pleasure at my sense of joy for my recovered happiness to come. Give, then, to my new-born love what name you please; it cannot, shall not be too kind: oh! it cannot be too soft for what my soul swells up with emulation to deserve. Receive me, then, entire at last; and take what yet no woman ever truly had, my conquered heart.

Lady E. Oh! the soft treasure! oh! the dear reward of long-desiring love! Now I am blest, indeed, to see you kind without the expense of pain in being so, to make you mine with easiness. Thus, thus to have you mine, is something more than happiness; 'tis double life and madness of abounding joy. But 'twas a pain intolerable to give you a confusion.

Sir C. Oh! thou engaging virtue! But I am too slow in doing justice to thy love: I know thy softness will refuse me; but, remember, I insist upon it: let thy woman be discharged this minute.

Lady E. No, my dear; think me not so low in faith, to fear that (after what you've said) 'twill ever be in her power to do me future injury. When I can conveniently provide for her, I'll think on't; but to discharge her now, might let her guess at the occasion; and, methinks, I would have all our differences, like our endearments, be equally a secret to our servants.

Sir C. Still my superior every way. Be it as you have better thought. Well, my dear, now I'll confess a thing that was not in your power to accuse me of; to be short, I own this creature is not the only one I have been to blame with.

Lady E. I know she is not, and was always less concerned to find it so; for constancy in errors might have been fatal to me.

Sir C. What is it you know, my dear? (*Surprised.*)

Lady E. Come, I am not afraid to accuse you now—my Lady Graveairs. Your carelessness, my dear, let all the world know it, and it would have been hard, indeed, had it been only to me a secret.

Sir C. My dear, I'll ask no more questions, for fear of being more ridiculous: I do confess, I thought my discretion there had been a master-piece. How contemptible must I have looked all this while!

Lady E. You sha'n't say so.

Sir C. Well, to let you see I had some shame as well as nature in me, I had written this to my Lady Graveairs, upon my first discovering that you knew I had wronged you. Read it.

Lady E. (*Reads.*) "*Something has happened that prevents the visit I intended you; and I could gladly wish you never would reproach me if I tell you it is utterly inconvenient that I should ever see you more.*" This, indeed, was more than I had merited.

Enter a Servant.

Sir C. Who's there? Here, step with this to my Lady Graveairs. (*Gives the letter to the Servant.*)

Serv. Yes, sir. Madam, my Lady Betty's come.

Lady E. I'll wait on her. [*Exit Serv.*

Sir C. My dear, I am thinking there may be other things my negligence may have wronged you in; but, be assured, as I discover them, all shall be corrected. Is there any part or circumstance in your fortune that I can change, or yet make easier to you?

Lady E. None, my dear; your good-nature never stinted me in that; and now, methinks, I have less occasion there than ever.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Morelove's come.

Sir C. I am coming. [*Exit Serv.*] I think I told you of the design we had laid against Lady Betty.

Lady E. You did, and I should be pleased to be myself concerned in it.

Sir C. I believe we may employ you. I know he waits for me with impatience. But, my dear, won't you think me tasteless to the joy you've given me, to suffer, at this time, any concern but you to employ my thoughts?

Lady E. Seasons must be obeyed; and since I know your friend's happiness is depending, I could not taste my own, should you neglect his.

Sir C. Thou easy sweetness! Oh! what a waste on thy neglected love, has my unthinking brain committed! But time and future thrift of tenderness shall yet repair it all. The hour will come when this soft gliding stream that swells my heart, uninterrupted shall renew its course;

And like the ocean after ebb, shall move
With constant force of due returning love.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene VII.—*A Room.*

Enter Lady Easy *and* Lady Betty Modish.

Lady B. You've been in tears, my dear, and yet you look pleased, too.

Lady E. You'll pardon me, if I can't let you into circumstances; but be satisfied, Sir Charles has made me happy even to a pain of joy.

Lady B. Indeed, I am truly glad of it, though I am sorry to find that any one who has generosity enough to do you justice, should, unprovoked, be so great an enemy to me.

Lady E. Sir Charles your enemy!

Lady B. My dear, you'll pardon me if I always thought him so, but now I am convinced of it.

Lady E. In what, pray? I can't think you'll find him so.

Lady B. Oh! madam, it has been his whole business, of late, to make an utter breach between my Lord Morelove and I.

Lady E. That may be owing to your usage of my lord: perhaps, he thought it would not disoblige you. I am confident you are mistaken in him.

Lady B. Oh! I don't use to be out in things of this nature; I can see well enough: but I shall be able to tell you more when I have talked with my lord.

Lady E. Here he comes; and because you shall talk with him—no excuses; for, positively, I will leave you together.

Lady B. Indeed, my dear, I desire you would stay, then; for, I know you think, now, that I have a mind to—to—

Lady E. To—to—Ha, ha, ha! (*Going.*)

Lady B. Well, remember this.

Enter Lord Morelove.

More. I hope I don't frighten you away, madam?

Lady E. Not at all, my lord; but I must beg your pardon for a moment; I'll wait upon you immediately. [*Exit.*

Lady B. My Lady Easy gone!

More. Perhaps, madam, in friendship to you, she thinks I may have deserved the coldness you of late have shewn me, and was willing to give you this opportunity to convince me, that you have not done it without reason.

Lady B. How handsomely does he reproach me! But I can't bear that he should think I know it. (*Aside.*) My lord, whatever has passed between you and I, I dare swear that could not be her thoughts at this time: for when two people have appeared professed enemies, she can't but think one will as little care to give, as the other to receive a justification of their actions.

More. Passion, indeed, often does repeated injuries on both sides; but I don't remember in my heat of error that I ever yet professed myself your enemy.

Lady B. My lord, I shall be very free with you: I confess I do think now I have not a greater enemy in the world.

More. If having long loved you, to my own disquiet, be injurious, I am contented, then, to stand the foremost of your enemies.

Lady B. Oh! my lord, there's no great fear of your being my enemy that way, I dare say.

More. There's no other way my heart can bear to offend you now, and I foresee in that it will persist to my undoing.

Lady B. Fie, fie! my lord, we know where your heart is well enough.

More. My conduct has, indeed, deserved this scorn; and, therefore, it is but just I should submit to your resentment, and beg (though I am assured in vain) for pardon. (*Kneels.*)

Enter Sir Charles Easy.

Sir C. How, my lord! (*Lord M. rises.*)

Lady B. Ha! He here! This is unlucky. (*Aside.*)

More. Oh! pity my confusion! (*To Lady B.*)

Sir C. I am sorry to see you can so soon forget yourself; methinks, the insult you have borne from that lady, by this time, should have warned you into a disgust of her regardless principles.

More. Hold, Sir Charles! While you and I are friends, I desire you would speak with honour of this lady: 'tis sufficient I have no complaint against her, and—

Lady B. My lord, I beg you would resent this thing no farther: an injury like this is better punished with our contempt: apparent malice should only be laughed at.

Sir C. Ha, ha! the old recourse. Offers of any hopes to delude him from his resentment; and, then, (as the grand Monarque did with Cavalier,) you are sure to keep your word with him.

Lady B. Sir Charles, to let you know how far I am above your little spleen, my lord, your hand from this hour.

Sir C. Psha, psha! All design, all pique! mere artifice, and disappointed woman.

Lady B. Lookye! sir, not that I doubt my lord's opinion of me; but—

Sir C. Lookye! madam, in short, your word has been too often taken to let you make up quarrels, as you used to do, with a soft look, and a fair promise you never intended to keep.

Lady B. Was there ever such insolence! he won't

More. Sir Charles! [give me leave to speak.

Lady B. No, pray, my lord, have patience; and since his malice seems to grow particular, I dare his worst, and urge him to the proof of't: pray, sir, wherein can you charge me with a breach of promise to my lord?

Sir C. Death! you won't deny it? How often, to piece up a quarrel, have you appointed him to visit you alone; and though you have promised to see no other company the whole day, when he has come, he has found you among the laugh of noisy fops, coquets, and coxcombs, dissolutely gay, while your full eyes ran over with transport of their flattery, and your own vain power of pleasing? How often, I say, have you been known to throw away, at least, four hours of your good-humour upon such wretches; and the minute they were gone, grew only dull to him; sunk into a distasteful spleen, complained you had talked yourself into the headache, and then indulged upon the dear delight of seeing him in pain: and by that time you had stretched, and gaped him heartily out of patience, of a sudden, most importantly remember you had outsat your appointment with my Lady Fiddlefaddle; and immediately order your coach to the

Lady B. Yet, sir, have you done? [park?

Sir C. No; though this might serve to shew the nature of your principles. But the noble conquest you have gained at last, over defeated sense of reputation, too, has made your fame immortal.

More. How, sir?

Lady B. My reputation!

Sir C. Ay, madam, your reputation! My lord, if I advance a falsehood, then resent it. I say, your reputation; it has been your life's whole pride, of late, to be the common toast of every public table; vain even in the infamous addresses of a married man, my Lord Foppington; let that be reconciled with reputation, and I'll now shake hands with shame, and bow me to the low contempt which you deserve from him: not but I suppose you'll yet endeavour to recover him; now you find ill usage in danger of losing your conquest, 'tis possible you'll stop at nothing to preserve it.

Lady B. Sir Charles—(*Confused.*)

Sir C. I know your vanity is so voracious, 'twill even wound itself to feed itself; offer him a blank, perhaps, to fill up with hopes of what nature he pleases, and part with even your pride to keep him.

Lady B. Sir Charles, I have not deserved this of you. (*Bursting into tears.*)

Sir C. Ah! true woman! drop him a soft dissembling tear, and then his just resentment must be hushed of course.

More. Oh! Charles, I can bear no more; those tears are too reproaching.

Sir C. Hist, for your life! (*Aside.*) My lord, if you believe her, you're undone; the very next sight of my Lord Foppington would make her yet forswear all that she can promise.

Lady B. My Lord Foppington! Is that the mighty crime that must condemn me, then? You know I used him but as a tool of my resentment, which you yourself, by a pretended friendship to us both, most artfully provoked me to.

More. Hold! I conjure you, madam; I want not this conviction.

Lady B. Send for him this minute; and you and he shall be witnesses of the contempt and detestation I have for any forward hopes his vanity may have given him, or your malice would insinuate.

Sir C. Death! you would as soon eat fire, as soon part with your luxurious taste of folly, as dare to own the half of this before his face, or any one that would make you blush to deny it to. Here comes my wife; now we shall see; ha! and my Lord Foppington with her. Now, now, we shall see this mighty proof of your sincerity: now, my lord, you'll have a warning, sure, and henceforth know me for your friend indeed.

Enter Lady Easy *and* Lord Foppington.

Lady E. In tears, my dear; what's the matter?

Lady B. Oh! my dear, all I told you is true; Sir Charles has shewn himself to be such an inveterate enemy of mine, that if I believed I deserved but half his hate, 'twould make me hate myself.

Fop. Harkye! Charles, pr'ythee, what is this business?

Sir C. Why, your's, my lord, for aught I know. I have made such a breach betwixt them—I can't promise much for the courage of a woman; but if it holds, I am sure it's wide enough, that you may enter ten a-breast, my lord. (*Apart.*)

Fop. Say'st thou so, Charles? then I hold six to four I am the first man in the town.

Lady E. Sure, there must be some mistake in this; I hope he has not made my lord your enemy.

Lady B. I know not what he has done.

More. Far be that thought! Alas! I am too much in fear myself, that what I have this day committed, (advised by his mistaken friendship,) may have done my love irreparable prejudice.

Lady B. No, my lord; since I perceive his little arts have not prevailed upon your good-nature to my prejudice, I am bound in gratitude, in duty to myself, and to the confession you have made, my lord, to acknowledge now, I have been to blame, too.

More. Ah! is it possible? can you own so much? Oh! my transported heart!

Lady B. He says I have taken pleasure in seeing you uneasy—I own it: but it was when that uneasiness, I thought, proceeded from your love; and if you did love—'twill not be much to pardon it.

More. Oh! let my soul, thus bending to your power, adore this soft descending goodness.

Lady B. And since the giddy woman's slights I have shewn you too often, have been public, 'tis fit, at last, the amends and reparation should be so: therefore, what I offered to Sir Charles, I now repeat before this company, my utter detestation of any past or future gallantry that has or shall be offered by me to your uneasiness.

More. Oh! be less generous, or teach me to deserve it. Now blush, Sir Charles, at your injurious accusation.

Lady B. As for my Lord Foppington, I owe him thanks for having been so friendly an instrument of our reconciliation; for, though in the little outward gallantry I received from him, I did not immediately trust him with my design in it, yet I have a better opinion of his understanding than to suppose he could mistake it.

Fop. I am struck dumb with the deliberation of her assurance; and do not positively remember that the *non-chalance* of my temper ever had so bright an occasion to shew itself before. (*Aside.*)

Lady B. My lord, I hope you'll pardon the freedom I have taken with you.

Fop. Oh! madam, don't be under the confusion of an apology upon my account; for, in cases of this nature, I am never disappointed, but when I find a lady of the same mind two hours together.

Lady B. My lord, that's a very prudent temper.

Fop. Madam, to convince you that I am in an universal peace with mankind, give me leave to have the honour of completing it, by joining your hands where you have already offered up your inclination. [you.

Lady B. My lord, that's a favour I can't refuse

More. Generous, indeed, my lord.

Fop. And, stap my breath! if ever I was better pleased since my first entrance into human nature.

Sir C. How now, my lord! What, throw up the cards before you have lost the game?

Fop. Lookye! Charles, 'tis true, I did design to have played with her alone: but he that will keep well with the ladies must sometimes be content to make one at a pool with them: and since I know I must engage her in my turn, I don't see any great odds in letting him take the first game with her.

Sir C. Wisely considered, my lord.

Lady B. And now, Sir Charles—

Sir C. And now, madam, I'll save you the trouble of a long speech; and, in one word, confess that everything I have done in regard to you this day was purely artificial. I saw there was no way to secure you to my Lord Morelove but by alarming your pride with the danger of losing him: and since the success must have, by this time, convinced you that in love nothing is more ridiculous than an overacted aversion; I am sure you won't take it ill, if we at last congratulate your good-nature by heartily laughing at the fright we had put you in. Ha, ha!

Lady B. Why—well, I declare it now, I hate you worse than ever.

Sir C. Ha, ha, ha! And was it afraid they would take away its love from it. Poor Lady Betty!

Lady E. My dear, I beg your pardon; but 'tis impossible not to laugh when one's so heartily pleased.

Fop. Really, madam, I am afraid the humour of the company will draw me into your displeasure, too; but if I were to expire this moment, my last breath would positively go out with a laugh.

Lady B. Nay, I have deserved it all, that's the truth on't; but I hope, my lord, you were not in this design against me.

More. As a proof, madam, I am inclined never to deceive you more, I do confess I had my share in it.

Lady B. You do, my lord; then I declare 'twas a design the best carried on, that ever I knew in my life; and (to my shame I own it) for aught I know, the only thing that could have prevailed upon my temper: it was a foolish pride that has cost me many a bitten lip to support it. I wish we don't both repent, my lord. [never shall.

More. Don't you repent without me, and we

Sir C. Well, madam, now the worst that the world can say of your past conduct is, that my lord had constancy, and you have tried it.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. (*To More.*) My lord, Mr. Le Fevre's below, and desires to know what time your lordship will please to have the music begin.

More. Sir Charles, what say you? will you give me leave to bring them hither?

Sir C. As the ladies think fit, my lord.

Lady B. Oh! by all means; 'twill be better here, unless we could have the Terrace to ourselves.

More. Then, pray, desire them to come all hither immediately. [*Exit Serv.*

Enter Lady Graveairs.

Lady G. Yes, you may well start! but don't suppose I am now come, like a poor fool, to upbraid your guilt; but, if I could, to blast you with a look.

Sir C. Come, come, you have sense—don't expose yourself: you are unhappy, and I own myself the cause; the only satisfaction I can offer you is, to protest no new engagement takes me from you; but a sincere reflection of the long neglect and injuries I have done the best of wives; for whose amends and only sake I now must part with you, and all the inconvenient pleasures of my life.

Lady G. Have you then fallen into the low contempt of exposing me, and to your wife, too?

Sir C. 'Twas impossible without it, I could ever be sincere in my conversion.

Lady G. Despicable!

Sir C. Do not think so: for my sake I know she'll not reproach you; nor, by her carriage, ever let the world perceive you've wronged her.

Lady E. Lady Graveairs, I hope you'll sup with us? [pany.

Lady G. Madam, I can't refuse such good com-

Sir C. You see the worst of her resentment: in the meantime, don't endeavour to be her friend, and she'll never be your enemy.

Lady G. I am unfortunate: 'tis what my folly has deserved, and I submit to it.

More. So! here's the music. (*Music.*)

Lady E. Come, ladies, shall we sit?

SONG.

Sabina, with an angel's face,
By love ordain'd for joy,
Seems of the syren's cruel race,
To charm and then destroy:
With all the arts of look and dress,
She fans the fatal fire;
Through pride, mistaken oft for grace,
She bids the swain expire.

The god of love enrag'd to see
The nymph defy his flame,
Pronounc'd his merciless decree
Against the haughty dame;
Let age with double speed o'ertake her,
Let love the room of pride supply;
And when the lovers all forsake her,
A spotless virgin let her die.

Sir C. (*To Lady E.*) Now, my dear, I find my happiness grow fast upon me. In all my past experience of the sex, I found, even among the better sort, so much of folly, pride, malice, passion, and irresolute desire, that I concluded you but of the foremost rank, and, therefore, scarcely worthy my concern; but thou hast stirred me with so severe a proof of thy exalted virtue, it gives me wonder equal to my love. If, then, the unkindly thought of what I have been, hereafter should intrude upon thy growing quiet, let this reflection teach thee to be easy:

Thy wrongs, when greatest, most thy virtue prov'd,
And from that virtue found, I blush'd and truly lov'd.

[*Exeunt.*

THE CHANCES;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS:

ALTERED FROM BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER, BY DAVID GARRICK.



Act I.—Scene 6.

CHARACTERS.

DUKE	ANTHONY	GENTLEMEN
DON JOHN	FRANCISCO	SERVANTS
DON FREDERICK	PEREZ	FIRST CONSTANTIA
PETRUCHIO	PEDRO	SECOND CONSTANTIA
ANTONIO	GUZMAN	LANDLADY
PETER	SANCHIO	NURSE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*

Enter PETER *and* ANTHONY.

Peter. 'Would we were remov'd from this town, Anthony,
That we may taste some quiet! for mine own part,
I'm almost melted with continual trotting
After inquiries, dreams, and revelations,
Of who knows whom, or where? Serve wenching soldiers!
I'll serve a priest in Lent first, and eat bell-ropes.
Anth. Thou art the forwardest fool—
Peter. Why, good, tame Anthony,
Tell me but this: to what end came we hither?
Anth. To wait upon our masters.
Peter. But how, Anthony?
Answer me that; resolve me there, good Anthony.
Anth. To serve their uses.
Peter. Shew your uses, Anthony.
Anth. To be employ'd in anything.
Peter. No, Anthony;
Not anything, I take it, nor that thing
We travel to discover, like a new island;
I'll give 'em warning.
Anth. Come, come, all will be mended: this invisible woman,
Of infinite report for shape and beauty,
That bred all trouble to no purpose,
They are determin'd now no more to think on.
Peter. Were there ever
Men known to run mad with report before?
Or wander after that, they knew not where
To find; or, if found, how to enjoy? Are men's brains
Made, now-a-days, with malt, that their affections
Are never sober?
I do believe,
That men in love are ever drunk, as drunken men
Are ever loving.
Anth. Pr'ythee, be thou sober,
And know that they are none of those, not guilty
Of the least vanity of love; only a doubt
Fame might too far report, or rather, flatter
The graces of this woman, made them curious
To find the truth; which, since they find so
Lock'd up from their searches, they are now resolv'd
To give the wonder over.
Peter. 'Would they were resolv'd
To give me some new shoes, too! for I'll be sworn,
These are e'en worn out to the reasonable soles,
In their good worship's business: and some sleep
Would not do much amiss, unless they mean
To make a watchman of me.—Here they come!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Don John *and* Don Frederick.

Don J. I would we could have seen her though: for, sure,
She must be some rare creature, or report lies:
All men's reports, too.
Don F. I could well wish I had seen Constantia:
But since she is so conceal'd, plac'd where
No knowledge can come near her, so guarded
As 'twere impossible, though known, to reach her,
I have made up my belief.
Don J. Hang me, from this hour,
If I more think upon her!
But as she came a strange report unto me,
So the next beauteous fame shall lose her.
Don F. 'Tis the next way:—
But whither are you walking?
Don J. My old round,
After my supper, and then to bed.
Don F. Your servant, then.
Don J. Will not you stir?
Don F. I have a little business.
Don J. I'd lay my life, this lady still—
Don F. Then you would lose it.
Don J. Pray, let's walk together.
Don F. Now I cannot.
Don J. I have something to impart.
Don F. An hour hence,
I will not miss to meet you.
Don J. Where?
Don F. I' th' High-street;
For, not to lie, I have a few devotions
To do first, and then I am your's, Don John.
Don J. Devotions, Frederick! Well, I leave you to them:
Speed you well: but remember—
Don F. I will not fail. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Street.*

Enter Petruchio, Antonio, Sanchio, *and* Baptista.

Anto. Cut his windpipe, I say.
San. Fie, Antonio!
Anto. Or knock his brains out first, and then forgive him.
If you do thrust, be sure it be to th' hilts,
A surgeon may see through him.
San. You are too violent.
Bapt. Too open; indiscreet.
Petr. Am I not ruin'd? [son'd?
The honour of my house crack'd? my blood poi-
My credit and my name?
Bapt. Be sure it be so,
Before you use this violence. Let not doubt,
And a suspecting anger, so much sway you:
Your wisdom may be question'd.
Anto. I say, kill him,
And then dispute the cause.
Bapt. Hang up a true man,
Because 'tis possible he may be thievish?
Is this good justice?
Petr. I know, as certain
As day must come again, as clear as truth,
And open as belief can say it to me,
That I am basely wrong'd, wrong'd above recompense,
Maliciously abus'd, blasted for ever
In name and honour, lost to all remembrance,
But what is smear'd and shameful: I must kill him;
Necessity compels me.
San. But think better.
Petr. There's no other cure left; yet, witness with me,
All that is fair in man, all that is noble,
I am not greedy of his life I seek for,
Nor thirst to shed man's blood; and 'would 'twere possible,
I wish it from my soul,
My sword should only kill his crimes: no, 'tis
Honour—honour, my noble friends, that idol, honour,
That all the world now worships, not Petruchio,
Must do this justice.
Anto. Let it once be done,
And 'tis no matter whether you, or honour,
Or both, be accessary.
Bapt. Do you weigh, Petruchio,
The value of the person, power, and greatness,
And what this spark may kindle?
Petr. To perform it,
So much I am tied to reputation,
And credit of my house, let it raise wild-fires,
And storms that toss me into everlasting ruin,
Yet I must through; if you dare side me.
Anto. Dare!
Say we were all sure to die in this venture,
As I am confident against it, is there any
Amongst us of so fat a sense, so pamper'd,
Would choose luxuriously to lie a-bed,
And purge away his spirit? send his soul out
In sugar sops, and syrups? Give me dying,
As dying ought to be, upon my enemy:
Let them be all the world, and bring along
Cain's envy with them, I will on.
San. We'll follow.
Petr. You're friends, indeed!
Anto. Here is none will fly from you;
Do it in what design you please, we'll back you.
Petr. That's spoken heartily.
Ant. And he that flinches,
May he die, lousy, in a ditch!
San. Is the cause so mortal? nothing but his life?
Petr. Believe me,
A less offence has been the desolation
Of a whole name.
San. No other way to purge it?
Petr. There is, but never to be hop'd for.
Bapt. Think an hour more,
And if, then, you find no safer road to guide you,
We'll set our rest, too.
Anto. Mine's up already,
And hang him, for my part, goes less than life.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Don John.

Don J. The civil order of this city, Naples,
Makes it belov'd and honour'd of all travellers,
As a most safe retirement in all troubles;
Beside the wholesome seat, and noble temper
Of those minds that inhabit it, safely wise,
And to all strangers courteous. But I see
My admiration has drawn night upon me,
And longer to expect my friend, may pull me
Into suspicion of too late a stirrer,
Which all good governments are jealous of.
I'll home, and think at liberty: yet, certain,
'Tis not so far night as I thought; for see,
A fair house yet stands open; yet all about it
Are close, and no lights stirring: there may be foul play:
I'll venture to look in. If there be knaves,
I may do a good office,
Nurse. (*Within.*) Signior!
Don J. What? how is this?
Nurse. (*Within.*) Signior Fabritio!
Don J. This is a woman's tongue; here may be good done,
Nurse. (*Within.*) Who's there? Fabritio?
Don J. Ay.
Nurse. (*Within.*) Where are you?
Don J. Here.
Nurse. (*Within.*) Oh! come, for heaven's sake!
Don J. I must see what this means.

Enter Nurse with a Child.

Nurse. I have stay'd this long hour for you; make no noise;

For things are in strange trouble. Here; be secret;
'Tis worth your care: begone now; more eyes watch us,
Than may be for our safeties.
Don J. Harkye—
Nurse. Peace; good night! [*Exit.*
Don J. She's gone, and I am loaden. Fortune for me!
It weighs well, and it feels well; it may chance
To be some pack of worth: by th' mass, 'tis heavy!
If it be coin or jewels, it is worth welcome.
I'll ne'er refuse a fortune: I am confident
'Tis of no common price. Now to my lodging:
If it be right, I'll bless this night. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*Another Street.*

Enter Duke, Guzman, Pedro, *and* Perez.

Duke. Welcome to town. Are ye all fit?
Guz. To point, sir.
Duke. Where are the horses?
Pedro. Where they were appointed.
Duke. Be private all, and whatsoever fortune
Offer itself, let us stand sure.
Perez. Fear not;
Ere you shall be endanger'd, or deluded,
We'll make a black night on't.
Duke. No more, I know it;
You know your quarters.
Guz. Will you go alone, sir?
Duke. Ye shall not be far from me; the least noise
Shall bring you to my rescue.
Pedro. We are counsell'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Don John, *with a Child, crying.*

Don J. Was ever man so paid for being curious;
Ever so bobb'd for searching out adventures,
As I am! Did the devil lead me? Most I needs be peeping
Into men's houses, where I had no business,
And make myself a mischief?
What have I got by this now?
A piece of pap and caudle-work—a child:
This comes of peeping!
What a figure do I make now! good white bread,
Let's have no bawling wi' ye. 'Sdeath! have I
Known wenches thus long, all the ways of wenches,
Their snares and subtleties,
And am I now bumfiddled with a bastard?
Well, Don John,
You'll be wiser one day, when you have paid dearly
For a collection of these butter prints.
'Twould not grieve me to keep this gingerbread,
Were it of my own baking; but to beggar
Myself in caudles, nurses, coral, bells, and babies,
For other men's iniquities!
What shall I do with it now?
Should I be caught here dandling this pap-spoon,
I shall be sung in ballads;
No eyes are near—I'll drop it,
For the next curious coxcomb. How it smiles upon me!
Ha! you little sugar-sop! 'tis a sweet baby;
'Twere barbarous to leave it: ten to one 'twould kill it;
Worse sin than his who got it. Well, I'll take it,
And keep it as they keep death's-head, in rings,
To cry memento to me, "No more peeping!"
Now all the danger is to qualify
The good old gentlewoman, at whose house we lodge;
For she will fall upon me with a catechism
Of four hours long. Come, good wonder,
Let you and I be jogging; your starv'd treble
Will waken the rude watch else. All that be
Curious night-walkers, may they find my fee!
[*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*A Street.*

Enter Don Frederick.

Don F. Sure, he's gone home. I have beaten all the purlieus,
But cannot bolt him: if he be a bobbing—What's here?

Enter First Constantia.

1 *Con.* I am ready,
And through a world of dangers am flown to you;
Be full of haste and care, we are undone else.
Where are your people? Which way must we travel?
For heaven's sake, stay not here, sir!
Don F. What may this prove?
1 *Con.* Alas! I am mistaken, lost, undone,
For ever perish'd! Sir, for heaven's sake tell me,
Are you a gentleman?
Don F. I am.
1 *Con.* Of this place?
Don F. No; born in Spain.
1 *Con.* As ever you lov'd honour,
As ever your desires may gain their ends,
Do a poor wretched woman but this benefit,
For I am forc'd to trust you.
Don F. You have charm'd me:
Humanity and honour bid me help you;
And if I fail your trust—
1 *Con.* The time's too dangerous
To stay your protestations: I believe you.
Alas! I must believe you. From this place,
Good, noble sir, remove me instantly;
And, for a time, where nothing but yourself,
And honest conversation, may come near me;
In some secure place settle me. What I am,
And why thus boldly I commit my credit
Into a stranger's hand, the fear and dangers
That force me to this wild course, at more leisure,
I shall reveal unto you.
Don F. Come, be hearty;
He must strike through my life that takes you from me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

Enter Petruchio, Antonio, Sanchio, *and* Baptista.

Petr. He will sure come: are ye all well arm'd?
Anto. Never fear us:
Here's that will make them dance without a fiddle.
Petr. We are to look for no weak foes, my friends,
Nor unadvis'd ones.
Anto. Best gamesters make the best play;
We shall fight close, and home, too.
San. Antonio,
You are a thought too bloody.
Anto. Why, all physicians
And penny almanacks allow the opening
Of veins this month. Why do you talk of bloody?
What come we for, to fall to cuffs for apples?
What, would you make the cause a cudgel-quarrel?
On what terms stands this man? Is not his honour
Open'd t' his hand, and pick'd out like an oyster?
His credit like a quart-pot knock'd together,
Able to hold no liquor? Clear out this point.
Petr. Speak soft, gentle cousin.
Anto. I'll speak truly.
What should man do, allied to these disgraces,
Lick o'er his enemy, sit down, and dance him?
Cry, "That's my fine boy, thou shalt do so no more, child?"
Petr. Here are no such cold pities.
Anto. By St. Jaques,
They shall not find me one! Here's old tough Andrew,
A special friend of mine, and he but hold,
I'll strike them such a hornpipe! Knocks I come for,

And the best blood I'll light on: I profess it
Not to scare costermongers. If I lose my own,
My audit's cast, and farewell five-and-fifty.
Petr. Let's talk no longer, place yourself with silence,
As I direct you; and when time calls us,
As ye are friends, so shew yourselves.
Anto. So be it.
Oh! how my fingers tingle to be at them!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.—*A Chamber.*

Enter Don John *and his Landlady.*

Land. Nay, son, if this be your regard—
Don J. Good mother—
Land. Good me no goods. Your cousin and yourself
Are welcome to me whilst you bear yourselves
Like honest and true gentlemen. Bring hither,
To my house, that have ever been reputed
A gentlewoman of a decent and fair carriage,
And so behav'd myself—
Don J. I know you have.
Land. Bring hither, as I say, to make my name
Stink in my neighbours' nostrils, your devices,
Your brats, got out of allicant and broken oaths;
Your linsey-wolsey work, your filch'd iniquities!
You're deceiv'd in me, sir, I am none
Of those receivers.
Don J. Have I not sworn unto you,
'Tis none of mine, and shew'd you how I found it?
Land. You found an easy fool, that let you get it.
Don J. Will you hear me?
Land. Oaths! what care you for oaths, to gain your ends,
When you are high and pamper'd? What saint knows you?
Or what religion, but your wicked passions?
I'm sick to see this dealing.
Don J. Heaven forbid, mother!
Land. Nay, I am very sick.
Don J. Who waits there?
Peter. (*Within.*) Sir?
Don J. Bring a bottle of canary wine.
Land. Exceeding sick, heaven help me!
Don J. Haste you, sirrah!
I must e'en make her drunk. (*Aside.*) Nay, gentle mother—
Land. Now lie upon you! was it for this purpose
You fetch'd your evening walks for your devotions,
For this pretended holiness? No weather,
Not before day, could hold you from the matins.
Were these your bo-peep prayers?
Still sicker, sicker!

Enter Peter, *with a bottle of wine.*

Don J. There is no talking to her till I have drench'd her: (*Aside.*)
Give me: here, mother, take a good round draught.
It will purge spleen from your spirits: deeper, mother.
Land. Ay, ay, son, you imagine this will mend all.
Don J. All, i'faith! mother.
Land. I confess, the wine
Will do its part.
Don J. I'll pledge you.
Land. But, son John—
Don J. I know your meaning, mother; touch it once more.
Alas! you look not well. Take a round draught,
And then we'll talk at large.
Land. A civil gentleman!
A stranger; one the town holds a good regard of.
(*Aside.*)
Don J. Now we grow kind and maudlin. (*Aside.*)
Land. One that should weigh his fair name! (*Aside.*) Oh! a stitch!
Don J. There's nothing better for a stitch, good mother:
Make no spare of it as you love your health;
Mince not the matter.
Land. As I said, a gentleman lodge in my house!
Now heaven's my comfort, signior!—
Don J. And the wine, good mother.
I look'd for this. (*Aside.*)
Land. I did not think you would have us'd me thus;
A woman of credit; one, heaven knows!
That loves you but too tenderly.
Don J. The thunder ceases, and the rain descends.
Land. What do you say, son?
Don J. I say, mother,
That I ever found your kindness, and acknowledge it.
Land. No, no; I am a fool to counsel you. Where's the infant?
Come, let's see your workmanship.
Don J. It is none of mine, mother, but I'll fetch it.
Here it is, and a lusty one.
Land. Oh! heaven bless thee! As I live,
Your own eyes, signior; and the nether lip
As like you as you had spit it.
Don J. I am glad on't.
Land. Bless me! what things are these?
Don J. I thought my labour
Was not all lost; 'tis gold, and these are jewels,
Both rich and right, I hope.
Land. Well, well, son John,
Here I am with you now, when, as they say,
Your pleasure comes with profit.
Don J. All this time, good mother,
The child wants looking to, wants meat and nurses.
Land. Now blessing o' thy heart! it shall have all,
And instantly: I'll seek a nurse myself, son.
'Tis a sweet child! Ah! my young Spaniard!
Take you no further care, sir.
Don J. Yes, of these jewels,
I must, by your good leave, mother; these are mine:
The gold for bringing up of't, I freely render
To your charge: for the rest, I'll find a master.
But where's Don Fred'rick, mother?
Land. Ten to one,
About the like adventure; he told me
He was to find you out.
Don J. Why should he stay thus?
There may be some ill chance in't; sleep I will not,
Before I have found him.
Well, my dear mother, let the child be look'd to;
And look you to be rewarded. About it
Straight, good mother.
Land. No more words, nor no more children,
Good son, as you love me: this may do well:
This shall do well: eh! you little, sweet cherub!
[*Exit, with the Child.*
Don J. Away! So, so; I thought the wine would do its duty:
She'll kill the child with kindness: t'other glass,
And she had ravish'd me. There is no way
Of bringing women of her age to reason,
But by this: girls of fifteen are caught
Fifty ways; they bite as fast as you throw in;
But with the old cold 'tis a diff'rent dealing,
'Tis wine must warm them to their sense of feeling.
[*Exit.*

Act II.

Scene I.—*A Chamber.*

Enter Don Frederick, *and* Anthony *with a candle.*

Don F. Give me the candle; so, go you out that way.

Anth. What have we now to do? (*Aside.*)
Don F. And, on your life, sirrah!
Let none come near the door, without my knowledge;
No, not my landlady, nor my friend.
Anth. 'Tis done, sir.
Don F. Nor any serious business that concerns me.
Anth. Is the wind there again? (*Aside.*)
Don F. Begone!
Anth. I am, sir. [*Exit.*
Fred. Now enter without fear.

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

And, noble lady,
That safety and civility you wish for,
Shall truly here attend you:
No wishes,
Beyond the moderation of a man,
Dare enter here. Your own desires and innocence,
Join'd to my vow'd obedience, shall protect you.
1 *Con.* You are truly noble,
And worth a woman's trust: let it become me,
(I do beseech you, sir,) for all your kindness,
To render, with my thanks, this worthless trifle:
(*Offers a ring.*)
I may be longer troublesome.
Don F. Fair offices
Are still their own rewards: heaven bless me, lady,
From selling civil courtesies. May it please you,
If you will force a favour, to oblige me,
Draw but that cloud aside, to satisfy me
For what good angel I am engag'd.
1 *Con.* It shall be;
For I am truly confident you are honest:
The piece is scarce worth looking on.
Don F. Trust me,
The abstract of all beauty, soul of sweetness!
What eyes are there!
Noble lady,
If there be any further service to cast on me,
Let it be worth my life, so much I honour you—
1 *Con.* Your service is too liberal, worthy sir.
Thus far I shall entreat—
Don F. Command me, lady:
You make your power too poor.
1 *Con.* That presently,
With all convenient haste, you will retire
Unto the street you found me in:
There, if you find a gentleman oppress'd
With force and violence, do a man's office,
And draw your sword, to rescue him.
Don F. He's safe,
Be what he will; and let his foes be devils,
Arm'd with your beauty, I shall conjure them.
Retire; this key will guide you: all things necessary
Are there before you.
1 *Con.* All my prayers go with you! [*Exit.*
Don F. Men say, gold
Does all, engages all, works through all dangers:
Now, I say, beauty can do more. The king's exchequer,
Nor all his wealthy Indies, could not draw me
Through half those miseries this piece of pleasure
Might make me leap into:
Yet, I vow,
My hopes shall die, and my tongue rot within me,
Ere I infringe my faith. Now to my rescue. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter the DUKE, *pursued by* PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and that party.*

Duke. You will not all oppress me?
Anto. Kill him i' th' wanton eye.
Let me come to him.
Duke. Then you shall buy me dearly.
(*They fight; the Duke fights and retreats.*)

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. Sure, 'tis fighting!
My friend may be engag'd. Fie! gentlemen,
This is unmanly odds. (*Duke falls.*) Press upon
A fall'n enemy; it is cowardly:
Thus will I protect him. (*Bestrides the Duke.*)
Anto. I'll stop your mouth, sir.
Don J. Nay, then, have at thee freely.
There's a plum to satisfy your longing.
Petr. He's fallen; I hope I have sped him.
Where's Antonio?
Anto. I must have one thrust more, sir.
Don J. Come up to me.
Anto. A mischief confound your fingers!
He's given me my *quietus est;* I felt him
In my small guts; I'm sure he's feez'd me:
This comes of siding with you.
Petr. I hear more rescue coming.
(*Trampling within.*)
Anto. Let's turn back, then;
My skull's uncloven yet, let me but kill somebody.
Petr. Away, for heaven's sake, with him!
[*They hurry Antonio off.*

Enter the Duke's Party.

Don J. Help, gentlemen! How is it?
Duke. Well, sir,
Only a little stagger'd.
Duke's Party. Let's pursue them.
Duke. No; not a man, I charge you.
My thanks to you, brave sir, whose timely valour
And manly courtesy came to my rescue.
Don J. You had foul play offer'd you, and shame befall him
That can pass by oppression.
Duke. May I crave, sir,
But this much honour more, to know your name,
And him I am so bound to?
Don J. For the bond, sir,
'Tis every good man's tie; to know me further,
Will little profit you; I am a stranger;
My country, Spain; my name, Don John; a gentleman
That came abroad to travel.
Duke. I have heard, sir,
Much worthy mention of you, yet I find
Fame short of what you are.
Don J. You are pleas'd, sir,
To express your courtesy; may I demand
As freely what you are, and what mischance
Cast you into this danger?
Duke. For this present
I must desire your pardon; you shall know me
Ere it be long, sir, and nobler thanks
Than now my will can render.
Don J. Your will's your own, sir.
(*Looking about.*)
Duke. What is't you look for, sir? Have you lost anything?
Don J. Only my hat i' th' scuffle; sure, these fellows
Were night-snaps!
Duke. No, believe me, sir; pray, use mine,
For 'twill be hard to find your own now.
Don J. Indeed, I cannot.
Duke. Indeed, you shall: I can command another.
I do beseech you, honour me.
Don J. Well, sir, then I will;
And so I'll take my leave.
Duke. Within these few days
I hope I shall be happy in your knowledge,
Till when, you live in my remembrance.
[*Exit with his party.*
Don J. And you in mine.
This is some noble fellow!

Enter Don Frederick.

Don F. 'Tis his tongue, sure.
Don John!
Don J. Don Frederick!
Don F. You're fairly met, sir.
Pr'ythee, tell me, what revelations hast thou had to-night,
That home was never thought of?
Don J. Revelations!
I'll tell thee, Frederick: but before I tell thee,
Settle thy understanding.
Don F. 'Tis prepar'd, sir.
Don J. Why, then, mark what shall follow:
This night, Frederick, this wicked night—
Don F. I thought no less.
Don J. This blind night!—
What dost thou think I have got?
Don F. What such wanton fellows ought to get.
Don J. Would 'twere no worse! you talk of revelations,
I have got a revelation will reveal me
An arrant coxcomb whilst I live.
Don F. What is't?
Thou hast lost nothing?
Don J. No, I have got, I tell thee.
Don F. What hast thou got?
Don J. One of the infantry—a child.
Don F. How!
Don J. A chopping child, man.
Don F. 'Give you joy, sir!
Don J. I'll give it you, sir, if it is joy. Frederick,
This town's abominable, that's the truth on't.
Don F. I still told you, John,
Your wenching must come home; I counsell'd you;
But where no grace is—
Don J. 'Tis none of mine, man.
Don F. Answer the parish so.
Don J. Cheated, in troth!
Peeping into a house, by whom I know not,
Nor where to find the place again; but, Frederick,
'Tis no poor one,
That's my best comfort, for't has brought about it
Enough to make it, man.
Don F. Where is't?
Don J. At home.
Don F. A saving voyage; but what will you say, signior,
To him that, searching out your serious worship,
Has met a stranger fortune?
Don J. How, good Frederick?
A little squeaking girl to this boy would hit it.
Don F. No, mine's a nobler venture; what do you think, sir,
Of a distress'd lady, one whose beauty
Would oversell all Italy?
Don J. Where is she?
Don F. A woman of that rare behaviour,
So qualified, as love and admiration
Dwell round about her; of that perfect spirit—
Don J. Ay, marry, sir?
Don F. That admirable carriage,
That sweetness in discourse: young as the morning,
Her blushes staining his.
Don J. But where's this creature?
Shew me but that.
Don F. That's all one; she's forthcoming.
I have her sure, boy.
Don J. Harkye! Frederick;
What truck betwixt my infant?
Don F. 'Tis too light, sir;
Stick to your charge, good Don John; I am well.
Don J. But is there such a wench?
Don F. First tell me this:
Did you not lately, as you walk'd along,
Discover people that were arm'd, and likely
To do offence?
Don J. Yes, marry, and they urg'd it
As far as they had spirit.
Don F. Pray, go forward.
Don J. A gentleman I found engag'd amongst them,
It seems, of noble breeding, I'm sure, brave mettle,
As I return'd to look you; I set into him,
And without hurt (I thank heaven!) rescu'd him.
Ecce signum. (*Shewing the hat.*)
Don F. What the devil's that, John?
Don J. Only the laurel I gain'd in the scuffle.
Don F. Bravo! then all my work is done.
And now, to satisfy you, there is a woman—
Oh! John, there is a woman—
Don J. Oh! Frederick, where is she?
Don F. And one of no less worth than I assure you;
And, which is more, fall'n under my protection.
Don J. I'm glad of that; forward, sweet Frederick.
Don F. And, which is most of all, she is at home, too, sir.
Don J. Come, let's begone, sir.
Don F. Yes; but 'tis most certain,
You cannot see her, sir.
Don J. Why?
Don F. She has sworn me,
That none else shall come near her; not my mother,
Till some doubts are clear'd.
Don J. Not look upon her? What chamber is she in?
Don F. In ours.
Don J. Let's go, I say:
A woman's oaths are wafers, break with making.
They must for modesty a little: we all know it.
Let's go, I say.
Don F. No, I'll assure you, sir.
Don J. Not see her!
I smell an old dog trick of your's. Lookye! Frederick;
You talk'd to me of wenching; let's have fair play,
Square dealing, I would wish you.
Don F. You may depend upon it, John.
Don J. Tell me,
And tell me true: is the cause honourable,
Or for your pleasure?
Fred. By all our friendship, John,
'Tis honest, and of great end.
Don J. I'm answer'd;
But let me see her though.
Don F. I can't.
Don J. Leave the door open as you go in.
Don F. I dare not.
Don J. Not wide open, but a little, very little,
So as a jealous husband
Would level at his wanton wife through.
Don F. That courtesy,
If you desire no more—
Don J. No more.
Don F. And keep it strictly—
Don J. Upon my honour.
Don F. I dare afford you. Come, 'tis now near morning.
Don J. Along, along, then, dear Frederick.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Peter *and* Anthony.

Peter. Nay, the old woman's gone, too.
Anth. She's a caterwauling
Amongst the gutters: but, conceive me, Peter,
Where our good masters should be.
Peter. Where they should be,
I do conceive; but where they are, good Anthony—
Anth. Ay, there it goes. My master's bo-peep with me,
With his sly popping in and out again,
Argued a cause—
Peter. My saint-like Don has hired a chapel
In the corner there, for his pious uses;
Where I, against my will, watch, fast, and pray.

Anth. Hark! (*Lute sounds.*)
Peter. What?
Anth. Dost not hear a noise?
Again!—'tis a lute.
Peter. Odd! it's a lute, or a drum. Where is it?
Anth. Above, in my master's chamber.
Peter. There is no creature: he hath the key himself, man.
Anth. Let him have it; this is his lute.
(*Singing within.*)
Peter. I grant you; but who strikes it?
Anth. An admirable voice, too! Hark you!
Peter. Anthony,
Art sure we are at home?
Anth. Without all doubt, Peter.
Peter. Then it must be the devil.
Anth. Let it be.
Good devil, sing again. Oh! dainty devil!
Peter, believe it a most delicate devil!
The sweetest devil—

Enter DON FREDERICK *and* DON JOHN.

Don F. If you will be content with peeping?
Don J. I will, I will.
Don F. Then come in softly;
And, as you love your faith, presume no further
Than you have promis'd.
Don J. Basta!
Don F. What makes you up so early, sir?
Don J. You, sir, in your contemplations?
Peter. Oh! pray you, peace, sir.
Anth. Hush, hush! (*Lute sounds.*)
Don F. Why peace, sir?
Anth. Why, hush, hush!
Peter. Do you hear?
Don J. 'Tis your lute: she's playing on't.
Anth. The house is haunted, sir;
For this we have heard this half year.
Don F. You saw nothing?
Anth. Not I.
Peter. Nor I, sir.
Don F. Get out our breakfast, then;
And make no words on't.
Don J. We'll undertake this spirit, if it be one.
Anth. This is no devil, Peter.
Mum! there be bats abroad. [*Exit with Peter.*
Don F. Stay; now she sings.
Why didst thou shrug so?
Either allay this heat, or, as I live, I will not trust you.
Don J. Pass on; I warrant you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Chamber.*

Enter First CONSTANTIA, *with a lute.*

1 *Con.* Thou friendly, soothing instrument! my better
Genius has surely laid thee in my way,
That thy sweet melancholy strain might echo
To the sorrows of my heart, lest it, o'erburden'd,
Should, from reflection, sink into despair.
To curse those stars, that men say govern us;
To rail at fortune, to fall out with fate,
And tax the general world, will help me nothing:
Alas! our own desires
Are our own fates, our own stars all our fortune,
Which, as we sway them, so abuse, or bless us.
(*Retires and sits.*)

Enter DON FREDERICK. DON JOHN *peeping.*

Don F. Peace to your meditations!
Don J. Pox on you!
Stand out of the light. (*Aside.*)
1 *Con.* I crave your mercy, sir.
My mind, o'erchargd with care, made me unmannerly.
Don F. Pray you, set that mind at rest; all shall be perfect.
Don J. I like the person rare: a handsome person!
A wond'rous handsome body! Would she would turn!
See, an that spiteful puppy be not got
Between me and my light again! (*Aside.*)
Don F. 'Tis done;
As all that you command, shall be: the gentleman
Is safely off all danger.
Don J. What a rare creature: (*Aside.*)
1 *Con.* How shall I thank you, sir? how satisfy—
Don F. Gentle lady, all's rewarded.
Now does he melt like marmalade. (*Aside.*)
Don J. Nay, 'tis certain,
Thou art the sweetest woman, that eyes e'er look'd on!
Pray, heaven, thou art not honest! (*Aside.*)
Don F. None disturb'd you?
1 *Con.* Not any, sir; nor any sound came near me;
I thank your care.
Don F. 'Tis well.
Pull in your head, and be hang'd! (*To Don J.*)
Don J. Harkye! Frederick,
I have brought you home your pack-saddle.
Don F. Fie upon you!
(*To Don J. Shuts the door.*)
1 *Con.* Nay, let him enter. Fie! my lord duke;
Stand peeping at your friends!
Don F. You are cozen'd, lady;
Here is no duke.
1 *Con.* I know him, full well, signior.
I do beseech your grace, come in.
Don F. Shall he enter,
Whoe'er he be?
1 *Con.* With all my heart.
Don F. Come in, then.

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. Bless you, lady! (*Constantia starts.*)
Don F. Nay, start not; though he be a stranger to you,
He's of a noble strain; my kinsman, lady;
My countryman, and fellow-traveller.
He's truly honest.
Don J. That's a lie. (*Aside.*)
Don F. And trusty,
Beyond your wishes; valiant to defend,
And modest to converse with as your blushes.
Don J. Modest to converse with! Here's a fellow!
Now may I hang myself: this commendation
Has broke the neck of all my hopes; for now
Must I cry, "No, forsooth!" and "Ay, forsooth!"
"And truly, as I live!" and "As I am honest!"
He's done these things on purpose; for he knows,
Like a most envious rascal as he is,
I am not honest this way. Oh! the traitor!
He has watch'd his time. I shall be quit with him.
(*Aside.*)
1 *Con.* Sir, I credit you.
Don F. Go, salute her, John.
Don J. Plague o' your commendations! (*Aside.*)
1 *Con.* Sir, I shall now desire to be a trouble.
Don J. Never to me, sweet lady. Thus I seal
My faith, and all my services. (*Kisses her hand.*)
1 *Con.* One word, signior. (*To Don F.*)
Don J. What a hand the rogue has! softer than down,
And whiter than the lily; and then, her eyes!
What points she at? my leg, I warrant; or
My well-knit body: sit fast, Don Frederick.
Don F. 'Twas given him by that gentleman,
You took such care of, his own being lost i' the scuffle.

1 *Con.* With much joy may he wear it! 'tis a right one,
I can assure you, gentlemen; and right happy
May he be in all fights for that noble service.
Don F. Why do you blush?
1 *Con.* It had almost cozen'd me.
For, not to lie, when I saw that, I look'd for
Another owner of it. But 'tis well.
Don F. Who's there? (*Knocking.*)
Pray you, retire, madam. [*Exit* 1 *Con.*] Come in, sir.

Enter Anthony.

Now, what's the news with you?
Anth. There is a gentleman without
Would speak with Don John.
Don F. (*To Don J. who is peeping after Con.*) Don John!
Don J. (*Still peeping.*) What's the matter?
Don F. Leave peeping, John; you are wanted.
Don J. Who is it?
Anth. I do not know, sir; but he shews a man
Of no mean reckoning.
Don J. Let him shew his name,
And you return a little wiser. [*Exit Anthony.*
Don F. How do you like her, John?
Don J. As well as you, Frederick,
For all I am honest; you shall find it, too.
Don F. Art thou not honest?
Don J. Art thou an ass?
"And modest as her blushes!" What a block-head
Would e'er have popp'd out such a dry apology
For his dear friend? And to a gentlewoman,
A woman of her youth and delicacy!
They are arguments to draw them to abhor us.
An honest, moral man! 'tis for a constable.
A handsome man, a wholesome man,
A liberal man, a likely man,
Stout, strong, and valiant—
These had been things to hearken to; things catching;
But you have such a spic'd consideration,
Such qualms upon your worship's conscience,
Such chilblains in your blood, that all things pinch you,
Which nature and the liberal world make custom;
And nothing but fair honour! dear honour! sweet honour!
Oh! damn your water-gruel honour!
Don F. I am sorry, John—
Don J. And so am I, Frederick; but what of that?
Fie upon thee! a man of thy discretion!
That I was trusty and valiant, were things well put in;
But, modest! a modest gentleman!
Oh! wit, wit! where wast thou?
Don F. It shall be mended;
And henceforth you shall have your due.

Re-enter Anthony.

Don J. I look for't.--How now, who is't?
Anth. A gentleman of this city,
And calls himself Petruchio.
Don J. Petruchio! I'll attend him. [*Exit Anth.*

Enter First Constantia.

1 *Con.* How did he call himself?
Don F. Petruchio:
Does it concern you aught?
1 *Con.* Oh! gentlemen,
The hour of my destruction is come on me;
I am discover'd, lost, left to my ruin:
As ever you had pity—
Don J. Do not fear;
Let the great devil come, he shall come through me first.
Lost here, and we about you!
1 *Con.* To you, and your humanity, a hapless
Helpless creature, begs for safety. Oh! grant
Me your protection; to your honours, sirs,
I fly, as to the altar, for a refuge:
Be your nobleness
My sanctuary, and shield a woe-sick heart
From all its terrors and afflictions. (*Kneeling.*)
Don J. Pray, rise. (*Kneels.*) I can't bear it.
Don F. Fall before us!
1 *Con.* Oh! my unfortunate estate! all anger
Compar'd to his, to his—
Don F. Let his and all men's,
Whilst we have power and life; bear up, for heaven's sake!
Don J. And for my sake, be comforted.
1 *Con.* I have offended heaven, too; yet heaven knows—
Don J. Ay, heaven knows, that we are all evil;
Yet heaven forbid we should have our deserts.
What is he?
1 *Con.* Too, too near to my offence, sir.
Oh! he will cut me piece-meal!
Don F. 'Tis no treason?
Don J. Let it be what it will, if he cut here,
I'll find him cut-work.
Don F. He must buy you dear;
With more than common lives.
Don J. Fear not, nor weep not;
By heaven, I'll fire the town before you perish!
And then the more the merrier; we'll jog with you.
Don F. Come, in, and dry your eyes.
Don J. Pray, no more weeping.
Spoil a sweet face for nothing! My return
Shall end all this, I warrant you.
1 *Con.* Heaven grant it! [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.—*An Apartment in Don Frederick's Lodgings.*

Enter Petruchio, *with a letter.*

Petr. This man should be of quality and worth,
By Don Alvaro's letter; for he gives
No slight recommendation of him:
I'll e'en make use of him.

Enter Don John.

Don J. Save you, sir; I am sorry
My business was so unmannerly, to make you
Wait thus long here.
Petr. Occasions must be serv'd, sir.
But is your name Don John!
Don J. It is, sir.
Petr. Then,
First, for your own brave sake, I must embrace you:
Next, for the credit of your noble friend,
Hernanda de Alvaro, make you mine:
Who lays his charge upon me, in this letter,
To look you out; and for the virtue in you,
Whilst your occasions make you resident
In this place, to supply you, love and honour you;
Which had I known sooner—
Don J. Noble sir,
You'll make my thanks too poor. I wear a sword, sir;
And have a service to be still dispos'd of,
As you shall please command it.
Petr. That manly courtesy is half my business, sir;

And, to be short, to make you know I honour you,
And in all points believe your worth-like oracle;
This day, Petruchio,
One that may command the strength of this place,
Hazard the boldest spirits, hath made choice
Only of you, and in a noble office.

Don J. Forward, I am free to entertain it.

Petr. Thus, then;
I do beseech you, mark me.

Don J. I shall, sir.

Petr. Ferrara's duke—Would I might call him worthy!
But that he has razed out from his family,
As he has mine, with infamy—This man,
Rather, this powerful monster, we being left
But two, of all our house, to stock our memories,
My sister Constantia and myself; with arts and witchcrafts,
Vows, and such oaths heaven has no mercy for,
Drew to dishonour this weak maid by stealth,
And secret passages, I knew not of.
Oft he obtain'd his wishes, oft abus'd her,
I am asham'd to say the rest. This purchas'd,
And his hot blood allay'd, he left her,
And all our name to ruin.

Don J. This was foul play,
And ought to be rewarded so.

Petr. I hope so:
He 'scap'd me yesternight; which, if he dare
Again adventure for, I will pardon him.

Don J. Sir, what commands have you to lay on me?

Petr. Only thus: by word of mouth to carry him
A challenge from me, that so (if he have honour in him)
We may decide all difference betwixt us.

Don J. Fair and noble;
And I will do it home. When shall I visit you?

Petr. Please you, this afternoon, I will ride with you;
For, at the castle, six miles hence, we are sure
To find him.

Don J. I'll be ready.

Petr. My man shall wait here,
And conduct you to my house.

Don J. I shall not fail you. [*Exit Petruchio.*

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Don F. How now?

Don J. All's well, and better than thou couldst expect; for this wench is certainly no vestal. But who do you think that she is? guess, an' thou canst.

Don F. I cannot.

Don J. Be it known, then, to all men, by these presents, this is she, she, and only she, our curious coxcombs have been so long hunting after.

Don F. Who, Constantia? Thou talk'st of cocks and bulls, John.

Don J. I talk of wenches, Frederick. This is the pullet we two have been crowing after.

Don F. It cannot be.

Don J. It can be, it shall be, and must be—sister to Don Petruchio; her name, Constantia; I know all, man.

Don F. Now I believe—

Don J. I both believe and hope it.

Don F. Why do you hope it?

Don J. First, because she is handsome; and next, because she is kind: there are two reasons for you. Now do you find out a third, a better, if you can: for take this, Frederick, for a certain rule, since she has once begun, she'll never give it over: ergo, if we have good luck, in time she may fall to our share.

Don F. I can't believe her dishonest for all this. She has not one loose thought about her.

Don J. No matter for that, she's no saint. There has been fine work, dainty doings, Frederick!

Don F. How can you talk so?

Don J. Because I think so. Now you think so, and talk otherwise; therefore, I am the honester, though you may be the modester man.

Don F. Well, well; there may have been a slip.

Don J. Ay, and a tumble, too, poor creature! I think the boy will prove her's, I took up last night.

Don F. The devil!

Don J. Ay, ay; he has been at work. Let us go in, and comfort her: that she is here, is nothing yet suspected. Anon I'll tell you why her brother came, (who, by this light, is a brave fellow,) and what honour he has done me, in calling me to serve him.

Don F. There be irons heating for some, Don John.

Don J. Then we must take care not to burn our fingers, Frederick. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*

Enter Landlady and ANTHONY.

Land. Come, sir, who is it that keeps your master company?

Anth. I say to you, Don John.

Land. I say, what woman?

Anth. I say so, too.

Land. I say again, I will know.

Anth. I say, 'tis fit you should.

Land. And I tell thee, he has a woman here.

Anth. I tell thee, 'tis, then, the better for him.

Land. Was ever gentlewoman
So frump'd up with a fool! Well, saucy sirrah,
I will know who it is, and to what purpose.
I pay the rent, and I will know how my house
Comes by these inflammations.

Anth. 'Twould be a great ease to your age.

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Don F. How now?
Why, what's the matter, Landlady?

Land. What's the matter!
You use me decently among you, gentlemen.

Don F. Who has abus'd her? you, sir?

Land. Od's my witness!
I will not be thus treated, that I will not.

Anth. I gave her no ill language.

Land. Thou liest, sirrah!
Thou took'st me up at every word I spoke,
As I had been a maukin, a flirt gillian:
And thou think'st, because thou canst write and read,
Our noses must be under thee.

Don F. Dare you, sirrah?

Anth. Let but the truth be known, sir, I beseech you:
She raves of wenches, and I know not what, sir.

Land. Go to, thou know'st too well, thou wicked varlet!
Thou instrument of evil!

Anth. As I live, sir, she's ever thus, till dinner.

Don F. Get you in, sir; I'll answer you anon. [*Exit Anthony.*
Now to your grief: what is't? for I can guess—

Land. You may, with shame enough, Don Frederick,
If there were shame amongst you: nothing thought on,
But how you may abuse my house.

Don F. No more of these words;
Nor no more murm'rings, woman:

I did suspect your anger;
But turn it presently and handsomely,
And bear yourself discreetly to this lady;
For such a one there is, indeed.
Land. 'Tis well, sir!
Don F. Leave off your devil's matims, and your melancholies,
Or we shall leave our lodgings.
Land. But, mine honour—
And 'twere not for mine honour—
Don F. Come, your honour,
Your house, and you, too, if you dare believe me,
Are well enough. Sleek up yourself, leave crying;
For I must have you entertain this lady
With all civility. When you know her,
You'll find your own fault; no more words, but do it.
Land. You know, you may command me.

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. Worshipful landlady,
How does thy swanskin petticoat? By heav'n,
Thou look'st most amiable!
Land. You'll leave this roguery,
When you come to my years.
Don J. By this light,
Thou art not above fifteen yet; a mere girl!
Thou hast not half thy teeth! (*Knocking.*)
Don F. Somebody knocks;
See who it is; and do not mind this fellow.
Land. I beg, sir, that you'll use me with decorum.
Don J. Ay, ay, I'll promise you; with nothing else. [*Exit Landlady.*
Was there ever such a piece of touchwood?
Don F. Pr'ythee, John, let her alone; she has been
Well vex'd already. She'll grow stark mad, man.
Don J. I would fain see her mad. An old mad woman—
Don F. Don't be a fool.
Don J. Is like a miller's mare troubled with the tooth-ache,
She makes the rarest faces—
Don F. Pr'ythee, be sober.

Re-enter Landlady.

Don J. What, again!
Nay, then, it is decreed, though hills were set on hills,
And seas met seas to guard thee, I would through!
Land. Od's my witness! if you ruffle me, I'll spoil your sweet face for you.
Don J. Oh! raptures, raptures! (*Kissing her. She runs after him.*)
What, will you hurt your own son?
Land. Well, well; go, go to the door, there's a gentleman there would speak with you.
Don J. Upon my life, Petruchio. Good, dear landlady, carry him into the dining-room, and I'll wait upon him presently.
Land. Well, Don John, the time will come that I shall be even with you. [*Exit.*
Don J. I must begone about this business. Won't you go too, Frederick?
Don F. I am not requested, you know; besides, the lady will want advice and consolation.
Don J. Yes; and I know, too, with all your modesty, that you will be ready to give it her.
Don F. For shame, John; how can you ramble so?
You know you may trust me.
Don J. I had rather trust a cat with sweet milk, Frederick.
Don F. I'll but speak to her, and follow you.
Don J. Indeed?
Don F. Indeed.
Don J. Upon your honour?
Don F. Upon my honour.
Don J. And your modesty?
Don F. Phoo, phoo! don't be a fool.
Don J. Well, well, I shall trust you,—now I'm easy. [*Exit.*

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

1 *Con.* What, no way to divert this certain danger?
Don F. Impossible! their honours are engag'd.
1 *Con.* Then there must be murder, and I the cause!
Which, gen'rous sir, I shall no sooner hear of,
Than make one in't. You may, if you please, sir,
Make all go less. Do, sir, for heaven's sake,
Let me request one favour.
Don F. It is granted.
1 *Con.* Your friend, sir, is, I find, too resolute,
Too hot and fiery for the cause: as ever
You did a virtuous deed, for honour's sake,
Go with him, and allay him: your fair temper,
And noble disposition, like wish'd showers,
May quench those eating fires, that would spoil all else.
I see in him destruction.
Don F. I will do it: and it is a wise consideration.
I'll after him, lady.
The old gentlewoman
Shall wait upon you; she is discreet and secret,
And you may trust her to all points.
1 *Con.* You are noble.
Don F. And so I take my leave.
I hope, lady, a happy issue for all this.
1 *Con.* All heaven's care upon you, and my prayers! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Antonio's House.*

Enter Surgeon and a Gentleman.

Gent. What symptoms do you find in him?
Surg. None, sir, dangerous, if he'd be ruled.
Gent. Why, what does he do?
Surg. Nothing that he should. First, he will let no liquor down but wine; and then, he has a fancy that he must be dressed always to the tune of John Dory.
Gent. How to the tune of John Dory?
Surg. Why, he will have fiddlers, and make them play and sing it to him all the while.
Gent. An odd fancy, indeed!

Enter ANTONIO.

Anto, Give me some wine.
Surg. I told you so—'Tis death, sir.
Anto. 'Tis a horse, sir. Dost thou think I shall recover with the help of barley water only?
Gent. Fie, Antonio, you must be governed.
Anto. Why, sir, he feeds me with nothing but rotten roots, and drowned chickens, stewed pericraniums and pia-maters; and when I go to bed, (by heaven 'tis true, sir) he rolls me up in lints, with labels at them, that I am just the man in the almanack, my head and face is in Aries' place.
Surg. Will it please you to let your friends see you opened?
Anto. Will it please you, sir, to give me a brimmer? I feel my body open enough for that. Give it me, or I'll die upon thy hand, and spoil thy custom.
Surg. How, a brimmer?
Anto. Why, look you, sir, thus I am used still;

I can get nothing that I want. In how long a time canst thou cure me?

Surg. In forty days.

Anto. I'll have a dog shall lick me whole in twenty. In how long a time canst thou kill me?

Surg. Presently.

Anto. Do it; that's the shorter, and there's more delight in it.

Gent. You must have patience.

Anto. Man, I must have business; this foolish fellow hinders himself; I have a dozen rascals to hurt within these five days. Good man-mender, stop me up with parsley like stuffed beef, and let me walk abroad, and let me be dressed to that warlike tune, John Dory.

Surg. You shall walk shortly.

Anto. I will walk presently, sir, and leave your salads there, your green salves and your oils; I'll to my old diet again, strong food and rich wine, and see what that will do.

Surg. Well, go thy ways, thou art the maddest old fellow I ever met with! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—*Don Frederick's lodging.*

Enter First CONSTANTIA *and Landlady.*

1 *Con.* I have told all I can, and more than yet
These gentlemen know of me, ever trusting
Your concealment—but are they such strange creatures?

Land. There's the younger, ay, and the wildest,
Don John, the arrant'st Jack in all this city:
Has been a dragon in his days! the truth is,
Whose chastity he chops upon he cares not;
He flies at all; bastards, upon my conscience,
He has now a hundred of 'em. The last night
He brought home one; I pity her that bore it.
Some rich woman
(For wise I dare not call her) was the mother,
For it was hung with jewels; the bearing cloth
No less than crimson velvet.

1 *Con.* How?

Land. 'Tis true, lady.

1 *Con.* Was it a boy, too?

Land. A brave boy!

1 *Con.* May I see it?
For there is a neighbour of mine, a gentleman,
Has had a late mischance, which willingly
I would know further of; now if you please
To be so courteous to me.

Land. You shall see it:
But what do you think of these men, now you know 'em?
Be wise, or you may repent too late. I tell you
But for your own good, and as you will find it.

1 *Con.* I am advised.

Land. No more words then; do that,
And instantly, I told you of; be ready:
Don John, I'll fit you for your frumps. (*Aside.*)

1 *Con.* I will, dame:
But shall I see this, child?

Land. Within this half hour.
Let's in, and then think better. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Near the Castle of the Duke.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, DON JOHN, *and* FREDERICK.

Don J. Sir, he is worth your knowledge, and a gentleman
(If I that so much love him, may commend him)
That's full of honour: and one, if foul play
Should fall on us, will not fly back for lillips.

Petr. You much honour me,
And once more I pronounce you both mine.

Don F. Stay;
What troop is that below i' th' valley there?

Don J. Hawking, I take it.

Petr. They are so; 'tis the Duke, 'tis even he, gentlemen;
I know him by his company.

Don F. I think too,
He bends up this way.

Petr. So he does.

Don J. Stand you still,
Within that covert, till I call: You, Frederick,
By no means be not seen, unless they offer
To bring on odds upon us: He comes forward;
Here will I wait him fairly: To your places.

Petr. I need no more instruct you.

Don J. Fear me not.
(*Petruchio and Frederick retire.*)

Enter DUKE *and his Party.*

Duke. Feed the hawks up,
We'll fly no more to-day. Oh, my blest fortune,
Have I so fairly met the man!

Don J. You have, sir;
And him you know by this. (*Showing his hat.*)

Duke. Sir, all the honour,
And love—

Don J. I do beseech your grace stay there.
Dismiss your train a little.

Duke. Walk aside,
And out of hearing, I command ye: Now, sir,
Be plain.

Don J. I will, and short;
You have wronged a gentleman beyond all justice,
Beyond the mediation of all friends.

Duke. The man, and manner of wrong?

Don J. Petruchio is the man;
The wrong is, you have dishonour'd his sister.

Duke. Now, stay you, sir,
And hear me a little. This gentleman's
Sister, that you have named, 'tis true I have long loved;
As true, I have possess'd her: No less truth,
I have a child by her. But that she, or he,
Or any of that family, are tainted.
Suffer disgrace or ruin by my pleasures,
I wear a sword to satisfy the world, no,
And him in this case when pleases; for know, sir,
She is my wife, contracted before heaven;
(A witness I owe more tie to than her brother)
Nor will I fly from that name, which long since
Had had the church's seal and approbation,
But for his jealous nature.

Don J. Sir, your pardon;
And all that was my anger, now my service.

Duke. Fair sir, I knew I should convert you; had we
But that rough man here now too—

Don J. You shall, sir.
What, hoa, hoa!

Duke. I hope you have laid no ambush?

Enter PETRUCHIO.

Don J. Only friends.

Duke. My noble brother, welcome.
Come, put your anger off, we'll have no fighting.
Unless you will maintain I am unworthy
To bear that name.

Petr. Do you speak this heartily?

Duke. Upon my soul, and truly: The first priest
Shall put you out of these doubts.

Petr. Now I love you,
And beseech you, pardon my suspicions;
You are now more than a brother, a brave friend too.

Don J. The good man's overjoy'd. What, ho,
Mr. Modesty, you may come forth now—

Enter Don Frederick.

Don F. How goes it?
Don J. Why, the man has his mare again, and all's well.
The Duke professes freely he's her husband.
Don F. 'Tis a good hearing.
Don J. Yes, for modest gentlemen;
I must present you—May it please your grace,
To number this brave gentleman, my friend,
And noble kinsman, among these your servants.
He is truly valiant, and modest to converse with.
Duke. Oh, my brave friend! you shower your bounties on me.
Amongst thy best thoughts, signior, in which number
You being worthily disposed already,
May freely place your friend.
Don F. Your grace honours me.
Petr. Why, this is wond'rous happy. But now, brother,
Now comes the bitter to our sweet: Constantia!
Duke. Why, what of her?
Petr. Nor what, nor where do I know:
Wing'd with her fears, last night, beyond my knowledge.
She quit my house, but whither—
Don F. Let not that—
Duke. No more, good sir, I have heard too much.
Petr. Nay, sink not,
She cannot be so lost.
Don J. Nor shall not, gentlemen;
Be free again, the lady's found: That smile, sir,
Shows you distrust your servant.
Duke. I do beseech you.
Don J. You shall believe me; by my soul, she's safe.
Duke. Heaven knows I would believe, sir.
Don F. You may safely.
Don J. And under noble usage: This modest gentleman—
Speak, Frederick.—
Don F. I met her in all her doubts last night, and to my guard
(Her fears being strong upon her) she gave her person;
I waited on her to our lodging; where all respect,
Civil and honest service, now attend her.
Petr. You may believe now.
Duke. Yes, I do, and strongly:
Well, my good friends, or rather my good angels,
For you have both preserved me; when these virtues
Die in your friend's remembrance—
Don J. Good, your grace,
Lose no more time in compliments, 'tis too precious;
I know it by myself, there can be no hell
To his that hangs upon his hopes.
Petr. He has hit it.
Don F. To horse again then, for this night I'll crown you
With all the joys you wish for.
Petr. Happy gentlemen! [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.—*The Suburbs.*

Enter Francisco *and a Man.*

Fran. This is the maddest mischief: never fool was so fobbed off as I am, made ridiculous, and to myself mine own ass; trust a woman! I'll trust the devil first, for he dares be better than his word sometimes. Pray tell me, in what observance have I ever failed her?

Man. Nay, you can tell that best yourself.
Fran. Let us consider.

Enter Don Frederick *and* Don John.

Don F. Let them talk, we'll go on before.
Fran. Where didst thou meet Constantia, and this woman?
Don F. Constantia! what are these fellows? Stay by all means. (*They listen.*)
Man. Why, sir, I met her in that great street that comes from the market-place, just at the turning by a goldsmith's shop.
Don F. Stand still, John.
Fran. Well, Constantia has spun herself a fine thread, now; what will her best friend think of this?
Don F. John, I smell some juggling, John.
Don J. Yes, Frederick, I fear it will be proved so.
Fran. But what should the reason be, dost think, of this so sudden change in her?
Don F. 'Tis she.
Man. Why, truly I suspect she has been enticed to it by a stranger.
Don J. Did you mark that, Frederick?
Fran. Stranger! who?
Man. A wild gentleman, that's newly come to town.
Don F. Mark that, too.
Don J. Yes, sir.
Don F. Why do you think so?
Man. I heard her grave conductress twattle something as they went along, that makes me guess it.
Don J. 'Tis she, Frederick.
Don F. But who that he is, John?
Fran. I do not doubt to bolt them out, for they must certainly be about the town. Ha! no more words. Come, let's be gone. (*Francisco and Man seeing Don J. and F. they retire.*)
Don F. Well.
Don J. Very well.
Don F. Discreetly.
Don J. Finely carried.
Don F. You have no more of these tricks?
Don J. Ten to one, sir.
I shall meet with them if you have.
Don F. Is this fair?
Don J. Was it in you a friend's part to deal double?
I am no ass, Don Frederick.
Don F. And, Don John,
It shall appear I am no fool: disgrace me,
To make yourself thus every woman's courtesy?
'Tis boyish, 'tis base.
Don J. 'Tis false; I privy to this dog-trick!
Clear yourself, for I know where the wind sits:
Or, as I have a life— (*Trampling within.*)
Don F. No more, they are coming: show no discontent, let's quickly away. If she be at home, our jealousies are over; if not, you and I must have a farther parley, John.
Don J. Yes, Don Frederick, you may be sure we shall. But, where are these fellows? Plague on them, we have lost them too in our spleens, like fools.

Enter Duke *and* Petruchio.

Duke. Come, gentlemen, let's go a little faster: Suppose you have all mistresses, and mend
Your pace accordingly.
Don J. Sir, I should be as glad of a mistress as another man.
Don F. Yes, on my conscience wouldst thou, and of any other man's mistress too, that I'll answer for.
Don J. You'll answer!—Oh! You're a good one! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*Antonio's House.*

Enter ANTONIO *and his Man.*

Anto. With all my gold?

Man. The trunk broken open, and all gone!

Anto. And the mother in the plot?

Man. And the mother and all.

Anto. And the devil and all; and all his imps go with them. Belike they thought I was no more of this world, and those trifles would but disturb my conscience.

Man. Sure, they thought, sir, you would not live to disturb them.

Anto. Well, my sweet mistress, I'll try how handsomely your ladyship can caper in the air; there's your master-piece. No imaginations where they should be?

Man. None, sir; yet we have searched all places we suspected; I believe they have taken towards the port.

Anto. Give me then a water-conjurer, one that can raise water-devils! I'll part them—play at duck and drake with my money! Get me a conjurer, I say; inquire out a man that lets out devils.

Man. I don't know where.

Anto. In every street, Tom Fool; any bleareyed people with red heads and flat noses can perform it. Thou shalt know them by their half gowns and no breeches. Find me out a conjurer, I say, and learn his price, how he will let his devils out by the day. I'll have them again, if they be above ground. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*Street before Don Frederick's Lodging.*

Enter DUKE, PETRUCHIO, DON FREDERICK, *and* DON JOHN.

Petr. Your grace is welcome now to Naples; so you are all, gentlemen.

Don J. Don Frederick, will you step in, and give the lady notice who comes to visit her?

Petr. Bid her make haste; we come to see no stranger—a night gown will serve her turn.

Don F. I'll tell her what you say, sir. [*Exit.*

Petr. Now will the sport be to observe her alterations, how, betwixt fear and joy, she will behave herself.

Duke. Dear brother, I must entreat you—

Petr. I conceive your mind, sir; I will not chide her, but like a summer's evening against heat—

Enter DON FREDERICK *and* PETER.

Don J. How now?

Don F. Not to abuse your patience longer, nor hold you off with tedious circumstances; for you must know—

Don J. What I knew before.

Petr. What?

Duke. Where is she?

Don F. Gone, sir.

Duke. How!

Petr. What did you say, sir?

Don F. Gone; by heaven removed. The woman of the house, too.

Petr. What, that reverend old woman, that tired me with compliments?

Don F. The very same.

Don J. Well, Don Frederick.

Don F. Don John, it is not well: but—

Don J. But what?

Petr. Come!

Don F. This fellow can satisfy I lie not.

Peter. A little after my master was departed, sir, with this gentleman, my fellow and myself being sent on business, as we must think, on purpose—

Don J. Yes, yes, on purpose.

Petr. Hang these circumstances, they always serve to usher in ill ends.

Don J. Gone! now could I eat that rogue, I am so angry. Gone?

Petr. Gone!

Don F. Directly gone, fled, shifted; what would you have me say?

Duke. Well, gentlemen, wrong not my good opinion.

Don F. For your dukedom, sir, I would not be a knave.

Don J. He that is, a rot run in his blood.

Petr. But harkye, gentlemen, are ye sure you had her here? Did you not dream this?

Don J. Have you your nose, sir?

Petr. Yes, sir.

Don J. Then we had her.

Petr. Since you are so short, believe your having her shall suffer more construction.

Don J. Well, sir, let it suffer. (*Turns off peevishly.*)

Don F. How to convince you, sir, I can't imagine; but my life shall justify my innocence, or fall with it.

Duke. Thus, then—for we may be all abused.

Petr. 'Tis possible.

Duke. Here let's part until to-morrow this time; we to our way to clear this doubt, and you to yours. Pawning our honours then to meet again; when, if she be not found—

Don F. We stand engaged to answer any worthy way we are called to.

Duke. We ask no more.

Petr. To-morrow, certain.

Don J. If we out-live this night, sir.

[*Exeunt Duke and Petruchio.*

Don F. Very well, Don John!

Don J. Very ill, Don Frederick!

Don F. We have somewhat now to do.

Don J. With all my heart, I love to be doing.

Don F. If she be not found we must fight.

Don J. I am glad on't; I have not fought a great while.

Don F. I am glad you are so merry, sir.

Don J. I am sorry you are so dull, sir.

Don F. Here let us part; and if the lady be
Not forthcoming,
'Tis this, Don John, shall damp your levity!
(*Clapping his hand upon his sword.*)

Don J. Or this shall tickle up your modesty!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Tavern.*

Enter Second CONSTANTIA *and her* MOTHER.

Mother. Hold, Cons, hold, for goodness, hold! I am in that desertion of spirit, for want of breath, that I am almost reduced to the necessity of not being able to defend myself against the inconvenience of a fall.

2 *Con.* Dear mother, let us go a little faster, to secure ourselves from Antonio: for my part, I am in that terrible fright, that I can neither think, speak, nor stand still, till we are safe a ship-board, and out of sight of the shore.

Mother. Out of sight of the shore! why, do you think I'll depatriate?

2 *Con.* Depatriate? what's that?

Mother. Why, you fool, you, leave my country:

what, will you never learn to speak out of the vulgar road?

2 *Con.* Oh lord! this hard word will undo us.

Mother. As I am a Christian, if it were to save my honour (which is ten thousand times dearer to me than life) I would not be guilty of so odious a thought.

2 *Con.* Pray, mother, since your honour is so dear to you, consider that if we are taken, both it and we should depatriate?

2 *Con.* Ay, there's it; the world! why, mother, the world does not care a pin, if both you and I were hanged; and that we shall be certainly, if Antonio takes us, for you have run away with his gold.

Mother. Did he not tell you that he kept it in his trunk for us? and had not I a right to take it whenever I pleased: you have lost your reasoning faculty, Cons!

2 *Con.* Yes, mother, but you was to have it upon a certain condition, which condition I would sooner starve than agree to. I can't help my poverty, but I can keep my honour, and the richest old fellow in the kingdom sha'n't buy it. I'll sooner give it away than sell it; that's my spirit, mother.

Mother. But what will become of me, Cons? I have so indelible an idea of my dignity, that I must have the means to support it; these I have got, and I will ne'er depart from the demarches of a person of quality; and let come what will, I shall rather chuse to submit myself to my fate, than strive to prevent it, by any deportment that is not congruous in every degree to the steps and measures of a strict practitioner of honour.

2 *Con.* Would not this make one stark mad? your style is no more out of the way, than your manner of reasoning; you first sell me to an ugly old fellow, then you run away with me and all his gold; and now, like a strict practitioner of honour, resolve to be taken, rather than depatriate, as you call it.

Mother. As I am a Christian, Cons, a tavern, and a very decent sign; I'll in, I am resolved, though by it I should run a risk of never so stupendous a nature!

2 *Con.* There's no stopping her. What shall I do? (*Aside.*)

Mother. I'll send for my kinswoman and some music, to revive me a little: for really, Cons, I am reduced to that sad imbecility, by the injury I have done my poor feet, that I am in a great incertitude, whether they will have liveliness sufficient to support me up to the top of the stairs or no.

[*Exit Mother.*

2 *Con.* I have a great mind to leave this fantastical mother-in-law of mine, with her stolen goods, take to my heels and seek my fortune; but to whom shall I apply? Generosity and humanity are not to be met with at every corner of the street. If any young fellow would but take a liking to me, and make an honest woman of me, I would make him the best wife in the world: but what a fool am I to talk thus? Young men think of young women now-a-days, as they do of their clothes: it is genteel to have them, to be vain of them, to show them to everybody, and to change them often; when their novelty and fashion is over, they are turned out of doors, to be purchased and worn by the first buyer. A wife, indeed, is not so easily got rid of: it is a suit of mourning, that lies neglected at the bottom of the chest, and only shows itself now and then, upon melancholy occasions. What a terrible prospect! However, I do here swear and vow to live for ever chaste, till I find a young fellow who will take me for better and for worse. La, what a desperate oath have I taken!

Mother. (*Looking out of the window.*) Come up, Cons, the fiddles are here.

2 *Con.* I come—(*Mother goes from the window.*) I must begone, though whither I cannot tell; these fiddles, and her discreet companions, will quickly make an end of all she has stolen; and then for five hundred new pieces will she sell me to another old fellow, whom I will serve in the same manner. She has taken care not to leave me a farthing; yet I am so, better than under her conduct, 'twill be at worst but begging for my life:

And starving were to me an easier fate,
Than to be forc'd to live with one I hate.

Mother. Come, Cons, make haste. (*Goes up to her mother.*)

Enter Don John.

Don J. It will not out of my head, but that Don Frederick has sent away this wench, for all he carries it so quietly; yet methinks he should be honester than so; but these grave men are never touched upon such occasions. (*Music above.*) What's here, music and women? the best mixture in the world!—'would I were among them. (*Music again, and a woman appears in the balcony.*) That's a right one, I know it by her smile. I have an eye that never fails me. (*Another lady appears.*) Ah, rogue! she's right, too; I'm sure on't; here's a brave parcel of them! (*Music still, and dancing.*)

Mother. Come, come, let's dance in t'other room; 'tis a great deal better.

Don J. Say you so? what, now, if I should go up and dance too? It is a tavern—rot this business! why should a man be hunting upon a cold scent, when there is so much better sport near at hand? I'll in, I am resolved, and try my own fortune; 'tis hard luck if I don't get one of them. (*As he goes to the door.*)

Enter Second Constantia.

See, here's one bolted already! fair lady, whither so fast?

2 *Con.* I don't know, sir.

Don J. May I have the honour to wait upon you?

2 *Con.* Yes, if you please, sir.

Don J. Whither?

2 *Con.* I tell you, I don't know.

Don J. She's very quick. Would I might be so happy as to know you, lady!

2 *Con.* I dare not let you see my face, sir.

Don J. Why?

2 *Con.* For fear you should not like it, and then leave me; for, to tell you true, I have, at this present, very great need of you.

Don J. Hast thou? Then I declare myself thy champion: and let me tell thee, there is not a better knight-errant in all Christendom than I am to succour distressed damsels.

2 *Con.* What a proper, handsome, spirited fellow this is! If he'd love me now as he ought, I would never seek out farther. Sir, I am young, and unexperienced in the world.

Don J. If thou art young, it's no great matter what thy face is.

2 *Con.* Perhaps this freedom in me may seem strange; but, sir, in short, I'm forced to fly from one I hate; will you protect me?

Don J. Yes, that I will, before I see your face; your shape has charmed me enough for that already.

2 *Con.* But if we should meet him, will you here promise me, he shall not take me from you?

Don J. If any one takes you from me, he shall take my life too; if I love one, I won't keep t'other; they shall go together.

2 *Con.* For heaven's sake, then, conduct me to some place where I may be secured a while from the sight of any one whatsoever.

Don J. By all the hopes I have to find thy face as lovely as thy shape, I will.

2 *Con.* Well, sir, I believe you; for you have an honest look.

Don J. An honest look! Zounds! I am afraid Don Frederick has been giving her a character of me too. Come, pray, unveil.

2 *Con.* Then turn away your face, for I'm resolved you shall not see a bit of mine, till I have set it in order, and then—

Don J. What then?

2 *Con.* I'll strike you dead.

Don J. A mettled wench, I warrant her! If she be young now, and have but a nose on her face, she'll be as good as her word. Come, my dear, I'm even panting with impatience. Are you ready? (*As he turns slowly round, she gets on the other side.*) 'Sdeath! where is she?

2 *Con.* Here! stand your ground, if you dare!

Don J. By this light, a rare creature! ten thousand times handsomer than her we seek for! this can be sure no common one: 'pray Heaven she be a kind one! (*Aside.*)

2 *Con.* Well, sir, what say you now?

Don J. Nothing: I'm so amazed, I'm not able to speak. Pr'ythee, my sweet creature, don't let us be talking in the street, but run home with me, that I may have a little private innocent conversation with you.

2 *Con.* No, sir; no private dealing, I beseech you.

Don J. 'Sheart, what shall I do? I'm out of my wits. Harkye, my dear soul, canst thou love me?

2 *Con.* If I could, what then?

Don J. Why, then I should be the happiest man alive! (*Kissing her hand.*)

2 *Con.* Nay, good sir, hold—remember the conditions.

Don J. Conditions! what conditions? I would not wrong thee for the universe!

2 *Con.* Then you'll promise?

Don J. What, what? I'll promise anything, everything, thou dear, sweet, bewitching, heavenly woman!

2 *Con.* To make me an honest woman?

Don J. How the devil, my angel, can I do that, if you are undone to my hands?

2 *Con.* Ay, but I am not; I am a poor innocent lamb, just escaped from the jaws of an old fox.

Don J. Art thou, my pretty lamb? then I'll be thy shepherd, and fold thee in these arms. (*Kisses her hand.*)

2 *Con.* Ay, but you must not eat the lamb yourself.

Don J. I like you so well, I will do anything for thee, my dear delightful incognita! I love you so much, it is impossible to say how much I love thee! My heart, my mind, and my soul, are transported to such a degree, that—that—that—d—n it, I can't talk; so let us run home, or the old fox, my lamb, will overtake us. (*They run out.*)

SCENE II.—*The Street.*

Enter DON FREDERICK *and* FRANCISCO.

Don F. And art thou sure it was Constantia, sayest thou, that he was leading?

Fran. Am I sure I live, sir? Why, I dwelt in the house with her; how can I chuse but know her?

Don F. But didst thou see her face?

Fran. Lord, sir, I saw her face as plain as I see yours just now, not two streets off.

Don F. Yes, 'tis even so; I suspected it at first, but then he forswore it with that confidence—Well, Don John, if these be your practices, you shall have no more a friend of me, sir, I assure you. Perhaps, though, he met her by chance, and intends to carry her to her brother, and the duke.

Fran. A little time will show. Gadso, here he is!

Don F. I'll step behind the shop, and observe him.

Enter DON JOHN *and Second* CONSTANTIA.

Don J. Here, now go in, and let me see who will get you out again without my leave.

2 *Con.* Remember, you have given your honour.

Don J. And my love—and when they go together, you may always trust them.

Don F. Dear Don John! (*Don J. puts Con. in, and locks the door.*)

Don J. Oh! how do you do, Frederick? D—n him, now will he ask me forty foolish questions, and I have such a mind to talk to this wench, that I cannot think of one excuse for my life!

Don F. Your servant, sir: pray, who's that you locked in just now, at the door?

Don J. Why, a friend of mine, that's gone up to read a book.

Don F. A book! that's a quaint one, i'faith! pr'ythee, Don John, what library hast thou been buying this afternoon? for in the morning, to my knowledge, thou hadst never a book there, except it were an almanack, and that was none of thy own neither.

Don J. No, no, its a book of his own; he brought along with him: a scholar, that's given to reading.

Don F. And do scholars, Don John, wear petticoats now-a-days?

Don J. Plague on him, he has seen her! Well, Don Frederick, thou knowest I am not good at lying; 'tis a woman, I confess it, make your best on't: what then?

Don F. Why then, Don John, I desire you'll be pleased to let me see her.

Don J. Why, 'faith, Frederick, I should not be against the thing, but you know that a man must keep his word, and she has a mind to be private.

Don F. But, John, you may remember, when I met a lady so before, this very self-same lady too, that I got leave for you to see her, John.

Don J. Why, do you think then, that this here is Constantia?

Don F. I cannot properly say I think it, John, because I know it; this fellow, here, saw her, as you led her in the streets.

Don J. Well, and what then? Who does he say it is?

Don F. Ask him, sir, and he'll tell ye.

Don J. Harkye, friend, dost thou know this lady?

Fran. I think I should, sir; I have lived long enough in the house to know her, sure.

Don J. And how do they call her, pr'ythee!

Fran. Constantia,

Don J. How! Constantia!

Fran. Yes, sir; the woman's name is Constantia, that's flat.

Don J. It is so, sir? and so is this too. (*Strikes him.*)

Fran. Oh, oh! (*Runs out.*)

Don J. Now, sirrah, you may safely say you have not borne false witness for nothing.

Don F. Fie, Don John, why do you beat the poor fellow for doing his duty, and telling truth?

Don J. Telling truth! thou talkest as if thou hadst been hired to bear false witness too: you are a very fine gentleman!

Don F. What a strange confidence he has! but is there no shame in thee? nor no consideration of what is just or honest, to keep a woman thus against her will, that thou knowest is in love with another man too? Dost think a judgment will not follow this?

Don J. Good, dear Frederick, do thou keep thy sentences and thy sentiments, which are now out of fashion, for some better opportunity; this here is not a fit subject for them: I tell thee, she is no more Constantia than thou art.

Don F. Why won't you let me see her then?

Don J. Because I can't: besides, she's not for thy taste.

Don F. How so?

Don J. Why, thy genius lies another way; thou art all for flames and darts, and those fine things! now I am for pure, plain, simple love, without any embroidery; I am not so curious, Frederick, as thou art.

Don F. Very well, sir; but is there no shame? but is this worthy in you to delude—

Don J. But is there no shame! but is this worthy! What a many buts are here! If I should tell thee now solemnly thou hast but one eye, and give thee reasons for it, wouldst thou believe me?

Don F. I think hardly, sir, against my own knowledge.

Don J. Then why dost thou, with that grave face, go about to persuade me against mine? You should do as you would be done by, Frederick.

Don F. And so I will, sir, in this very particular, since there's no other remedy; I shall do that for the duke and Petruchio, which I should expect from them upon the like occasion: in short, to let you see I am as sensible of my honour, as you can be careless of yours, I must tell you, sir, that I'm resolved to wait upon this lady to them.

Don J. Are you so, sir? Why, I must then, sweet sir, tell you again, I am resolved you sha'n't. Never stare nor wonder! I have promised to preserve her from the sight of any one whatsoever, and with the hazard of my life will make it good; but that you may not think I mean an injury to Petruchio, or the Duke, know, Don Frederick, that though I love a pretty girl perhaps a little better, I hate to do a thing that's base, as much as you do. Once more, upon my honour, this is not Constantia; let that satisfy you.

Don F. All that will not do. (*Goes to the door.*)

Don J. No! why, then this shall. (*Draws.*) Come not one step nearer, for if thou dost, by heaven, I'm through you!

Don F. This is an insolence beyond the temper of a man to suffer. Thus, I throw off thy friendship; and since thy folly has provoked my patience beyond its natural bounds, know it is not in thy power now to save thyself.

Don J. That's to be tried, sir, though by your favour. (*Looks up at the balcony.*) Mistress What d'ye-call-'em, pr'ythee look out now a little, and see how I'll fight for thee.

Don F. Come, sir, are you ready?

Don J. Oh lord, sir, your servant! (*Fight.*)

Enter Duke *and* Petruchio.

Petr. What's here? fighting! Let's part them. How! Don Frederick against Don John? How came you to fall out, gentlemen? What's the cause?

Don F. Why, sir, it is your quarrel, and not mine, that drew this on me: I saw him lock Constantia up into that house, and I desired to wait upon her to you; that's the cause.

Duke. Oh! it may be, he designed to lay the obligation upon us himself. Sir, we are beholden to you for this favour beyond all possibility of— (*Approaching Don J.*)

Don J. Pray, your grace, keep back, and don't throw away your thanks, before you know whether I have deserved them or no. Oh, is that your design? Sir, you must not go in there. (*Petruchio is going to the door.*)

Petr. How, sir! not go in?

Don J. No, sir; most certainly not go in.

Petr. She's my sister, and I will speak to her.

Don J. If she were your mother, sir, you should not, though it were but to ask her blessing.

Petr. Since you are so positive, I'll try.

Don J. You shall find me a man of my word, sir.

Duke. Nay, pray, gentlemen, hold; let me compose this matter. Why do you make a scruple of letting us see Constantia?

Don J. Why, sir, 'twould turn a man's head round to hear these fellows talk so: there is not one word true of all that he has said.

Duke. Then you do not know where Constantia is?

Don J. Not I, by heavens!

Don F. Oh, monstrous impudence! Upon my life, sir, I saw him force her up into that house, lock her up, and the key is now in his pocket.

Don J. Now that is two lies; for, first, he did not see her: and next, all force is unnecessary, she is so very willing.

Duke. But lookye, sir, this doubt may easily be cleared: let either Petruchio or me but see her, and if she be not Constantia, we engage our honours (though we should know her) never to discover who she is.

Don J. Ay, but there's the point now, that I can never consent to.

Duke. Why?

Don J. Because I gave her my word to the contrary.

Petr. Pish! I won't be kept off thus any longer. Sir, either let me enter, or I'll force my way.

Don F. No, pray, sir, let that be my office: I will be revenged on him, for having betrayed me to his friendship. (*Petruchio and Don F. offer to fight with Don J.*)

Duke. Nay, you shall not offer him foul play, neither. Hold, brother, pray a word; and with you too, sir.

Don J. Harkye, gentlemen, I'll make ye a fair proposition; leave off this ceremony among yourselves, and those dismal threats against me: fillip up, cross or pile, who shall begin first, and I'll do the best I can to entertain you all, one after another.

Enter Antonio.

Anto. Now do my fingers itch to be about somebody's ears, for the loss of my gold. Ha! what's here to do? swords drawn! I must make one, though it cost me the singing of ten John Dories more. Courage, brave boy! I'll stand by you as long as this tool here lasts: and it was once a good one.

Petr. Who's this? Antonio! Oh, sir! you are welcome! you shall be even judge between us.

Anto. No, no, no; not I, sir, I thank you: I'll make work for others to judge of, I'm resolved to fight.

Petr. But we won't fight with you.

Anto. Then put up your swords, or by this hand I'll lay about me! (*They put up their swords.*)

Don J. Well said, old Bilboa, i'faith!

Petr. Pray hear us, though: this gentleman saw

him lock up my sister into this house, and he refuses to let us see her.

Anto. How, friend, is this true? (*Going to him.*)

Don J. Not so hasty, I beseech you. Lookye, gentlemen, to show you that all are mistaken, and that my formal friend there is an ass—

Don F. I thank you, sir.

Don J. I'll give you my consent, that this gentleman here shall see her, if his information can satisfy you.

Duke. Yes, yes; he knows her very well.

Don J. Then, sir, go in here, if you please: I dare trust him with her, for he is too old to do any mischief. (*Antonio goes in.*)

Don F. I wonder how my gentleman will get off from all this?

Don J. I shall be even with you, Don Frederick, another time, for all your grinning. (*Noise within.*) How now! what noise is that?

Enter Peter.

Peter. The gentleman!—

Don J. Where is he?

Peter. He's run out of the back door, sir.

Don J. How so?

Peter. Why, sir, he's run after the gentlewoman you brought in.

Don J. 'Sdeath! how durst you let her out?

Peter. Why, sir, I knew nothing.

Don J. No? thou ignorant rascal! and therefore I'll beat something into thee. (*Beats him.*) Run after her, you dog, and bring her back, or— (*Peter runs off.*)

Don F. What, you won't kill him?

Don J. Nay, come not near me, for if thou dost, by heavens, I'll give thee as much! and would do so however, but that I won't lose time from looking after my dear, sweet—a plague confound you all! (*Goes in, and shuts the door after him.*)

Duke. What, he has shut the door!

Don F. It's no matter: I'll lead you a private back way, by that corner, where we shall meet him. [*Exeunt.*

Enter First Constantia.

1 *Con.* Oh! whither shall I run to hide myself? the constable has seized the landlady, and, I am afraid, the poor child too. How to return to Don Frederick's house, I know not: and, if I knew, I durst not, after those things the landlady has told me of him. I am faulty, I confess, but greater faults have often met with lighter punishments.

Enter Don John.

Don J. I am almost dead with running, and will be so quite, but I will overtake her.

1 *Con.* Hold, Don John, hold!

Don J. What's that? ha! is it you, my dear?

1 *Con.* For heaven's sake, sir, carry me from hence, or I'm utterly undone.

Don J. Phoo, plague, this is the other! now could I almost beat her, for but making me the proposition. Madam, there are some a-coming, that will do it a great deal better: but I am in such haste, that, I vow to gad, madam—

1 *Con.* Nay, pray, sir, stay; you are concerned in this as well as I; for your woman is taken.

Don J. Ha! my woman! (*Goes back to her.*) I vow to gad, madam, I do so highly honour your ladyship, that I would venture my life, a thousand times, to do you service. But, pray, where is she?

1 *Con.* Why, sir, she is taken by the constable.

Don J. Constable! Which way went he?

1 *Con.* I cannot tell; for I ran out into the streets, just as he had seized upon your landlady.

Don J. Plague o' my landlady! I mean the other woman.

1 *Con.* Other woman, sir! I have seen no other woman, never since I left your house!

Don J. 'Sdeath! what have I been doing here, then, all this while! Madam, your most humble—

1 *Con.* Good sir, be not so cruel as to leave me in this distress.

Don J. No, no, no; I'm only going a little way, and will be back again presently.

1 *Con.* But, pray, sir, hear me; I'm in that danger—

Don J. No, no, no; I vow to gad, madam, no danger in the world. Let me alone, I warrant you. (*Hurries off.*)

1 *Con.* He's gone! and I a lost, wretched, miserable creature, for ever.

Enter Antonio.

Anto. Oh! there she is.

1 *Con.* Who's this? Antonio! the fiercest enemy I have. (*Runs away.*)

Anto. Are you so nimble-footed, gentlewoman? A plague confound all whores! [*Exit.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*A Street.*

Enter Mother *and* Kinswoman.

Kins. But, madam, be not so angry; perhaps she'll come again.

Mother. Oh! kinswoman, never speak of her more; for she's an odious creature to leave me thus in the lurch. I have given her all her breeding, and instructed her with my own principles of education.

Kins. I protest, madam, I think she's a person that knows as much of all that as—

Mother. Knows, kinswoman! there's ne'er a female in Italy, of thrice her years, knows so much the procedures of a true gallantry, and the infallible principles of an honourable friendship, as she does.

Kins. And, therefore, madam, you ought to love her.

Mother. No, fie upon her! nothing at all, as I am a Christian. When once a person fails in fundamentals, she's at a period with me. Besides, with all her wit, Constantia is but a fool; and calls all the *minauderies* of a *bonne mine*, affectation.

Kins. Bless me, sweet goodness! But, pray, madam, how came Constantia to fall out with your ladyship? Did she take anything ill of you?

Mother. As I am a Christian, I can't resolve you, unless it were that I led the dance first: but for that she must excuse me; I know she dances well, but there are others, who, perhaps, understand the right swim of it as well as she—

Enter Don Frederick.

And, though I love Constantia—

Don F. How's this? Constantia!

Mother. I know no reason why I should be debarred the privilege of showing my own geno too sometimes.

Don F. If I am not mistaken, that other woman is she Don John and I were directed to, when we came first to town, to bring us acquainted with Constantia. I'll try to get some intelligence from her. Pray, lady, have I never seen you before?

Kins. Yes, sir, I think you have, with another stranger, a friend of yours, one day, as I was coming out of the church.

Don F. I'm right then. And, pray, who were you talking of?

Mother. Why, sir, of an inconsiderate, inconsiderable person, that has at once both forfeited the honour of my concern, and the concern of her own honour.

Don F. Very fine, indeed! and is all this intended for the beautiful Constantia?

Mother. Oh! fie upon her, sir, an odious creature, as I'm a Christian, no beauty at all.

Don F. Why, does not your ladyship think her handsome?

Mother. Seriously, sir, I don't think she's ugly; but, as I am a Christian, my position is, that no true beauty can be lodged in that creature, who is not, in some measure, buoyed up with a just sense of what is incumbent to the devoir of a person of quality.

Don F. That position, madam, is a little severe; but however she has been incumbent formerly, as your ladyship is pleased to say, now that she's married, and her husband owns the child, she is sufficiently justified for what she has done.

Mother. Sir, I must, blushingly, beg leave to say, you are in an error. I know there has been the passion of love between them, but with a temperament so innocent and so refined, as it did impose a negative upon the very possibility of her being with child. No, sir; I assure you my daughter Constantia has never had a child. A child! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, goodness, save us, a child!

Don F. Well, madam, I shall not dispute this with you any farther; but give me leave to wait upon your daughter; for her friend, I assure you, is in great impatience to see her.

Mother. Friend, sir! I know none she has. I'm sure she loaths the very sight of him.

Don F. Of whom?

Mother. Why, of Antonio, sir; he that you were pleased to say—ha, ha, ha!

Don F. I tell you I do not know Antonio, nor never named him to you. I told you, that the Duke has owned Constantia for his wife, and that her brother and he are friends, and are now both in search after her.

Mother. Then, as I'm a Christian, I suspect we have both been equally involved in the misfortune of a mistake. Sir, I am in the dernier confusion to avow, that, though my daughter, Constantia, has been liable to several addresses, yet she had never the honour to be produced to his grace.

Don F. So, now the thing is out, and I'm a d—d rogue for what I did to Don John; for, on my conscience, this is that Constantia the fellow told me of! I'll make him amends, whate'er it cost me. Lady, you must give me leave not to part with you, till you meet with your daughter, for some reasons I shall tell you hereafter.

Mother. Sir, I am so highly your *obligée* for the manner of your enquiries, and you have grounded your determinations upon so just a basis, that I shall not be ashamed to own myself a votary to all your commands. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Street.*

Enter Second Constantia,

2 *Con.* So, thanks to my youth and my heels, I am once more free from Antonio! What an escape! and yet, what a misfortune! I have no great reason to rejoice—for, though I have got clear from the old fellow, I have lost the young one too. I did not wish to out-run them both; but whither to go now? that's the question—I wish my spirited young Spaniard were here to answer it; but that this wild spark, whom I liked so well, and who swore he liked me, should send that old piece of mischief to distress me, and drive me out of the house, puzzles me exceedingly! I wish I could see him once more, to explain this matter to me. May I never be married if he is not coming this way! Should he prove false, my poor heart will have a terrible time of it. Now for the proof— (*Walks aside.*)

Enter Don John, *holding Peter.*

Don J. Did you run after her, as I ordered you, sirrah!

Peter. Like any greyhound, sir.

Don J. And have you found her, rascal?

Peter. Not quite, sir.

Don J. Not quite, sir! You are drunk, fellow!

Peter. A little, sir; I run the better for it.

Don J. Have you seen her? speak quickly, or speak no more. (*Shaking him.*)

Peter. Yes, yes, I have seen her.

Don J. Where? where?

Peter. There! there!

Don J. Where's there, sirrah?

Peter. There where I saw her—in the street!

Don J. Did you overtake her?

Peter. I was overtaken myself, sir, and—hic—fell down.

Don J. Then she is gone! irrecoverably gone! and I shall run distracted! (*Second Constantia taps him on the shoulder; he turns, and they gaze on each other.*) Heigho!

Peter. Never was so near death in all my life! [*Exit.*

Don J. Oh! my dear soul, take pity on me, and give me comfort; for I'm e'en dead for want of thee.

2 *Con.* Oh! you're a fine gentleman, indeed, to shut me up in your house, and send another man to me.

Don J. Pray, hear me.

2 *Con.* No, I will never hear you more, after such an injury; what would you have done, if I had been kind to you, that you could use me thus before?

Don J. By my troth, that's shrewdly urged.

2 *Con.* Besides, you basely broke your word.

Don J. But will you hear nothing? nor did you hear nothing? I had three men upon me at once, and had I not consented to let that old fellow up, who came to my rescue, they had all broken in whether I would or no.

2 *Con.* It may be so; for I remember I heard a noise; but suppose it was not so, what then? why, then, I'll love him, however. Harkye, sir, I ought now to use you very scurvily; but I can't find in my heart to do so.

Don J. Then heaven's blessing on thy heart for it!

2 *Con.* But a—

Don J. What?

2 *Con.* I would fain know—

Don J. What, what? I'll tell thee anything, everything.

2 *Con.* I would fain know, whether you can be kind to me.

Don J. Look in your glass, my charmer, and answer for me.

2 *Con.* You think me very vain.

Don J. I think you devilish handsome.

2 *Con.* I shall find you a rogue at last.

Don J. Then you shall hang me for a fool; take your garters, and do it now, if you will. (*Sighing.*)

2 *Con.* You are no fool.

Don J. Oh, yes, a loving fool.

2 *Con.* Will you love me for ever?

Don J. I'll be bound to you for ever; you can't desire better security.

2 *Con.* I have better security.

Don J. What's that, my angel?

2 *Con.* The tenderest affection for you now, and the kindest behaviour to you, for evermore.

Don J. And I, upon my knees, will swear, that, that—what shall I swear?

2 *Con.* Nay, use what words you please, so they be but hearty.

Don J. I swear, then, by thy fair self, that looks so like a deity, and art the only thing I now can think of, that I'll adore you to my dying day.

2 *Con.* And here I vow, the minute thou dost leave me, I'll leave the world—that's, kill myself.

Don J. Oh! my dear heavenly creature, we'll love as long as we live, and then we'll die together; and there's an end of both of us. But who is this my old friend has got there?

Enter First CONSTANTIA *and* ANTONIO, *who seizes her.*

Anto. Oh! have I caught you, gentlewoman, at last? Come, give me my gold.

1 *Con.* I hope he takes me for another; I won't answer, for I had rather you should take me for any one, than who I am.

Don J. Pray, sir, who is that you have there by the hand?

Anto. A person of honour, that has broken open my trunks, and run away with all my gold; yet, I'll hold ten pounds I'll have it whipped out of her again.

2 *Con.* Done, I'll hold you ten pounds of that now.

Anto. Ha! by my troth, you have reason; and, lady, I ask your pardon; but I'll have it whipped out of you, then, gossip. (*Going to her.*)

Don J. Hold, sir; you must not meddle with my goods. (*Stopping him.*)

Anto. Your goods! how came she to be yours? I'm sure I bought her of her mother for five hundred good pieces in gold.

Don J. Ay, sir, but that bargain won't hold good in our court; besides, sir, as I told you before, she's mine, Don.

Anto. Yours, sir! by what right?

Don J. The right of possession, sir; the law of love, and consent of the parties.

Anto. And is this so, young lady?

2 *Con.* Yes, young gentleman, it is. You purchase me! And could you imagine, you old fool you, that I would take up with you, while there was a young fellow to be had for love or money! Purchase yourself a little wit, and a great deal of flannel, against the cold weather, or, on my word, you'll make a melancholy figure. Ha, ha, ha!

Don J. He does make a melancholy figure! ha, ha! you had better let her alone, Don; why, she's too hard for me—

Anto. Indeed, I think so. But, pray, sir, by your leave, I hope you will allow me the speech of one word to your goods here, as you call her; 'tis but a small request.

Don J. Ay, sir, with all my heart—how, Constantia! Madam, now you have seen that lady, I hope you will pardon the haste you met me in a little while ago; if I committed a fault, you must thank her for it.

1 *Con.* Sir, I do know too well the power of love, by my own experience, not to pardon all the effects of it in another.

Anto. Well, then, I'll promise you, if you will but help me to recover my gold again, that I'll never trouble you more.

2 *Con.* A match; and 'tis the best that you and I could ever make.

Don J. Pray, madam, fear nothing; by my love, I'll stand by you, and see that your brother shall do you no harm.

2 *Con.* Harkye, sir, a word; how dare you talk of love to any lady but me, sir?

Don J. By my troth, that was a fault, but I meant it only civilly.

2 *Con.* Ay, but if you are so very civil a gentleman, we shall not be long friends: I scorn to share your love with any one whatsoever; and, for my part, I'm resolved to have either all or none.

Don J. Well, well, my dear little covetous rogue, thou shalt have it all—thus I sign and seal—(*Kisses her hand.*) and transfer all my stock of love to thee, for ever and for ever.

2 *Con.* I accept it, in the warmest spirit of love and gratitude.

Enter DON FREDERICK *and Mother.*

Don F. Come, now, madam, let us not speak one word more, but go quietly about our business; not but that I think it the greatest pleasure in the world to hear you talk, but—

Mother. Do you, indeed, sir? I swear then, good wits jump, sir; for I have thought so myself a very great while.

Don F. You have all the reason imaginable. Oh, Don John, I ask thy pardon! but I hope I shall make thee amends, for I have found out the mother, and she has promised to help thee to thy mistress again.

Don J. Sir, you may save your labour; the business is done, and I am fully satisfied.

Don F. And dost thou know who she is?

Don J. No, 'faith, I never asked her name.

Don F. Why, then, I'll make thee more satisfied; this lady, here, is that very Constantia—

Don J. Ha! thou hast not a mind to be knocked o'er the pate too, hast thou?

Don F. No, sir; nor dare you do it neither; but, for certain, this is that very self same Constantia that thou and I so long looked after.

Don J. I thought she was something more than ordinary: but shall I tell thee now a stranger thing than all this?

Don F. What's that?

Don J. Why, I will never more think of any other woman, for her sake.

Don F. That, indeed, is strange; but you are much altered, John; it was but this morning that women were such hypocrites that you would not trust a single mother's daughter of them.

Don J. Ay, but when things are at the worst, they'll mend; example does everything, Frederick, and the fair sex will certainly grow better whenever the greatest is the best woman in the kingdom; that's what I trust to.

Don F. Well parried, John!

Don J. See here, Frederick! the lost jewel is found. (*Showing First Constantia.*)

Don F. Madam, I am heartily glad to meet your ladyship here; we have been in very great disorder since we saw you.

2 *Con.* Come, mother, deliver your purse; I have delivered myself up to this young fellow, and the bargain's made with that old fellow; so he may have his gold again, that all shall be well.

Mother. As I am a Christian, sir, I took it away, only to have the honour of restoring it again; for my hard fate having not bestowed upon me a fund which might capacitate me to make you presents, I had no way left for the exercise of my generosity but by putting myself into a condition of giving back what was yours.

Anto. A very generous design, indeed! So now I'll e'en turn a sober person, and leave off this wenching and this fighting, for I begin to find it does not agree with me.

Don J. What's here? Our landlady and the child again!

Enter PETRUCHIO *and* LANDLADY, *with the Child.*

Petr. Yes, we met her going to be whipped, in a drunken constable's hands that took her for another.

Don J. Why, then, pray let her e'en be taken, and whipped for herself, for, on my word, she deserves it.

Land. Yes, I'm sure of your good word at any time.

1 *Con.* Harkye, dear landlady!

Land. Oh, sweet goodness! is it you? I have been in such a pack of troubles since I saw you; they took me, and they tumbled me, and they hauled me, and they pulled me, and they called me painted Jezebel, and the poor little babe here did so take on!

Enter DUKE.

Come hither, my lord, come hither: here is Constantia!

1 *Con.* Yonder's my brother!

Duke. No, madam, there is no danger.

1 *Con.* Were there a thousand dangers in those arms, I would run thus to meet them.

Duke. Oh, my dear! it were not safe that any should be here at present; for now my heart is so overpressed with joy, that I should scarce be able to defend thee.

Petr. Sister, I'm so ashamed of all my faults which my mistake has made me guilty of, that I know not how to ask your pardon for them.

1 *Con.* No, brother, the fault was mine, in mistaking you so much as not to impart the whole truth to you at first; but, having begun my love without your consent, I never durst acquaint you with the progress of it.

Duke. Come, let the consummation of our present joys blot out the memory of all these past mistakes.

Don J. And when shall we consummate our joys?

2 *Con.* ————Never:
We'll find out ways to make them last for ever.

Don J. A match, my girl!—Come, let us all away,
And celebrate THE CHANCES of this day;
My former vanities are past and gone,
And now I fix to happiness and one,
Change the wild wanton, for the sober plan,
And, like my friend—become a *modest* man.

THE CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY MISS LEE.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

LORD GLENMORE	GREY	MRS. WARNER
GOVERNOR HARCOURT	VANE	MISS MORTIMER
CAPTAIN HARCOURT	JACOB	CECILIA
WOODVILLE	SERVANTS	BRIDGET

ACT I.—SCENE I.—*A Hall.*

Enter VANE, *in a riding-dress, and a Footman.*

Vane. Run, and tell Mrs. Warner, my lord is at hand; and bid the butler send me a bottle of hock. Phew! the months have jumbled out of their places, and we have July in September. (*Sits.*)

Enter MRS. WARNER.

Mrs. W. Servant, Mr. Vane.

Vane. Ah, my dear creature! how have you done these fifty ages?

Mrs. W. Why, methinks you are grown mighty grand, or you would have come to the still-room to ask: will you choose any chocolate?

Vane. Why, don't you see I am dead? absolutely dead; and, if you were to touch me, I should shake to mere dust, like an Egyptian mummy. Because it was not provoking enough to lounge away a whole summer in the country, here am I driven up to town, as if the devil were at my heels, in the shape of our hopeful heir; who has neither suffered my lord nor me to rest one moment, through his confounded impatience to see his uncle.

Mrs. W. Humph! he'll have enough of the old gentleman presently. He is the very moral of my poor dear lady, his sister, who never was at peace herself, nor suffered any one else to be so. Such a house as we have had ever since he came! Why, he is more full of importance and airs than a bailiff in possession; and hectors over Miss Mortimer, till she almost keeps her chamber to avoid him.

Vane. Hates Miss Mortimer! Why, here'll be the devil to pay about her, I suppose?

Mrs. W. Hate her! ay, that he does. He looked as if he could have killed her, the moment she came down to see him; and got into his chamber presently after, where he sends for me. "Who is this young woman, Mrs. What's-your-name?" says he. "Why, sir," says I, "she is the orphan of a Colonel Mortimer, whose intimacy with my lord," says I—"Pho, pho," says he, "all that I know, woman; what does she do in this house?" says he; his face wrinkling all over like cream, when it's skimming. "Why, sir," says I, "her father unluckily died just before the duke, his brother, and so could not leave her one shilling of all that fine fortune; and so my lord intends to marry her to Mr. Woodville," says I. "He does," cries he; "heaven be praised! I'm come in time to mar that dainty project, however. You may go, woman, and tell miss I don't want anything more to-night." So up goes I to Miss Mortimer, and tells her all this. Lord! how glad she was to find he intended to break the match, though she can't guess what he means.

Vane. Upon my soul, I think it is full as hard to guess what she means. What the devil, will not my lord's title, fortune, and only son, be a great catch for a girl without a friend or a shilling?

Mrs. W. Ay; but I could tell you a little story would explain all. You must know—(*Knocking.*)

Vane. Zounds! here's my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Anti-chamber.*

Enter LORD GLENMORE *and* GOVERNOR HARCOURT *meeting; the latter hobbling.*

Lord G. You are welcome to England, brother! I am sorry your native air pays you so ill a compliment after sixteen years' absence.

Gov. H. Faith, my lord, and so am I too, I promise you: I put up with these things tolerably well in the Indies; I did not go there to be happy; but after all my labours, to find I have just got the money when it is out of my power to enjoy it, is a cursed stroke: like a fine ship of war, I am only come home to be dismasted and converted into an hospital. However, I am glad you hold it better: I don't think you looked as well when we parted. My sister, poor Susan! she is gone too: well, we can never live a day the longer for thinking on't. Where's Frank? Is he still the image of his mother?

Lord G. Just as you left him; but that the innocence of the boy is dignified by the knowledge of the man.

Gov. H. He will hardly remember his old uncle! I did love the rogue, that's the truth on't; and never looked at my money-bags but I thought of him. However, you have provided him a wife?

Lord G. I have; you saw her on your arrival, I suppose, for I left her in town to attend a sick aunt. Poor Mortimer! he died one month before the duke his brother, and missed a fine title and estate. You know how I loved the honest fellow, and cannot wonder I took home his orphan daughter as a match for Woodville.

Gov. H. Brother, brother, you are too generous; it is your foible, and artful people know how to convert it to their own advantage.

Lord G. It is, if a foible, the noblest incident to humanity. Sophia has birth, merit, accomplishments; and wants nothing but money to qualify her for any rank.

Gov. H. Can she have a worse want on earth? Birth, merit, accomplishments, are the very things that render money more essential.

Lord G. You are too captious, brother!

Gov. H. And you too placid, brother! If, like me, you had been toiling a third of your days to compass a favourite design, and found it disappointed at the moment you thought it complete, what would even your serene lordship say and do? Here have I promised myself a son in your's, an heir in your's; instead of which—

Lord G. His marriage with Miss Mortimer will not make him unworthy either title.

Gov. H. Never mention her name to me I beg, my lord! the wife I would have given him, has beauty without knowing it, innocence without knowing it, because she knows nothing else; and, to surprise you further, forty thousand pounds without knowing it; nay, to bring all your surprises together, is my daughter without knowing it.

Lord G. Your daughter? Why, have you married since my sister's death? Your daughter by her you lost before you went abroad?

Gov. H. Yes, but I shall find her again, I believe. I know you will call this one of my odd whims as usual, but we have all some; witness this dainty project of your's; and so I will tell you the truth in spite of that project. From the very birth of this girl, I saw her mother would spoil her; and, had she lived, proposed kidnapping miss in her infancy.

Lord G. Kidnap your own daughter! Why, brother, I need only prove this to obtain a commission of lunacy, and shut you up for life.

Gov. H. Why, though my wife was your lordship's sister, I will venture to tell you she was plaguy fantastical, and contrived to torment me as much with her virtues, as others by their vices. Such a fuss about her delicacy, her sensibility, and her refinement, that I could neither look, move, nor speak, without offending one or the other; and execrated the inventor of the jargon every hour in the four-and-twenty: a jargon, I resolved my girl should never learn; and heaven no sooner took her mother (heaven be praised for all things!) than I despatched her draggle-tailed French governess; made a bonfire of every book on education; whipped miss into a post-chaise, under a pretence of placing her in a nunnery; instead of which, I journeyed into Wales, and left her in the care of a poor curate's wife, whose name was up as the best housewife in the whole country; then returned with a solemn history of her death in the small-pox.

Lord G. Well, this is indeed astonishing! an admirable tutoress truly for my niece!

Gov. H. Yes, but there's a better jest than that.

Lord G. Indeed! is that possible?

Gov. H. How do you think I contrived to make them obey my instructions? I saw they suspected I was some rich humourist, and was afraid they would, after all, make a little bit of a gentlewoman of her, for which reason, except the first year in advance, they never had a shilling of my money.

Lord G. This is almost incredible! And so you left your only child to the charity of strangers?

Gov. H. No, no; not so bad as that neither. You remember my honest servant Hardy? After the poor fellow's leg was shot off in my tent, I promised him a maintenance; so, intrusting him with the secret, I ordered him to live in the neighbourhood, have an eye on the girl, and claim her if ill used: fine accounts I had from him, faith! The old parson and his wife having no children, and not finding any one own her, gave out she was theirs, and doated on her; in short, she is the little wonder of the country; tall as the palm-tree; with cheeks that might shame the drawing-room; and eyes, will dim the diamonds I have brought over to adorn them. This confounded gout has kept me in continual alarm, or else she should have spoke for herself. [to you?

Lord G. Why, then, does not Hardy bring her up

Gov. H. Why, for two very sufficient reasons. In the first place, that identical parson paid him the last compliment, that is, buried him a twelvemonth ago; and in the second, they would hardly entrust her to any man but him who delivered her to them. Here was a girl, my lord, to support your title, of which, I dare swear, you are as fond as ever.

Lord G. I thank your intention, brother; but am far from wishing the chief accomplishments of Woodville's lady should be the making cream-cheeses, goats'-whey, and elder-wine.

Gov. H. Let me tell your lordship, women were never better than when those were the chief accomplishments. But I may be ridiculous my own way without being singular. Harcourt shall have my girl, and my money too. Cream cheeses, quotha! No, no; making cream faces is an accomplishment which the belles of these days oftener excel in.

Lord G. I would not advise you to publish this opinion, Governor; for though you should call no anger into the cheeks of the ladies, I doubt you would into their hearts.

Gov. H. But where is this son of your's?

Lord G. He will be here immediately.

Gov. H. Nay, I must e'en take an old man's fate, and follow his mistress without complaint.

Lord G. You have no reason for the reproach; this is not his hour for visiting Miss Mortimer.

Gov. H. Miss Mortimer! Ha, ha, ha! why, do you think I took her for his mistress? What, I warrant I can tell you news of your own family, though I have hardly been three days in it. Woodville keeps a girl, and in great splendour; nay, they tell me, that the unconscionable young rogue encroaches so far on the privileges of threescore, as to intend marrying the slut.

Lord G. You jest, surely!

Gov. H. There's no jest like a true one. Ha, ha, ha! how foolish you look! this is your innocent elegance; and this is the blessed effect of letting him live out of your own house.

Lord G. Pr'ythee, reserve your raillery, sir, for some less interesting occasion. To have my views thus in a moment overturned! Where does she live?

Gov. H. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, the difference of those little syllables me and thee! now you can guess what made me so peevish, I suppose? As to where miss lives, I have not heard; but somewhere near his lodgings. A devilish fine girl she is, by-the-by. Ah! I told you twenty years ago, you would spoil this boy; entirely spoil him.

Lord G. Zounds! Governor, you have a temper Socrates himself could not have supported. Is this a time for old sayings of twenty years ago? Finish dressing, by that time your nephew will be here, and I shall have reflected on this matter.

Gov. H. With all my heart. 'Tis but a boyish frolic, and so good morning to you. Here! where's my triumvirate? Pompey, Anthony, Cæsar! [*Exit.*

Lord G. A boyish frolic, truly! many a foolish

fellow's life has been marked by such a boyish frolic. But her residence is the first object of my inquiry.

Enter Vane.

Is not my son come? [Governor is ready.

Vane. This moment, my lord; and walks till the

Lord G. Vane! I have deserved you should be attached to me, and I hope you are?

Vane. My lord! What the devil is he at? (*Aside.*)

Lord G. This strange old Governor has alarmed me a good deal; you are more likely to know, whether with reason, than I can be. Have you heard anything important of my son lately?

Vane. Never, my lord.

Lord G. Not that he keeps a mistress? What does the fool smile at? (*Aside.*) [my lord.

Vane. I did not think that anything important,

Lord G. I do, sir; and am told a more important thing, that he even thinks of marrying her. Now, though I cannot credit this, I would choose to know what kind of creature she is. Could not you assume a clownish disguise, and, scraping an acquaintance with her people, learn something of her character and designs?

Vane. Doubtless, to oblige your lordship, I could do such a thing. But if Mr. Woodville's sharp eyes (and love will render them still sharper) should discover me, I might chance to get a good drubbing in the character of a spy.

Lord G. Oh! it is very improbable he should suspect you: at the worst, name your employer, and your bones are safe. The office, perhaps, is not very agreeable, but I impose few such on you: execute it well, and you shall remember it with pleasure. I will detain Woodville till you are ready; and, as I doubt not that his next visit will be to this creature, by following him you will find out where she lives. Prepare, then, as quick as possible, and send me word when you are ready; for till then, I will not suffer him to depart. [*Exit.*

Vane. A pretty errand this his formal lordship has honoured me with. Hum! if I betray him, shall I not get more by it? Ay, but our heir is such a sentimental spark, that when his turn were served, he might betray me. Were he one of our harum-skarum, good-natured, good-for-nothing fellows, it would go against my conscience to do him an ill turn. I believe I stand well in my lord's will, if Counsellor Puzzle may be trusted, (and when he can get nothing by a lie, perhaps he may tell truth,) so, like all thriving men, I will be honest because it best serves my interest. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*A confined Garden.*

Woodville *discovered walking about.*

Wood. How tedious is this uncle! how tedious everybody! Was it not enough to spend two detestable months from my love, merely to preserve the secret, but I must be tantalized with seeing, without arriving at her? Yet how, when I do see her, shall I appease that affecting pride of a noble heart, conscious, too late, of its own inestimable value? Why was I not uniformly just? I had then spared myself the bitterest of regrets.

Enter Captain Harcourt.

Capt. H. Woodville! how do'st? Don't you, in happy retirement, pity me my Ealing and Acton marches and countermarches, as Foote has it? But, methinks, thy face is thinner and longer than a forsaken nymph's, who is going through the whole ceremony of nine months' repentance. What, thou'st fallen in love? rustically, too! Nay, pr'ythee, don't look so very lamentable.

Wood. How can we have an eye or ear for pleasure, when our fate hangs over us undecided?

Capt. H. I guess what you mean; but why make mountains of mole-hills? Is the rosy-fisted damsel so obstinately virtuous?

Wood. Imagine a fair favourite of Phœbus in all respects; since, while her face caught his beams, her heart felt his genius! Imagine all the graces hid under a straw hat and russet gown; imagine—

Capt. H. You have imagined enough, of conscience; and now for a few plain facts, if you please.

Wood. To such a lovely country maid I lost my heart last summer; and soon began to think romances the only true histories, and happiness not merely possible in a cottage, but only possible there.

Capt. H. Well, all the philosophers (ancient and modern) would never be able to convince me a coach was not a mighty pretty vehicle, and the lasses as good-natured in town as country. But, pray, let us know why you laid aside the pastoral project of eating fat bacon and exercising a crook all day, that thou mightest conclude the evening with the superlative indulgence of a peat-fire and a bed stuffed with straw? [to share mine.

Wood. Why, faith, by persuading the dear girl

Capt. H. Oh! now you talk the language of the world; and does that occasion thee such a melancholy face?

Wood. How ignorant are you both of me and her! Every moment since I prevailed, has only served to convince me I can sooner live without everything else than her; and this fatal leisure (caused by my absence with my father) she has employed in adding every grace of art to those of nature; till, thoroughly shocked at her situation, her letters are as full of grief as love, and I dread to hear every hour I have lost her.

Capt. H. I dread much more to hear you have lost yourself. Ah, my dear Woodville! the most dangerous charm of love is, every man conceits no other ever found out his method of loving; but, take my word for it, your Dolly may be brought back to a milk-maid. Leave her to herself awhile, and she'll drop the celestials, I dare swear.

Wood. She is too noble; and nothing but the duty I owe to so indulgent a father, prevents me from offering her all the reparation in my power.

Capt. H. A fine scheme, truly! Why, Woodville, art frantic? To predestinate yourself among the horned cattle of Doctors'-Commons, and take a wife for the very reason which makes so many spend thousands to get rid of one.

Wood. To withdraw an amiable creature from her duty, without being able to make her happy, is to me a very serious reflection: nay, I sinned, I may say, from virtue; and had I been a less grateful son, might have called myself a faultless lover.

Capt. H. Well, well, man, you are young enough to trust to time, and he does wonders. Above all, shake off this mental lethargy.

Wood. I will endeavour to take your advice. Should she fly, I were undone for ever. But you are no judge of my Cecilia's sincerity. How should you know those qualities which rise with every following hour? Can you think so meanly of me, as that I could be duped by a vulgar wretch, a selfish wanton? Oh, no! she possesses every virtue but the one I have robbed her of. [*Exit.*

Capt. H. Poor Frank! did I love your welfare less, I could soon ease your heart, by acquainting you of my marriage with Miss Mortimer; but, now, the immediate consequence would be, this ridiculous match. How, if I apprise either my lord or the Governor? both obstinate in different ways: I might betray only to ruin him. A thought occurs: my person is unknown to her; choosing an hour when he is absent, I'll pay her a visit; offer her an advantageous settlement, and learn, from her behaviour, her real character and intentions. [*Exit.*

Act II.—Scene I.—*An elegant Dressing-room.*

Bridget *discovered fetching jars with flowers.*

Brid. Lord help us! how fantastical some folks not a hundred miles off are! If I can imagine what's come to my lady: here she has been sighing and groaning these two months, because her lover was in the country; and now, truly, she's sighing and groaning because he is come to town. Such maggots, indeed! I might as well have staid in our parish all the days of my life, as to live

mewed up with her in this dear sweet town; I could but have done that with a virtuous lady, although I know she never was at Fox-hall in all her jaunts, and we two should cut such a figure there! Bless me, what's come to the glass? (*Setting her dress.*) Why, sure it is dulled with her eternal sighing, and makes me look as frightful as herself! Oh! here she comes, with a face as long and dismal as if he was going to be married, and to somebody else too.

Enter Cecilia, *who throws herself on the sofa.*

Cecil. What can detain Woodville such an age? It is an hour at least since he rode by. Run, Bridget, and look if you can see him through the drawing-room window.

Brid. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Cecil. How wearisome is every hour to the wretched! They catch at each future one, merely to while away the present; for, were Woodville here, could he relieve me from the torment of reflection; or the strong, though silent, acknowledgment of my own heart perpetually gives of my error?

Brid. (*Without.*) Here he comes, ma'am!

Cecil. Does he? Run down, then. (*Fluttered.*)

Brid. (*Without.*) Dear me, no, 'tis not, neither; [*Re-enter* Bridget.] 'tis only the French ambassador's cook, with his huge bag and long ruffles.

Cecil. Blind animal! Sure, nothing is so tormenting as expectation.

Brid. La, ma'am! anything will torment one when one has a mind to be tormented, which must be your case for sartin. What signifies sitting mope, mope, mope, from morning to night? You'd find yourself a deal better if you went out only two or three times a day. For a walk, we are next door to the Park, as I may say; and for a ride, such a dear sweet vis-a-vis and pretty horses might tempt any one. Then, as to company, you'll say, "A fig for your starched ladies, who owe their virtue to their ugliness!" Mine is much at your service.

Cecil. How could I endure this girl, did I not know that her ignorance exceeds even her impertinence. (*Aside.*) I have no pleasure in going abroad.

Brid. Oh la, ma'am! how should you know till you try? Sure, everybody must wish to see and be seen. Then, there's such a delightful hurricane, all the world are busy, though most are doing nothing; to splash the mob, and drive against the people of quality. Oh! give me a coach, and London for ever and ever! You could but lock yourself up, were you as old and ugly as gay Lady Grizzle, at next door.

Cecil. Had I been so, I had continued happy.

Brid. La, ma'am, don't ye talk so purphanely! Happy to be old or ugly? Or, I'll tell you what: as you don't much seem to fancy going out, suppose you were to come down now and then, (you know we have a pure large hall,) and take a game of romps with us. If you were once to see our Jacob hunt the slipper, you would die with laughing! Madam Frisk, my last mistress, used, as soon as ever master was gone, (and, indeed, he did not trouble her much with his company,) to run down, draw up her brocaded niggle-de-gee, and fall to play at some good fun or other! Dear heart, we were as merry then as the day was long! I am sure I have never been half so happy since.

Cecil. I cannot imitate the model you propose; but though I don't choose to go abroad, you may.

Brid. I don't love to go much among the mobility, neither. If, indeed, madam, next winter, you'd give me some of your tickets, I would fain go to a masquerade; (it vexes me to see 'em stick in the thing-um-bobs for months together;) and Mrs. Trim promises me the lent of a Venus's dress, which, she says, I shall cut a figure in. Now, ma'am, if I had but some diamonds, (for beggars wear diamonds there, they say,) who knows but I might make my fortune, like you?

Cecil. Mar it, much rather, like me. That is no place for girls of your station, which exposes you to so much insult.

Brid. Ah! let me alone, madam, for taking care of number one. I ware never afeard but once in my whole life, and that ware of grandfar's ghost; for he always hated I, and used to walk (poor soul!) in our barken, for all the world like an ass with a tie-wig on. (*A knocking.*)

Cecil. Hark! that sure is Woodville's knock! Fly, and see! [*Exit Bridget.*] Alas! is this my repentance? Dare I sin against my judgment?

Enter Woodville.

Wood. My Cecilia! my soul! have I at last the happiness of beholding you? You know me too well to imagine I would punish myself by a moment's voluntary delay.

Cecil. Oh, no! it is not that. (*They sit down.*)

Wood. Say you are glad to see me; afford me one kind word to atone for your cold looks. Are you not well?

Cecil. Rather say I am not happy. My dear Woodville, I am an altered being! Why have you reduced me to shrink thus in your presence? Oh! why have you made me unworthy of yourself?

Wood. Cruel girl! is this my welcome? When did I appear to think you so? [otherwise.

Cecil. Tell me when any one else will think me

Wood. Will you never be above so narrow a prejudice? Are we not the whole world to each other? Nay, dry your tears: allow me to dry them. (*Kisses her.*) What is there in the reach of love or wealth I have not sought to make you happy?

Cecil. That which is the essence of all enjoyments, innocence! Oh, Woodville! you knew not the value of the heart whose peace you have destroyed. My sensibility first ruined my virtue, and then my repose. But, though for you I consented to abandon an humble happy home, to embitter the age of my venerable father, and bear the contempt of the world, I can never support my own. My heart revolts against my situation, and hourly bids me renounce a splendour, which only renders guilt more despicable. (*Rises.*) I meant to explain this hereafter, but the agitation of my mind obliged me to lighten it immediately.

Wood. Is your affection, then, already extinct? For, sure, it must, when you can resolve to torture me thus!

Cecil. Were my love extinct, I might sink into a mean content! Oh, no! 'Tis to that alone I owe my resolution.

Wood. Can you, then, plunge me into despair? So young, so lovely too! Oh! where could you find so safe an asylum as my heart? Whither could you fly?

Cecil. I am obliged to you, sir, for the question; but who is it has made me thus destitute? I may retain your protection, indeed, but at what price?

Wood. Give me but a little time, my love! I am equally perplexed between my father and my uncle; each of whom offers me a wife I can never love. Suffer them to defeat each other's schemes. Let me, if possible, be happy without a crime; for I must think it one to grieve a parent hitherto so indulgent. I will not put anything in competition with your peace; and long for the hour when the errors of the lover will be absorbed in the merits of the husband.

Cecil. No, Woodville! That was, when innocent, as far above my hopes, as it is now beyond my wishes. I love you too sincerely to reap any advantage from so generous an error; yet, you at once flatter and wound my heart, in allowing me worthy such a distinction; but love cannot exist without esteem, and how should I possess your's when I have lost even my own?

Wood. It is impossible you should ever lose either, while so deserving of both. I am obliged to return directly, but will hasten to you the very first moment. When we meet again it must be with a smile, remember.

Cecil. It will, when we meet again. Oh! how those words oppress me! (*Aside.*) But do not regulate your conduct by mine, nor make me an argument

with yourself for disobeying my lord; for here I solemnly swear never to accept you without the joint consent of both our fathers; and that I consider as an eternal abjuration! But may the favoured woman you are to make happy, have all my love without my weakness! [*Exit in tears.*

Wood. Disinterested, exalted girl! Why add such a needless bar? For is it possible to gain my father's consent? And yet, without her, life would be insupportable! The censures of the world! What is that world to me? Were I weak enough to sacrifice her to the erroneous judgment of the malicious and unfeeling, what does it offer to reward me? Commendations I can never deserve, and riches I can never enjoy. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Street before Cecilia's house.*

JACOB *opens the door and lets out* WOODVILLE.

Enter VANE, *disguised, with a basket of game.*

Vane. So, there he goes at last. I may open the attack without fear of a discovery, since our hopeful heir will hardly return directly. This intelligence of my landlord's at the Blue Posts has made the matter much easier. Hum! a good subject! Sure, I ought to know that bumpkin's face! As I live, my playfellow at the parish-school, Jacob Gawky! Now for a touch of the old dialect. D'ye hire, young mon! pray, do ye knaw where one Bett Dowson do live?

Jacob. Noa, not I. [Jacob Gawky!

Vane. Eh! Why, zure as two-pence, thou beest

Jacob. Odsbodlikins! zo I be, indeed! But, who beest thee? [low, Wull, mun?

Vane. What, doost not knaw thy ould zkhoolvel-

Jacob. What, Wull? Od rabbit it! if I ben't desprate glad to zee thee: where doost live, mun?

Vane. Down at huome, in our parish. I becoomed up with Zur Izaac Promise to be meade excoisemun.

Jacob. Thee'st good luck, faith! wish, no odds to thee, my fortin ware as good! but theed'st always a muortal good notion of wroiting and ciphers, while I don't knaw my own neame when I doo zee it. What didst leave zea for?

Vane. Why, I ware afraid I should be killed before I comed to be a great mon: but what brought thee into this foine house?

Jacob. Fortin, Wull, fortin. Didst thee knaw

Vane. Noa, not I. [Nan o' th' mill?

Jacob. Od rabbit it! I thought every muortal zoul had knawd zhe. Well, Nan and I ware such near neighbors, there ware only a barn between us; zhe ware a desprate zmart lass, that's the truth on't: and I had half a moind to teake to feyther's business, and marry zhe; but, ecod! the zimpletony growed so fond, that somehow or other, I ware tired first! when behold you, zquire takes a fancy to me, and made I cuome and live at the hall; and as my head run all on tuown, when aw comed up to London, aw brought I wi'un: zo I thought to get rid that way of the bullocking of Nan.

Vane. But how didst get into thic foine house?

Jacob. Dang it, doant I zeay, I'll tell thee present! Zoa, as I ware zaying, one holyday I went to zee thic there church, wi' the top like a huge punch-bowl turned auver; and, dang it! who should arrive in the very nick, but madam Nan. Well, huome comes I as merry as a cricket; zquire caals for I in a muortal hurry; when who zhould I zee, but madam Nan on her marrowbones, a croying for dear loife! Dang it, I thought at first I should ha' zwounded; zo a made a long zarmant about 'ducing a poor girl, and zaid I should zartainly go to the divil for it, and then turned I off. But the best fun is to come, mun; rabbit me! if aw did not teake Nan into keeping himself; and zhe do flaunt it about, as foine as a duchess.

Vane. A mighty religious moral gentleman, truly! (*Aside.*) Well, how came you to this pleace?

Jacob. Why, Meay-day, walking in Commongarden to smell the pozeys, who zhould I zee but our Bridget. *I* was muortal glad to zee her, you must needs think, and zhe got I this here pleace.

Vane. Dost live wi' a lord in this fine house?

Jacob. Noa; a leady, you fool! but zuch a leady, zuch a dear, easy, good-natured creature! zhe do never say noa, let we do what we wull. [married?

Vane. Now to the point. (*Aside.*) Is your lady

Jacob. Noa: but zhe's as good; and what'st think mun? to a lord's zon! though if a ware a king, aw would not be too good for zhe. A muortal fine comely mon too, who do love her as aw do the eyes in his head. Couzin Bridget do tell I, zhe zeeded a letter where aw do zay aw wull ha' her any day of the week, whatever do come o' th' next. Why, I warrant they have 'pointed the wedding-day!

Vane. The devil they have! My lord will go mad at this news. (*Aside.*)

Jacob. Lauk a deazy! how merry we will be on that day! Wo't come and junket wi' us?

Vane. Yes, yes, I shall certainly make one among you, either then or before. (*Aside.*) But now I must goa and give this geame to zquire—zquire—what the dickens be his name? I do always forget it; there zhould be a ticket somewhere: zoa, rabbit me! if some of your London faulk ha' no' cut it off, out o' fun.

Jacob. Ha, ha, ha! ecod! nothing more likelier. (*Both laugh foolishly.*) The rum people be zo zharp as needles. But there's no pleace like it for all that; I be set upon living and dying in it.

Vane. Now to secure my return, if necessary. (*Aside.*) I'll tell thee what, Jacob; seeing as how I lost thic there direction, do thee teake the basket: 'tis only a present of geame from the parson o' our parish; and, if zo be I can't find the gentleman, why 'tis honestly mine. Meay be, I'll come, and teake a bit o' supper wi' ye.

Jacob. Wull ye, indeed? dang it! that's clever; and then you'll see our Bridget. She's a muortal zmart lass, I promise ye! and, meay be, may'st get a peap at my leady, who's desperate handsome! Good b'ye t'ye. Bridget's zo comical! od rabbit it! we'll be main merry. [*Exit.*

Vane. Thus far I have succeeded to admiration! our young heir has really a mind to play the fool and marry his mistress: though, faith, marrying his own does not seem very inexcusable, when so many of his equals modestly content themselves with the cast-off of half their acquaintance. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in Cecilia's house.*

Enter BRIDGET.

Brid. So, just the old story again! crying, crying for ever! Lord, if I was a man I should hate such a whimpering—what would she have, I wonder? to refuse such a handsome, genteel, good-natured man! and, I'll be sworn, he offered to marry her; for I listened with all my ears. Oh! that he would have me now! I should become my own coach prodigiously, that's a sure thing. (*A knocking.*) Eh! who knocks? *Enter* JACOB.

Jacob. A young mon do want my leady.

Brid. A man? what sort of a man?

Jacob. Why a mon—like—just such another as I.

Brid. No, no, no; that's not so easy to find. What can any man want with her? shew him in here, Jacob.

Jacob. (*Returning in a kind of glee.*) When shall we have the wedding, Bridget?

Brid. We shall have a burying first, I believe.

Jacob. Od rabbit it! we won't be their seconds there, faith! [*Exit.*

Brid. Now, if he mistakes me for my lady, I shall find out what he wants.

Re-enter JACOB, *with* CAPTAIN HARCOURT *disguised.*

Capt. H. Is that your lady? [our Bridget?

Jacob. He, he! lauk, zur! don't you know that's

Brid. So, deuce on him! there's my whole scheme spoiled. (*Aside.*) My lady, sir, is engaged; but, if you tell me your business, it will do just as well.

Capt. H. For yourself it may, child!

Brid. What, you belong to Mr. Gargle, the apothecary? or come from the jeweller on Ludgate-hill? or have a letter from—

Capt. H. The very person; you have hit it. And

now, do me the favour to tell your lady, a stranger wishes to speak to her on particular business.

Brid. Very well, sir. Was ever handsome man so crabbed! (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Capt. H. Egad! if the mistress has half as much tongue as the maid, Woodville may catch me in the midst of my first speech. Now for my credentials! and here she comes! a lovely girl, indeed! I can scarce blame Frank, for she awes me.

Enter Cecilia, *followed officiously by* Bridget.

Cecil. I was informed, sir, you had particular business with me. [dam, I—

Capt. H. I took the liberty, madam—I say, ma-

Cecil. As I have neither friends or relations in London, (*sighs*) I am at a loss to guess—

Capt. H. What I would communicate, madam, requires secrecy.

Cecil. Bridget, go where I ordered you just now.

Brid. Yes, madam. But if I a'n't even with you for this—(*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Cecil. I complied with your request, sir, without inquiring the motive; because you, I think, can have only one. My father, if I may trust my heart, has made you his messenger to an unwilling offender.

Capt. H. Pardon me, madam, but I refer you to this.

Cecil. (*Reads.*) "*Madam,—Being certainly informed Mr. Woodville is on the point of marrying a lady chosen by his friends, when, it is presumed, you will be disengaged, a nobleman of rank and estate above what he can ever possess, is thus early in laying his heart and fortune at your feet, lest some more lucky rival should anticipate him. The bearer is authorized to disclose all particulars, and offer you a settlement worthy your acceptance. Deign, madam, to listen to him on the subject, and you will find the unknown lover as generous, and not less constant than Woodville.*" Heavens! to what an insult have I exposed myself!

Capt. H. What can I think? There is an air of injured delicacy in her which teaches me to reproach myself for a well-meant deceit. (*Aside.*) If, madam—

Cecil. I had forgot this wretch. (*Rises.*) Return, sir, to your vile employer; tell him, whoever he is, I am too sensible of the insult, though not entitled to resent it; tell him, I have a heart above my situation, and that he has only had the barbarous satisfaction of adding another misery to those which almost overwhelmed me before.

Capt. H. Hear me, madam, I conjure you!

Cecil. Never! a word would contaminate me.

Capt. H. Nay, you shall. You do not know half the good consequences of this letter. I am the friend, the relation of Woodville: my name, Harcourt.

Cecil. Is it possible he should be so cruel, so unjust?

Capt. H. He is neither cruel nor unjust, but only unfortunate. Hear. He designs to marry you; this I learned from himself only this morning. As a proof of my sincerity, I will own I doubted your right to that mark of his esteem, and made this trial in consequence. Pleased to find you worthy of his rank, I feel shocked at reminding you, you ought not to share it. But, madam, if you truly love him, you cannot wish that to be just to you he should be unjust to those who have a prior right over him. This shall be my last effort. (*Aside.*)

Cecil. A motive like your's, sir, will excuse anything. How little my happiness, honour, or interest, ever weighed against his, need not be repeated; far be it from me now to disgrace him. He is apprised of my invincible objections to a match which will never take place. May he form a happier! while I, by a voluntary poverty, expiate my offence.

Capt. H. Ma—ma—What the devil chokes me so? (*Aside.*) I am struck with your sentiments, and must find you a proper asylum. The moment I saw you, I had hopes such manners could not veil an immoral heart. I have proved your sincerity, and owe a reparation to your delicacy. The proposed bride of Woodville is every way worthy that distinction; nor am I without hopes even she will be prevailed on to protect you. But I must not leave a doubt of my sincerity: do you know Miss Mortimer?

Cecil. I have seen the lady, sir. But dare I credit my senses? has heaven formed two such hearts, and for me?

Capt. H. With her your story will be buried for ever: and I think, the sooner you disappear, the more easily will you prevent Woodville's disobedience. I will open the affair to Miss Mortimer directly, and if she acquiesces, desire her to call for you in person, to prevent the possibility of any artifice.

Cecil. He who inspired such sentiments, alone can reward them! Oh, sir! you have raised a poor desponding heart; but it shall be the business of my future life to deserve those favours I can never half repay.

Capt. H. I find, by punishing me with acknowledgments, you are resolved to be obliged to me. The time is too precious to be wasted on such trifles. At seven, you shall have certain intelligence of my success; employ the interim to the best advantage, and hope everything by daring to deserve well. [*Exit.*

Cecil. Astonishing interposition of heaven! Hope! What have I to hope? But let the consciousness of acting rightly support me in the sad moment of renouncing Woodville, and in him all that rendered life desirable. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*Lord Glenmore's house.*

Enter Lord Glenmore *and* Vane.

Lord G. And are you sure of all this?

Vane. Absolutely, my lord. I have known the bumpkin, her footman, from the height of his own club. [what to resolve on.

Lord G. What a oursed infatuation! I know not

Vane. If I may be permitted to advise, my lord—

Lord G. And who asked your advice, sir?

Vane. You have, my lord, formerly. [sir.

Lord G. Take care you stay till I do. Leave me,

Vane. If you don't like my advice, I shall give you my opinion very shortly. A crusty crab! [*Exit.*

Lord G. This is the certain consequence of entrusting low people; and yet, there is no doing without them. I can never master my feelings enough to speak properly to Woodville on the subject, therefore must fix on some other method. (*Pauses.*) That's a sure one, and falls heavy on the artful, aspiring creature only. [*Re-enter* Vane.] Vane, could not you procure me a travelling-chaise and four stout fellows immediately?

Vane. To be sure, my lord, I can order a chaise at any inn, if you choose it.

Lord G. Pho, pho! Do what I have ordered, and wait near the Horse-guards, in about an hour; when I shall seize this insolent baggage, and convey her out of my son's reach. If we can contrive to frighten her into taking you as a husband, it will end all my fears, and shall be the making of your fortune.

Vane. Gad! I like the project well. A handsome wife is the best bait when we fish for preferment; and this gives me a double claim both on father and son. (*Aside.*) Nothing but the profound respect I have for your lordship could induce me to think of this; though born without rank and fortune, I have a soul, my lord—

Lord G. Come, come, my good lad, I guess what you would say; but we have no time for speeches. I have set my heart on the success of this project; and you shall find your interest in indulging me.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene V.—*Miss Mortimer's Apartment.*

Enter Capt. Harcourt, *meeting* Miss Mortimer.

Capt. H. If I were to judge of your temper by your looks, my dear, I should say it was uncommonly sweet, this morning.

Miss M. A truce with compliment; I must, in reason, renounce dear flattery after marriage.

Capt. H. To flattery you never paid court; but the language of the heart and the world will sometimes resemble. I ought, however, to praise your temper, for I am come to try it, and give you a noble opportunity of exerting its benevolence.

Miss M. A benevolence you certainly doubt by this studied eulogium.

Capt. H. I might, did I not know it well. In short, I have taken the strangest step this morning—

Miss M. What step, for heaven's sake?

Capt. H. In regard to a lady.

Miss M. Not another wife, I hope?

Capt. H. No, only a mistress.

Miss M. Oh! a trifle, a trifle!

Capt. H. You may laugh, madam, but I am serious. In plain English, Woodville has a mistress he dotes on so madly, as even to intend marrying her. Imagining her, like most of her stamp, only an artful interested creature, I paid her a visit as a stranger, with an offer which must have unveiled her heart had it been base; but I found her, on the contrary, a truly noble-minded girl, and far above her present situation, which she earnestly wishes to quit. In short, my dear, I thought it prudent to part them; and, in your name, offered her an asylum.

Miss M. In my name! you amaze me, Mr. Harcourt! Would you associate your wife with a kept mistress? bring such an acquisition into the house of Lord Glenmore, and deprive Woodville of, perhaps, his only reason for not interfering with us? Do you think I credit this sudden acquaintance?

Capt. H. I deceived myself, I find; I thought you above such low suspicion.

Miss M. Yes, yes, I can make distinctions more clearly than you wished. You must excuse my interference in this affair, sir; and let me hint to you, that your own will do as little credit to your heart as to your understanding.

Capt. H. Mighty well, madam! go on. Settle this with respect to yourself, but do not be concerned about me; for, in one word, if you cannot resolve on protecting this poor unfortunate, I will.

Miss M. That must not be; yet his warmth alarms me. (*Aside.*) Nay, but, my dear, think deliberately. Supposing her all you say, the world judges by actions, not thoughts, and will bury her merit in her situation.

Capt. H. It is that cruel argument perpetuates error in so many of your frail sex. Be the first to rise above it. That you are in Lord Glenmore's house, will be your justification, both to the world and himself; for what but a generous motive can actuate you? In my eyes, my dear Sophia, virtue never looks so lovely as when she stretches out her hand to the fallen.

Miss M. Oh, Harcourt! I am ashamed of my suspicion; I ought to have known all the candour and generosity of your heart, and received, in a moment, the unhappy woman it patronised; yet, at this crisis in our own affairs, to run the chance of further exasperating my benefactor—

Capt. H. I am not to learn that friendship and love have been mere masks to fraud and folly in the great world. No one would blame me, were I to suffer Woodville to ruin himself, as the shortest way of fixing my own fortune, and obtaining my lord's approbation of your choice. But I know not how it happened, that when a mere boy, I took it into my head, truth was as much to the purpose as lying; and as I never got into more scrapes than others, why I still pursue my system, and prefer honour to art. Then, if we fail, we have something better to console us than a pond or pistol; and if we succeed, what is there wanting to our happiness?

Miss M. How do you mean to manage her escape?

Capt. H. That, my dearest, is the difficulty. I found she had seen you; and, therefore, was obliged, to satisfy her of my honour, by assuring her you would call for her in person.

Miss M. Very well; we must carefully watch our opportunity. You dine here. The word of command you are accustomed to obey, but you must now become obedient to the look; for you know I have my difficulties, however strong my desire of obliging you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.—Scene I.—*The Hall.*

Enter Vane, *looking about.*

Vane. Heyday! sure, his old-fashioned lordship has not employed two of us on one errand! An old man has been hovering about madam's house, and has followed me here, without my knowing what to make of him. However, ears, befriend me!

[*Retires, listening.*

Enter Governor Harcourt, *followed by his black Servants soon after.*

Gov. H. Here, Anthony, Pompey, Cæsar! you dogs! be ready to attend my lord and me on a little expedition. No, no flambeaus, boobies! the chaste miss, Diana, will surely take a spiteful pleasure in lighting us to catch another kind of miss. And, do ye hear? not one syllable of the when, where, or how, except you intend to dangle on one string, like a bunch of black grapes. (*Talks to them apart.*)

Enter Grey.

Grey. It is here, I am at length informed, the father of this abandoned seducer resides. Yet, what redress can poverty hope from pride? Surely, however, for his own sake, he will assist me in regaining the poor girl, and afterwards prevent the wretch from pursuing her! There, I suppose, he is.—My lord! [with my lord?

Gov. H. Well, old Sturdy! what do you want

Grey. Good heaven! the father of Cecilia! (*Aside*)

Vane. Eh! indeed! (*Aside.*)

Grey. Oh! how my heart misgives me! Perhaps this base Woodville, her very brother—(*Aside.*)

Gov. H. What, is the old man ill? Sure I know this honest—it is not—yet it is—Grey?

Grey. The same, indeed, my lord. [court.

Gov. H. No my lord to me, man; my name is Har-

Grey. Blessed be heaven for that, however!

Gov. H. Be not righteous overmuch; for that my name is Harcourt I do not reckon among the first favours of heaven. But, ha, ha, ha! perhaps you thought I had no name at all by this time? Faith, I put a pretty trick upon—Well, well, well! You may retire till my lord is ready. [*To the blacks, who go off.*] I am a riddle, honest Grey! but now I am come to expound myself, and make thy fortune into the bargain. It is many a long day since I saw old England; but at last I am come home with a light heart and a heavy purse, design to fetch up my Cicely, give her and my money to the honestest fellow I can find, and grow old amid a rosy race of Britons, springing from a stem reared after my own fashion. There's news for you, my honest friend!

Grey. Alas! how little will he think I deserve his favour when he hears my account of her! And how can I shock a parent, with what too severely shocks even myself? (*Aside.*)

Gov. H. What, silent, man! ha, ha, ha! I can't but laugh to think how foolish you looked at the second year's end, when no allowance came; but that was my own contrivance; all done on purpose, my good old soul! and now it will come in a lump; there's the whole difference. Well, and so my dame made her a pattern of housewifery, eh?—'Od! I don't intend to touch another pickle or preserve that is not of my little Cicely's own doing; and I'll build her a dairy, with every bowl and churn of silver!—Zounds, it shall be a finer sight than the Tower of London! and we'll set up dame Deborah's statue before it, like queen Anne's in St. Paul's Church-yard.—But why doesn't enjoy this discovery, man? Art afraid I shall take her from thee? Oh! never think of that; for thou shalt bless every pie she makes; ay, and taste it afterwards, old Pudding-sleeves!

Grey. Ah, sir! (*Sighs.*)

Gov. H. Eh! Zounds! what dost mean? Sure my Cicely isn't dead?

Grey. No, not dead, sir.

Gov. H. She's very near it then, I suppose?

Grey. No, sir.

Gov. H. No, sir? Then what the devil do you

mean, by alarming me thus with your "No, sirs," after all?

Grey. Alas! is there no greater evil?

Gov. H. None that I know of; but your whole fraternity are not more like ravens in colour than note. Come, let us know what this mighty evil is.

Grey. For years did she increase in goodness as in beauty; the charm of every young heart, and the sole comfort of those old ones, to whom heaven and man seemed to have consigned her for ever.

Gov. H. Well, I'd a little bird told me all this.

Grey. About a twelvemonth ago, during a little absence of mine, a young man of fashion introduced himself into my house; and my wife being void of suspicion, and the dear girl uninstructed in the ways of this bad world—

Gov. H. The dog betrayed her!—And is this your care, you old—and that ignoramus, your wife? Zounds, I am in such a fury! I want to know no more of her infamous conduct. 'Od! I am strangely tempted to have you strangled this moment, as a just reward for your negligence; and so bury the secret with you.

Grey. It is as effectually buried already, sir. I love the dear unhappy girl too well ever to tell her heaven gave her to such a father.

Gov. H. Yes, yes, you are better suited to the—I hope she pays for this severely! You make her stand in a white sheet, to be pointed at by the whole village every Sunday, to be sure?

Grey. Alas, sir! she put it out of my power even to forgive her.

Gov. H. Forgive her! forgive her, truly!

Grey. By flying immediately from her only friend. Infirm and poor, I struggled with the joint evils till now; when, having collected enough to support me, I walked up in search of her. It was only yesterday I discovered her in a splendid coach, which I traced to her house.

Gov. H. A house? I shall run mad entirely! A coach? Why, dare the little brazen-face pretend to elegance, when I took such pains to quench every spark of gentility in her?

Grey. In the neighbourhood I discovered the name of her seducer; and in seeking him, met with you.—Moderate your passion, sir. Reflect! When age is frail, what can we expect in youth? Shall man desert humanity?

Gov. H. So, so, so! Now I am to be tortured with your preaching. I renounce the unworthy little slut. I have no friend—no daughter—no anything.—'Od! I would sooner build an hospital for idiots, like Swift, and endow it with all my fortune, than bestow it on one who thus perverts reason. Harkye, sir! forget the way to this house—forget you ever saw my face!—Would I had never seen your's! For if you dare to send her whining to me, I'll torment you with every plague power, wealth, law, or even lawyers, can set in motion. By heaven, I abjure the audacious little wretch for ever! and will sooner return to India, and bury my gold with those from whom it was taken, than bestow a single shilling on her, when she loses her coach and her house.

Grey. (*Contemptuously.*) And I will sooner want a shilling, than suffer her to waste her youth in a state which will render her age an insupportable burden. Fear not, sir, ever seeing her or me again; for the bosom which reared, will joyfully receive her, nor further embitter her remaining days with the knowledge she was born the equal of her undoer, and deprived herself of all those blessings heaven only hid, never denied her. [*Exit.*

Gov. H. Who would have a daughter? Zounds! I am as hot as if I were in the black hole at Calcutta! If miss had only married a lout, from ignorance of her birth, I could have forgiven it; but her puppy being of fashion, the papers will get hold of it, and I shall be paragraphed into purgatory. Fools can turn wits on these occasions; and, "A certain Governor and his daughter," will set the grinners in motion from Piccadilly to Aldgate. This insolent old fellow too! I need not wonder where she got her courage: not but I like his spirit. 'Od! I like it much; it proves his innocence. What the devil did I drive him away for? Here, dogs, run after that old man in black, and order him to return to me this moment.

Enter Lord Glenmore.

Lord G. And now, brother, I am ready for you.

Gov. H. Yes; and now, brother, I have something else to mind; and my servants moreover— [*Exit.*

Lord G. What new whim can this troublesome mortal have taken into his head? (*A rapping at the door.*) I am not at home, remember. I have disposed of Woodville for a few hours upon pretence of business in the city, which will give me time to prosecute my scheme upon his lady.

Enter Miss Mortimer, *with* Cecilia, *in mourning.*

Miss M. Nay, as to that circumstance—Bless me, here's my lord! (*Apart.*)

Cecil. My lord! Good heavens, I shall sink into the earth! (*Apart.*)

Miss M. He can never guess at you: recover, my dear creature! (*Apart.*)

Lord G. Is the lady indisposed, Miss Mortimer?

Miss M. Yes, my lord; that is, no—I don't know what I am saying. She has been ill lately, and riding has a little overcome her, that's all.—Struggle to keep up, for heaven's sake and your own. (*Apart to Cecilia.*)

Cecil. Impossible! (*Faints.*)

Lord G. Warner! drops and water, in a moment. How beautiful she is! her features are exquisitively fine.

Miss M. They are thought so, my lord.

Lord G. Her pulse returns; she revives.

Cecil. I beg your pardon, madam! My lord too! I am shocked to have occasioned so much trouble.

Miss M. Absurd to apologize for the infirmity of nature: my lord, I assure you, was quite anxious—

Lord G. The man must surely have lost every sense who can see this lady, even when deprived of her's, without emotion: but to me the languor of illness had ever something peculiarly interesting. I wonder who this elegant creature is! her hand seems to tremble strangely. (*Aside.*)

Cecil. Oh, madam!—

Miss M. Silence and recollection alone can secure you from suspicion; I confess I relied on his absence. (*Apart to Cecilia.*)

Re-enter Governor Harcourt.

Gov. H. He won't return, eh? 'Od! I like the old Cambrian the better for it. I have fired his Welsh blood finely. Why, what a blockhead was I, not to go after him myself? Methinks I should like to know miss when I meet her in her coach too. Um! did he not tell me something of tracing the seducer into this house? Woodville's mistress, by everything contrary! 'Od! I shall seize the gipsy with redoubled satisfaction! But I must keep my own counsel, or my old beau of a brother will roast me to death on my system of education. Eh! who has he got there? (*Cecilia rises.*) A pretty lass, faith! Ah! there is the very thing I admire; there is gentility, without the fantastical flourishes of fashion! just the very air I hoped my minx would have had.

[*Lord Glenmore, having led off Cecilia, returns.*

Lord G. I don't know how, but my inclination to this business is over. I think I'll let the matter alone at present.

Gov. H. The devil you will! why, by to-morrow, Woodville may have married her.

Lord G. D'ye think so? well then, let's go.

Gov. H. What d'ye intend to do with her, pray?

Lord G. I won't trust this weathercock till all is safe. (*Aside.*) I care not what becomes of her, so she is out of my way: send her to Bridewell perhaps.

Gov. H. To Bridewell, truly? No, that you sha'n't, neither. Why, who knows but the fault may be all that young Rakehell, your son's?

Lord G. My son's, sir! let me tell you, I have not bred him in such a manner.

Gov. H. Oh! if breeding were any security—Zounds, I shall betray all by another word. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. What now can have changed you? But you are more inconstant than our climate. Did you ever know one minute what you should think the next? However, to satisfy your scruples, I intend to despatch her to a nunnery; and if that don't please you, take charge of her yourself. [*Exeunt.*

Vane. (*Comes forward.*) Ha, ha, ha! why this would make a comedy! And so, of all birds in the air, his dignified lordship has pitched on me for the husband of the Governor's daughter and his own niece! Well, if I can but go through with this, it will be admirable! Thanked by one for making my fortune, and safe from the anger of all.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Woodville, sir, is just gone into the house you bade me watch. [*Exit.*

Vane. The devil he is! why then I must consign my intended to him for one night more, and persuade my lord to delay our seizure till morning; for, to meet with him, would certainly produce an agreement of all parties, and a marriage which would never enrol my name in the family pedigree, or Governor's will. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Cecilia's Dressing-room.*

Enter WOODVILLE.

Wood. Thanks to that dear lawyer's lucky absence, I have a few happy hours, my love, to spend with thee. (*Looks at her clothes.*) Already retired? sure I have not left my key in the gardengate: no, here it is. (*Rings the bell.*) Nobody answer! I don't understand this. Perhaps I shall disturb her: I'll steal into her chamber. (*Goes off, and presently returns, disordered.*) Not there! her clothes too, the same she had on last! Oh! my heart misgives me. But where are all the servants? (*Rings very violently.*) Bridget! Robert! Jacob!

Re-enter BRIDGET, *with her hat on.*

Bridget, what's become of your lady?

Brid. Really, sir, I can't say. Don't you know?

Wood. If I did I shouldn't have asked you.

Brid. (*After a little pause.*) Why sure, sir, my lady has not run away; and yet something runs in my head as if she had. I thought that spark came for no good to-day.

Wood. What spark, girl?

Brid. Why, just after you went away, comes a young man, a monstrous genteel one, and very handsome, too, I must needs say, with fine dark eys, and a fresh colour.

Wood. D—n his colour! tell me his business.

Brid. So he axed for my lady, and would not tell me what he wanted: I came with her, however; but she no sooner set eyes on him, than she sent me out; which argufied no good, you'll say; and before I could possibly come back, though I ran as fast as ever my legs could carry me, he was gone, and she writing, and crying for dear life; but that was no news, so I did not mind it: and when she gave me leave to go to the play, thought no more harm than the child unborn.

Wood. It must be a scheme beyond all doubt, and I am the dupe of a dissembling, ungrateful—Oh, Cecilia! (*Throws himself in a chair.*)

Brid. If I was as you, sir, I would not fret about her; there is not a lady in the land would slight a gentleman so handsome and sweet-tempered: I scorns to flatter, for my part. Inferials mustn't direct their betters; but had I been in my lady's place, a king upon his throne would not have tempted me. Handsome him that handsome does; say I; and I am sure you did handsome by her; for if she could have eat gold, she might have had it. He might take some notice, truly. (*Aside.*)

Wood. Where was she writing? (*Starting up.*)

Brid. In the little drawing-room, sir. [*Exit Woodville.*] This ridiculous love turns people's brains, I think. I am sure I said enough to open his eyes: but may be, I don't look so handsome, because I am not so fine. Eh! a thought strikes me: my lady is gone, that's plain; back she will not come is as plain. (*Gathers together Cecilia's elegant clothes.*) I'll put on these, and he'll think she gave 'em to me; then he may find out I am as pretty as she; if not—he and I are of very different opinions. [*Exit.*

Re-enter WOODVILLE, *more disordered.*

Wood. Cruel, ungrateful, barbarous girl! to forsake me the very moment I was resolving to sacrifice everything to her. But 'tis just: first dupes to the arts of man, the pupil soon knows how to foil him at his own weapons. Perhaps the discovery is fortunate. In a short time, I must have borne the whole disgrace of her ill conduct, and my father's resentment had the bitterest aggravation. But is she indeed gone? and will continual to-morrows come, without one hope to render them welcome? [*Enter* JACOB.] Where's your lady?

Jacob. 'Las a deazy, how can I tell, zur?

Wood. Where are all your fellows?

Jacob. Abroad, making haliday. [leave?

Wood. When did you go out? who gave you

Jacob. My leady, her own zelf; and I'll tell you how 'tware. Arter dinner, I geed her a noate; and when zhe had red un, zhe axed me if zo be as how I had ever zeed the lions? Zoa, I told her noa; nor no mour I never did. Zoa, zhe geed me half a crown, and bid me goa and make myself happy. I thought it ware desperate koind of her; zoa I went and zeed the huge creturs; and arter, only stopped a bit to peap at the Moniment, and hay my fortin tuold by conjurer in the Old Bailey; and aw zaid—

Wood. What the devil does it signify to me what he said? Harkye, sir! I see in your face you know more of your mistress.

Jacob. Dang it, then, my feace do lie hugely.

Wood. Tell me the whole truth, villain! or I'll stab you to the heart this instant. (*Draws.*)

Jacob. (*Kneels.*) I wull, zur, indeed I wull; doan't ye terrify me zoa! I do forget everything in the whole world. [ing you.

Wood. Be sincere, and depend upon my reward-

Jacob. Why, I wish I meay die this maument, if conjurer did not zay I should lose my pleace! nay, aw do verily think aw zaid zomething o'my being put in fear o'my loife. Loard knaws! I little thought how zoon his words would come to pass.

Wood. Will you dally?

Jacob. Zoa, as I zaid, zur, when I com'd huome again, I found all the duors aupen, and not a zoul to be zeed.

Wood. This fellow can never mean to impose on me, and I must think it a planned affair. (*Aside.*) While I was in the country, Jacob, did your mistress see much company? [gentlewomen.

Jacob. Cuompany; noa, not to speak an—not

Wood. Gentlewomen, blockhead! why, had she

Jacob. Anan! [any male visitors?

Wood. I must brain thee at last, booby! Did any men come to see her, then?

Jacob. Oh yes, zur, yes—two gentlemen com'd almost every deay.

Wood. How! two gentlemen? I shall run distracted! Young and handsome?

Jacob. Not auver young, zur, nor auver handsome; but drest muortal foine.

Wood. So, they came almost every day? Very pretty, indeed, Miss Cecilia! Was you never called up while they staid? Did they come toge-

Jacob. Aloane. [ther, or alone?

Wood. I thought as much; yes, I thought as much. But were you never called up, Jacob?

Jacob. Yes, zur, when one aw um ware here one deay, I ware caal'd up for zomething or other.

Wood. Why don't you go on? I am on the rack!

Jacob. Don't ye look so muortal angry, then!

Wood. Well, well, I won't, my good fellow! There's money for thy honesty.

Jacob. Well; there aw ware—

Wood. Speak out freely, you can tell me nothing worse than I imagine; you won't shock me in the least; not at all.

Jacob. Well; theare aw ware pleaying on that theare music-thing like a coffin, and madam ware a zinging to un like any blackbird.

Wood. A music-master! Is that all, booby?

Jacob. Yes; but t'other, zur. [Jacob?

Wood. Ay, I had forgot; what of him, good

Jacob. I ware never caalled up while aw steay'd; zoa (I can't but zeay I had a curiosity to knaw what brought he here) one deay, I peaped through the keay-hoole, and zeed un—(*Titters.*)—I shull ne'er forgeat. [rage and suspense.

Wood. Tell me this instant, or I shall burst with

Jacob. Screaping on a leetle viddle, no bigger than my hond; while madam ware a huolding out her quoats, and danzing all round the room, zoa.

Wood. Why, I believe the impudent bumpkin dares to jest with my misery! and yet I have no other avenue; for the rest I fear are knaves, and he seems only a fool. (*Aside.*) And are these all that came, Jacob?

Jacob. Noa, thare ware one moare, zur; a leetle mon in a black quoat; but aw only cuom'd now and tan.

Wood. A disguise, no doubt! Yes, yes, they were artful enough. (*Aside.*)

Jacob. And zoa, arter be'd done wi' my leady, aw did zhut hiz zelf up wi' Bridget; and zoa I ax'd her all about un, and zhe zaid az how aw coom'd to teeach madam to turn themmin great round balls, all bleue, and red, and yaller, that do stond by the books, and larned zhe to wroite.

Wood. Yes, yes; Mrs. Bridget was in all her secrets, I don't doubt. If that fellow in black comes here again, keep him, if you value your life, and send for me. I know not what to do or think, and must renew my search, though hopeless of success. [*Exit.*

Jacob. Dang it! but he's in a desperate teaking! Rabbit me, but I ware muortally afeard aw un too, for aw flurish'd hiz zword az yeazy az I could a cudgel. I do think conjurer moight as well ha' tould me madam would ha' run away, while aw ware abeout it, and then I moight ha' run'd away first. [*Exit.*

Enter Grey.

Grey. At length, I have gained entrance into this house of shame, which now, alas! contains my darling Cecilia; plunged in vice, and lost to every sentiment, I spent so many anxious years in implanting. This does not seem to be the abode of pleasure, nor have I met a single being.

Enter Woodville.

Wood. Ha! a man! and in black, as Jacob said. Villain, this moment is your last.

Grey. (*Turning suddenly upon him.*) Yes, young seducer, add to the daughter's ruin the father's murder. Stab my heart, as you already have my happiness. [speak to him.

Wood. Alas! was this her visitor? I dare not

Grey. Embosomed by affluence, exalted by title, peace still shall be far from thy heart; for thou, with the worst kind of avarice, hast, by specious pretences, wrested from poverty its last dear possession—virtue.

Wood. Pierced to the soul, as I am by your reproaches, I dare appeal to Cecilia herself for a testimony of my contrition. How shall I convince you?

Grey. Hardly by a life of repentance. But I debase myself to exchange a word with you. Give me back my Cecilia! Ruined as she is, I yet would recover her! Give her back then to a father you first taught her to fear, and an habitation too humble for any but the good to be happy in.

Wood. Alas, sir! can you trifle with my misery? Do you give her back to the wretch who cannot survive her loss. Let me owe her hand to your bounty, though her heart to her own. Did you know what this elopement of her's has cost me—

Grey. Oh! most accomplished villain! but think not to dupe me too. [since morning?

Wood. Who but you can have robbed me of her

Grey. Shallow artifice!

Wood. Hear me, sir! and even believe me, when I solemnly swear I have deeply repented my crime, and offered her all the reparation in my power; but since then—

Grey. What since then? [has fled!

Wood. Either by your means, or some other, she

Grey. Impossible!

Wood. 'Tis true, by heaven!

Grey. Perhaps while you are thus ingeniously deluding me, she indeed flies. Study some other deception, while I examine the whole house, for nothing else can convince me. [*Exit.*

Wood. Surely, this injured venerable man was sent by heaven to complete my misfortunes! My passions subside, but only into a vague horror and despondency, even more dreadful! If with rash hand she has shortened her days, what remain of mine will be, indeed, all her father predicts! (*Walks by the toilette.*) Ha, a letter!

Re-enter Grey.

Grey. A total loneliness in the house!

Wood. Now, sir, be convinced. I have just found a letter from her.

Grey. This cannot be the invention of a moment. (*Aside.*) Let me read it; it is indeed her hand. (*Reads.*) "*Receive this as my last farewell. Providence has unexpectedly sent me a friend, whose protection I dare accept; and time may, perhaps, subdue a passion which seems interwoven with my being. Forget me, I entreat; and seek that happiness with another, I can never hope to bestow or partake. Consoled only by reflecting, that the grief my error occasions, is inferior to that I should have felt, had I, by an ungenerous use of my power, made you, in turn, my victim. Once more, adieu! All search will certainly be fruitless.—P. S. In the cabinet you will find your valuable presents; and the key is in a dressing-box.*" (*Woodville snatches the letter, and bursts into tears.*) Cecilia! I may say, with tears of joy, thou art indeed my daughter! more dear, if possible than ever! A daughter monarchs might contend for, though thy weak father abjures thee. May the friend you have found have a heart but like your own. For you, young man—but I leave you to your anguish; the loss of such a woman is a sufficient punishment.

Wood. Stay, sir! (*Rises.*) By your holy profession, I conjure you, stay! Plunge me not into total despair! Though without a clue to her asylum, I would fain believe my heart will lead me to it; and let me then hope you will bestow her on me.

Grey. There is a something in your manner, young gentleman, that affects me. I have been young, wild, and extravagant myself; and what is more strange, have not forgot I was so: my own experience proves reformation possible; act up to her, and atone your error.

Wood. I will endeavour it, sir! and, oh! could those who yet but waver, know what has passed in my heart during the last hour, who would dare to deviate? [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.—Scene I.—*Cecilia's House.*

Bridget *discovered, dressed in Cecilia's clothes.*

Brid. So, I am ready against our gentleman comes. Deuce on him to run away last night, the moment I was dressed, and with an inferial fellow too! Lard, how can people of quality demean themselves by keeping company with inferials? However, one thing I am sure of, he's too much on the fidgets to stay long away from our house; and in the meanwhile, I can entertain myself extremely well. (*Goes to the toilette.*) [huome.

Jacob. (*Without.*) I tell ye, my leady's not at

Gov. H. (*Without.*) I tell you, I won't take your word for it; so come, my lord, and see.

Brid. Heyday, my lord! What's the news now, I wonder?

Enter LORD GLENMORE *and* GOVERNOR HARCOURT; *both stop short.*

Gov. H. Oh! I thought madam had learned enough of the ton to lie by proxy.

Brid. Dear heart, I am all of a twitteration!

Lord G. The vulgarity of the wench is astonishing. (*Apart.*)

Gov. H. Um, why, a little gawky or so, there's no denying it. Here's a pretty discovery, now, after all my projects! Thank fortune, the secret is yet my own, though. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. (*Advancing to her.*) I ought to beg your excuse, madam, for so abrupt an intrusion; but the opportunity, and so fair a temptation, will, I flatter myself, be a sufficient apology.

Brid. He takes me for my lady, that's a sure thing! oh, this is charming! (*Aside.*) You need not make no 'pologies, my lord; inferials never knows how to suspect people of quality; but I understands good breeding better.

Lord G. Why, what a barn-door mawkin it is! (*Aside.*) Your politeness, madam, can only be equalled by your beauty!

Brid. Dear heart, my lord, you flatter me.

Lord G. Surely, by using my title, she knows me. (*Apart.*)

Gov. H. Zounds! I have a great mind to make her know me. Od! I shall never be able to contain! (*Apart.*)

Lord G. I was afraid, madam, I should prove an unwelcome guest; but beauty like your's—

Brid. Does your lordship think I so very handsome, then? Lord, how lucky was my dressing myself! (*Aside.*)

Lord G. Affected idiot! (*Aside.*) I was afraid, madam, too, of meeting Woodville here. I know not what to say to her. (*Aside.*)

Brid. He has not been here this morning; but, if he had, he knows better than to ax arter my company, I do assure you, my—lordship.

Lord G. I have been told he intends marrying you; what a pity to monopolize such merit?

Brid. If he has any such kind intention, 'tis more than I knows of, I assure you.

Lord G. His keeping that wise resolution from you, is some little comfort, however. (*Aside.*)

Brid. But I promise ye, I shall make a rare person of quality; for I loves cards, coaches, dancing, and dress, to my very heart—nothing in the world better—but blindman's-buff. I had some thoughts of taking a trip to Sadler's Wells or Foxhall, but they don't begin till five o'clock.

Gov. H. Ha, ha! though she can hardly spell out the ten commandments, she could break every one with as much ease and impudence as if she had been bred in the circle of St. James's. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. But, madam—

Brid. My lord!

Lord G. You know, allowing Woodville willing to marry you, it is not in his power while his father lives, without forfeiting his fortune; the value of which, you doubtless understand?

Brid. Oh! yes, yes, for sartain, my lord.

Lord G. Who knows, too, how far an incensed parent may carry his resentment? He might find means to entrap and punish you.

Brid. Ha, ha, ha! he entrap me! that would be a good jest! No, no, I have more of the lady of quality than to be so easily catched.

Gov. H. (*Mimicing.*) He, he, he! that is the only particular in which you have nothing at all of the lady of quality.

Lord G. With me you may share a higher rank and larger fortune without those fears. I am of an age—

Brid. Yes, one may see that without being a conjurer. (*Aside.*) Will you marry me, my lord?

Lord G. Convince me that you don't love this Woodville, and I know not how far my passion may carry me.

Brid. Love him! Do you think I knows no more of high life than that comes to? To be sure, he is a sweet pretty man, and all that; but as to love, I loves nobody half so well as myself!

Lord G. Upon my soul, I believe you, and wish he had the whole benefit of the declaration. Her ingratitude is as shocking as her ignorance, and Bridewell too gentle a punishment. (*To Gov. H.*)

Gov. H. Then build a Bridewell large enough to contain the whole sex; for the only difference between her and the rest is—this country mawkin tells what the town-bred misses conceal. (*Apart.*)

Lord G. Why, Governor, you are as testy as if you had the care of her education. (*Apart.*)

Gov. H. I the care? Zounds! what I say is merely from friendship to your lordship. I hate to see you deceive yourself. (*Apart.*) Surely, he can never suspect. (*Aside.*)

Brid. Now I am ready to go, my lord.

Gov. H. (*Roughly snatching her hand.*) To where you little dream of, you vain, affected, presuming, ignorant baggage.

Brid. Heyday, my lord!

Lord G. Appeal not to me, base woman. Know I am the father of that poor dupe, Woodville.

Brid. Dear heart! be ye, indeed? what will become of me, then?

Lord G. And as a moderate punishment for your hypocrisy, ambition, and ingratitude, sentence you to be shut up for life in a monastery.

Brid. O Lord! among monsters!

Gov. H. No, ignoramus! No, among nuns; tho' they are but monsters in human nature, either.

Brid. What, where they'll cut off my hair, and make me wear sackcloth next my skin?

Gov. H. Yes, if they leave you any skin at all.

Brid. Oh dear, dear, dear! Upon my bended knees, I do beg you won't send me there! Why, I shall go mallancholly; I shall make away with myself for sartain, and my ghost will appear to you all in white.

Gov. H. All in black, I rather think; for the devil a speck of white is there in your whole composition.

Lord G. Your conduct, wretch, justifies a severer sentence. To seduce him from his duty was crime enough. [indeed I did not.

Brid. Who, I seduce him? I did not, my lord;

Lord G. Have you not owned—

Brid. No, indeed, no; that I wished to take my lady's place, I believe I did own.

Gov. H. Ha, ha, ha! Your lady! Ha, ha, ha!

Lord G. Shallow subterfuge!

Enter VANE, *with Slaves.*

Vane, is all ready? Seize this woman, and observe my orders.

Brid. Ah, dear heart! I shall die away, if the blacks do but touch me. Indeed you do mistake; I be no lady; I be only Bridget.

Gov. H. I would give ten thousand pounds that you were only Bridget, you artful puss! Take her away, however; and let us try how miss likes riding out in her own coach. (*Vane and the Slaves seize her; she screams.*) [*Enter* JACOB.]

Jacob. Why, what a dickens be ye all at here? Zoa, what's my leady theare?

Lord G. See there now! Oh, the artful Jezebel!

Brid. Oh, Jacob! why, don't ye see I am Bridget? Pray, satisfy my lord here. [else!

Jacob. Why, be ye Bridget? Never trust me

Gov. H. Here's a fool of t'other sex now can hardly take a hint, though so plainly given him! Thanks to the natural difference; for art is nature in woman. (*Lord Glenmore draws him aside.*)

Jacob. Auh, Bridget, Bridget! where didst thee get theesum foin claws? Noa, noa, as theest brew'd, thee meay'st beake.

Brid. Oh, do you take pity on me! Why, they be going to carry me to some outlandish place, and make a nunnery of me!

Jacob. A nunnery? what's that? anything Cristin? Well, if I do spake to um, will ye ha'e me?

Brid. O, yes, yes, yes!

Lord G. Brother, I shall leave you to the completion of this affair; I am sick to the soul of the gawky. [*Exit.*

Gov. H. Yes, yes, I don't doubt it, I don't doubt it. Will you take her or no? (*To Vane.*) I shall never be able to stifle my agitation, and burst with rage if I shew it. [our Bridget?

Jacob. Why, zure, zure, ye won't carr' away

Gov. H. Oh, she has beat her meaning into thy thick scull at last! Pr'ythee, keep thy blockhead out of my way, if thou meanest to keep it on thy own shoulders.

Jacob. Why, be ye in arnest then? Dear heart alive! why, this is cousin Bridget!

Brid. Only send for Mr. Woodville.

Gov. H. Prettily devised again! Ha, ha, ha!—Dost think, my little dear, we have lived three times as long as your ladyship to learn a quarter as much? Send for Mr. Woodville, eh? No, no, you won't find us quite so simple.

Jacob. Oh, doant ye, doant ye carr' off zhe; or if ye wull, do pray take I. [ber, truly.

Vane. Yes, you would be a choice piece of lum-

Gov. H. Drag her away this moment.

Brid. Oh dear, oh dear! to be hanged at last for another's crime is all that vexes me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Miss Mortimer's Apartment.*

Enter CECILIA, *and sits down to embroidery.*

Cecil. How fond, how weak, how ungrateful are our hearts! Mine still will presumptuously fancy this house its home, and ally itself to every one to whom Woodville is dear.

Enter LORD GLENMORE.

Oh, heavens, my lord! How unlucky! If I go, he may find the Captain with Miss Mortimer. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. You see, madam, you have only to retire, to engage us to pursue you even to rudeness. But tell me, can it be your own choice to punish us so far as to prefer solitude to our society?

Cecil. I know myself too well, my lord, to receive distinctions of which I am unworthy; yet think not, therefore, I fail in respect.

Lord G. But is that charming bosom susceptible of nothing beyond respect? Why is it capable of inspiring a passion it cannot participate?

Cecil. Your goodness, my lord—my profound veneration will always attend you. But the more generously you are inclined to forget what is due to yourself, the more strongly it is impressed on my memory.

Lord G. Were what you say true, the bounties of nature atone amply to you for the parsimony of fortune; nor would your want of every other advantage lessen your merit, or my sense of it.

Cecil. Had he thought thus a few months since, how happy had I now been! (*Aside.*) Your approbation at once flatters and serves me, by justifying Miss Mortimer's protection of me.

Lord G. Her partiality for you does her more honour than it can ever do you advantage. But you must tell me how she gained first the happiness of knowing you. [ing—

Cecil. My—my lord, by a misfortune so touch-

Lord G. Nay, I would not distress you neither; yet I own, madam, I wish to make a proposal worth a serious answer; but ought first to know why you affect a mystery? Tell me then, my dear, every incident of your life, and I will raise you to a title, I may, without vanity, say, many have aspired to!

Cecil. You oppress my very soul, my lord! But, alas! unconquerable obstacles deprive me for ever of that title. Neither would I obtain it by alienating such a son from such a father.

Lord G. Put him entirely out of the question; the meanness of his conduct acquits me to myself. Do you know, madam, he has resolved to marry a creature of low birth, illiterate, vulgar, and impudent? And, to complete her perfections, she has been his mistress at least.

Cecil. Surely he knows, and purposely shocks me thus. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. But your integrity doesn't render you less amiable in my eyes; it greatly enhances every other merit. As to his wretch, I have her in my power, and shall make her dearly repent.

Cecil. Then I am lost, indeed! (*Aside.*) You have, my lord, though I know not how, discovered—(*Rises in confusion.*)

Lord G. (*Rises and takes snuff.*) Oh! nothing more easy, madam; I had him carefully traced to her house; and, during his absence, took servants, and forced her away.

Cecil. That, however, cannot be me: every word seems to add to a mystery I dare not inquire into. (*Aside.*) Deprived of the weak, the guilty, the miserable wretch you justly condemn, a little time will no doubt incline him to his duty.

Lord G. I will confess I resent his misconduct the more, as I ever treated him with friendship as well as tenderness: to presume to insult me, by introducing into a family like mine the creature of his pleasures; a wretch, only distinguished by his folly and her own infamy. But can you, who so powerfully plead the cause of another, be deaf to the sighs of a man who adores you, who offers you a rank—

Cecil. Be satisfied, my lord, with knowing I have all that esteem your merit claims, which influences me beyond every casual advantage.

Lord G. But, madam—

Cecil. Alas, my lord! (*Bursts into tears.*) Be silent, if possible, both pride and virtue. I have deserved, and will submit to it; yet surely, the bitterness of this moment expiates all past offences. [*Exit.*

Lord G. Amiable creature! what an amazing elegance of mind and person. Tears were her only answers to my questions, and blushes to my looks; yet these only heighten a curiosity they have softened into love. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Woodville's Apartment.*

Enter WOODVILLE.

Wood. No intelligence of my Cecilia yet! Were I only assured of her safety, it would be some consolation. *Enter* JACOB.

Jacob. Zur, zur! I do meake so bowld as to ax to spake to you.

Wood. Jacob, my honest fellow, the very sight of thee revives my hopes, and sets my heart in motion! Well, what's the news?

Jacob. Zurprising news, indeed, zur!—Loord! I thought I should never meat wi' ye; I com'd to your lodgings twice, and ye warn't up.

Wood. Up! 'Sdeath, you ignorant booby! why didn't you order them to rouse me that moment?

Jacob. Loord, zur! why your gentlemen (as they do caal un) ware so terrable foine, I ware afeard of affronting un.

Wood. Plague on the stupidity of both! But what's all this to the purpose? The news, the news!

Jacob. Las-a-deazy! muortal bad news, indeed!

Wood. You blockhead! is your lady returned?

Jacob. Noa, zur. (*Shakes his head.*)

Wood. The horrid forebodings of my heart recur; yet surely she could not be so desperate! Shocking as the suspense is, I more dread the certainty. (*Aside.*) Speak, however, my good fellow! I shall ever value your sensibility. Tell me theu the simple truth, whatever it may be.

Jacob. I wull, zur, I wull. There has comed two foine gentlemen, wi' zwords by their zides, just for all the world like yourn.

Wood. Well, and what did these gentlemen say?

Jacob. Why, they went up stears, willy-nilly, and carr'd oft—our Bridget. (*Cries.*)

Wood. You impudent, ignorant clown! I'll give you cause for your tears. (*Shakes him.*)

Jacob. Loord! do ye ha' a little Cristin commiseration! Well, if ever I do cuome nigh ye again, I do wish ye may break every buone in my zkin.

Wood. To insult me with your own paltry love affairs! These great and mighty gentlemen were only constables, I dare swear, and your fears converted their staves to swords.

Jacob. Ay, but that an't the worst, neither. I do verily think my turn wull cnome next—can't zleep in my bed for thinking on't, nor enjoy a meal's meat; zo, except you do bring your zword, and cuome and live in our houze, I wull guo out on't, that's a zure thing; for I had rather sceare craws at a graat a deay all my loife long, than 'bide there to be so terrifoid.

Wood. Sceare craws, truly! why, the craws will sceare you, ye hen-hearted puppy! There, teake that, (*gives him money,*) and guo home, or to the devil, so you never fall in my way again.

Jacob. Zome faulk that I do knaw wull zee the black gentleman first, 'tis my belief; zoa, I had best keep out o'his way too. [*Exit.*

Enter CAPTAIN HARCOURT.

Capt. H. Woodville, what's the matter? Why, you will raise the neighbourhood.

Re-enter JACOB.

Jacob. Here's a peaper, housemaid do zend you, wi' her humble duty; but if zo be it do put you in another desperate teaking, I do huope ye wull zend for zhe to beat, and not I. Loord! Loord! what wull becuome of me in this woide world of London! [*Exit.*

Capt. H. Ha, ha, ha! he is a choice fellow.

Wood. A heart oppressed with its own feelings fears everything. I have hardly courage to open a letter without an address.

Capt. H. Come, come, give it me, then. Eh, what?—Confusion! Was ever anything so unlucky? (*Attempts to tear it.*)

Wood. Ha! it is important, then. (*Snatches it.*)

Capt. H. Why, will you invent torments for yourself? My own letter, by everything careless!—Here's a stroke! (*Aside.*)

Wood. (*Reads in a broken voice and manner.*) "*Woodville on the brink of marriage—you will be disengaged—A nobleman.*"—Damnation!—"*Heart and fortune at her feet.*" I'll let his soul out there. Hell and furies! but I will find him, if money—Never will I close my eyes till—Oh, Cecilia!

Capt. H. This is the most unforeseen—I know not what to say to him. (*Aside.*) Pr'ythee, Woodville, do not sacrifice so many reasonable presumptions in her favour, to a paper that may be a forgery, for aught you know.

Wood. Oh! Charles, that I could think so! but I have seen the villain's execrable hand somewhere. Did you never see the hand?

Har. Um, I can't but own I have. What the devil shall I say to him? (*Aside.*)

Re-enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT.

Gov. H. Woodville, my dear boy, I am come to have a little talk with thee. Charles, don't run away; you are in all your cousin's secrets.

Wood. What should possess this tiresome mortal to come here? (*Aside.*) I should have waited on you in half an hour, sir.

Gov. H. Ay, and that's what I wanted to avoid. The more I talk to your father, Frank, the more I find him fixed on the match with his Miss Mortimer: nay, he tells me he will have you married this very day. [I am in.

Wood. That's mighty probable, in the humour

Gov. H. Ah! Frank, the girl I offer thee—

Wood. Is no more agreeable to me than her you despise.

Gov. H. How do you know that, peppercorn? how do you know that? 'Od, I could tell you—

Wood. And to tell you my full mind, sir, I had rather make myself miserable to gratify my father than any other man.

Gov. 'Od, thou art so obstinate, boy, I can't help loving thee.—I don't see why I am obliged to know his miss is my daughter: I have a great mind to own what we have done with her; and if he will marry, e'en take care nobody hinders him; then trump up a farce about forgiving them; and yet it goes against my conscience to punish the puppy for life, though he has punished me pretty sufficiently, by the lord Harry. (*Aside.*)

Capt. H. I don't like this affair at all; and tremble for my Sophia, when I see this odd soul so inveterate against her. (*Aside.*)

Gov. H. Well, my lad, do you know I am as deep in all your secrets as your favourite valet de chambre? (*To Woodville.*)

Wood. I don't understand you, sir.

Gov. H. Pho, pho, pho! keep that face till I shew thee one as solemn as my lord's. Why should not you please yourself, and marry your miss, instead of your father's?

Wood. and Capt. H. Astonishing!

Gov. H. 'Od, if you turn out the honest fellow I take you for, I know a pretty round sum, an onion and a black coat may one day or other entitle you to; so never mind lord Gravity's resentment.

Wood. I act from better motives, sir, and were unworthy your wealth, could it tempt me to disobey the best of fathers.

Gov. H. Why then marry Miss Mortimer, and oblige him; take a back seat in your own coach, get a family of pale-faced brats, born with ostrich feathers on their heads, and hate away a long life with all decorum. Zounds! here's a fellow more whimsical than—even myself. Yesterday, you would have the puss, spite of everybody; but, you no sooner find it in your power to oblige your best friend, by humouring your inclinations, than, lo! you are taken with a most violent fit of duty and submission! 'Od, you don't know what you have lost by it! But, since you are bent on crossing me, I'll cross you, and once for all too. My secret shall henceforth be as impenetrable as the philosopher's stone. Ay, stare as you please, I'll give you more years than you have seen days to guess it in. [*Exit.*

Capt. H. What this uncle of ours' can mean is quite beyond my guess.

Wood. What signifies seeking to expound by reason actions in which it had no share? his brain is indubitably touched. But Cecilia lies heavy on my heart, and excludes every other thought.

Capt. H. Time may explain the secret of that letter, which, I will lay my life, she despises: a woman who did not, would have kept it from your hands.

Wood. That's true, indeed! If I wrong her, and this was but an insult, there is a noble sincerity in her own letter which sets suspicion at defiance. If he stumbled on one word of truth during this visit, the crisis of my fate approaches. Oh! wherever thou art, if the exalted being I will still hope my Cecilia, thou shalt know I have at least deserved thee! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*A mean Room.*

BRIDGET *discovered sitting very mournfully, her fine clothes in great disorder.*

Brid. Dear heart! dear heart! what a miserable time have I passed! and where I be to pass my whole life, my lord here only knows. I have not much stomach indeed; neither have I much breakfast. (*Eats a bit of bread, and bursts into tears.*)

Enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT.

Gov. H. Had I more sins to answer for than a college of Jesuits, I surely expiate them all, by going through a purgatory in this life beyond what they have invented for the other. This vulgar maux of mine haunts my imagination in every shape but that I hoped to see her in; I dare hardly trust myself to speak to her. 'Od, I would not have the extirpation of the whole female sex depend upon my casting vote while I am in this humour.

Brid. Mercy on me, here's that cross old gentleman again! What will become of me? (*Aside.*)

Do pray, strange sir, be so generous as to tell me what is next to be done with me?

Gov. H. Why, just whatever I please, you audacious baggage.—'Od, now I think on't, I have a great mind to try a few soft words, and dive into all the secrets of the little ignoramus. (*Aside.*) Come, suppose I had a mind to grant you your freedom, how would you requite me? [ever.

Brid. Dear heart, why I'd love you for ever and

Gov. H. Zounds! that's a favour I could very readily dispense with; and yet 'tis natural to the poor wench. Ah! if thou hadst been a good girl, thou hadst been a happy one. Harkye, miss, confess all your sins; that's the only way to escape, I promise you; and if you conceal the least, I'll—do—I don't know what I'll do to you.

Brid. I will, I will, sir, indeed, as I hope to be married.

Gov. H. Married, you slut! Bad as that is, it's too good for you. Come, tell me all your adventures. Describe the behaviour of the young villain who seduced you. Where did you see him [first?

Brid. Ugh, ugh—at church, sir.

Gov. H. At church, quotha! A pretty place to commence an intrigue in. And how long was it before you came to this admirable agreement?

Brid. Um—why, Sunday was Midsummer-eve, and Sunday after was madam's wedding-day, and Monday was our fair, and—

Gov. H. Oh, curse your long histories! And what then said Woodville?

Brid. Oh Lord, nothing at all; why, it warn't he.

Gov. H. No! Who, who, who? Tell me that, and quite distract me! (*Ready to burst with passion.*)

Brid. Timothy Hobbs, squire's gardener.

Gov. H. An absolute clown! Who, oh! who would be a father? I could laugh—cry—die—with shame and anger! Since the man who corrupted left her only one virtue, would he had deprived her of that too! Oh, that she had but skill enough to lie well!

Brid. Whether I can or no, I'll never speak truth again, that's a sure thing. What do I get by it, or any poor souls of the female kind? (*Aside.*)

Gov. H. I am incapable of thinking. Every plan, every resource thus overturned. I must be wiser than all the world; this fool's head of mine must take to teaching, truly! as if I could eradicate the stamp of nature, or regulate the senses, by anything but reason. Don't pipe, baggage, to me! You all can do that, when too late. When I have considered whether I shall hang myself or not, I'll let you know whether I shall tuck you up along with me, you little wretch you! [*Exit.*

Brid. Well, sure, I have at last guessed where I am shut up. It must be Bedlam; for the old gentleman is out of his mind, that's a sure thing.

Enter VANE.

Vane. Ha, ha, ha! my future father-in-law seems to have got a quietus of my intended; and, faith, so would any man who was not in love with a certain forty thousand. To be sure, in plain English, she is a glorious mawkin! (*Aside.*) Well, madam, how are you pleased with your present mode of living?

Brid. Living, do you call it? I think 'tis only starving. Why, I shall eat my way through the walls very shortly.

Vane. Faith, miss, they use you but so so, that's the truth on't; and I must repeat, even to your face, what I said to my lord, that your youth, beauty, and accomplishments, deserve a better fate.

Brid. Dear heart! Bedlam, did I say I was in? Why I never knew a more sensibler, genteeler, prettier sort of a man in my life. (*Aside.*) I am sure, sir, if I was to study seven years, I should never know what I have done to discommode them, not I.

Vane. O Lard, my dear! only what is done every day by half your sex without punishment; however, you are to suffer for all, it seems. You see your fare for life: a dungeon, coarse rags, and the same handsome allowance of bread and water twice a day. [a week.

Brid. Oh, dear me! why I shall be an otomy in

Vane. And an old black to guard you, more sulky and hideous than those in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

Brid. Why, sure, they will let you come and see me, sir? I shall certainly swound away every time I look at that nasty old black.

Vane. This is the last time your dungeon (which your presence renders a palace to me) will ever be open to one visitor, unless—unless—I could contrive—but no, it would be my ruin: yet who wouldn't venture something for such a charming creature? you could endear even ruin. Tell me, then, what reward you would bestow on a man who ventured all to give you freedom?

Brid. Nay, I don't know; you're such a dear sweet soul, I sha'n't stand with you for a trifle.

Vane. Ahey! Miss will be as much too complying in a minute. (*Aside.*) Well, then, my dear, I must marry you, or you will still be in the power of your enemies.

Brid. Eh! what? do I hear rightly? marry me? Why, this will be the luckiest day's work I ever did! (*Aside.*) Nay, sir, if you should be so generous, I hope I shall live to make you amends.

Vane. The only amends you can make me, is by dying. (*Aside.*) And now, my dear, I will own to you I have the license in my pocket; and my lord as eager as myself. Our chaplain will do us the favour with more expedition than he says grace before meat! Well done, Vane! egad, thy lucky star predominates! (*Aside.*)

Brid. Surely my locking up does end very comical. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Drawing-room.*

Enter GOVERNOR HARCOURT, *musing.*

Gov. H. I have lived fifty-eight years, five months, and certain odd days, to find out I am a fool at last; but I will live as many more, before I add the discovery that I am a knave too.

Enter CAPTAIN HARCOURT.

Capt. H. What the devil can he be now hatching? mischief, I fear.

Gov. H. Dear fortune! let me escape this once undiscovered, and I compound for all the rest. Charles! the news of the house? for the politics of this family are employment for every individual in it.

Capt. H. Bella, horrida bella, sir! My lord is determined to bring his son's duty to an immediate test. Thanks to his friend's schemes and his mistress's beauty. (*Aside.*)

Gov. H. What poor malicious wretches are we by nature! Zounds! if I could not find in my heart to rejoice at thinking every one here will be as mortified and disappointed as a certain person that shall be nameless. So, so, here they come, faith, to argue the point in open court.

Enter LORD GLENMORE, *followed by* WOODVILLE.

Lord G. Without this proof of your obedience, all you can urge, sir, is ineffectual.

Wood. While obedience was possible I never swerved, my lord; but when you command me to make myself wretched, a superior duty cancels that: already bound by a voluntary, an everlasting vow, I cannot break it without offending heaven, nor keep it without offending you.

Gov. H. What's this? chopped about again! (*Aside.*)

Wood. Did you once know the incomparable merits of my love, even your lordship's prejudices must give way to your reason.

Lord G. Mere dotage. Doesn't her conduct equally evince her folly and depravity?

Wood. Covered, as I ought to be, with confusion and remorse, I will own she was seduced and deceived.

Gov. H. Ah, poor boy! (*Aside.*) One of the two was wofully deceived, sure enough.

Lord G. Oh! your consoience may be very easy on that account; it could not require much art to deceive such an idiot.

Gov. H. No, no, my lord! Why paint the devil blacker than he is? Not an idiot, neither.

Wood. Sir, my father's freedom of speech I must endure; but your's—

Gov. H. You must endure too, young sir, or I shall bite my tongue off.

Wood. But, my lord, that dear unhapppy girl is no longer a subject of debate. She evidently proves her merit by her flight.

Lord G. Would you make a virtue from not doing ill, when it is no longer in your power? Woodville, I was once weak enough to believe indulgence the surest way of obtaining your duty and esteem. My eyes are at last opened. Miss Mortimer is worthy a better husband; but you are her's, or no son of mine. I solemnly promised this to her dying father, and will acquit myself at all events.

Wood. Can you resolve to sacrifice me to a promise made before we could judge of each other? You never felt, sir, the compulsion you practise. Will you dissolve the first band of morality, and see your highly-estimated title end in me? for never will I on these terms continue it.

Lord G. I almost wish I never had continued it. (*Walks in anger.*) I am determined, Woodville! and nothing but Miss Mortimer's refusal can break the match.

Wood. I shall not put that in her power, my lord. Permit me to tell you, no son was ever more sensible of a father's kindness; but if I can purchase its continuance only with my honour and my happiness, it would be too dearly bought.

Lord G. 'Tis well, sir.—I have listened to you sufficiently. Now hear me. Know, this worthless wretch you prefer to your duty, is in my power; nay, in this house.

Capt. H. The devil she is! How, in the name of ill-luck, should he find that out? My fine scheme entirely blown up, by Jupiter! (*Aside.*)

Wood. Why play thus upon me, my lord? Her letter—

Lord G. What, has she wrote to you? That I was not aware of, nor indeed suspected she could write.

Gov. H. No, not so ignorant as that, neither. I ordered she should write too!

Lord G. You ordered she should write? Let me tell you, sir, it was wronging my confidence.

Gov. H. No, I did not order she should write. I mean—I mean—Zounds! I don't know what I mean.

Wood. So it seems, indeed; since, hardly half an hour ago, my uncle himself persuaded me to marry my love.

Gov. H. Here's a cursed affair, now.

Lord G. Can this be possible? Let me tell you, Governor, if, presuming upon your wealth, you play a double part in my family—

Gov. H. Zounds! nobody knows his own part in your family, that I see! and this fellow too to tease me, whom I loved above all in it. Why, I spoke entirely from regard to him. If, since then, I have discovered a bumpkin was beforehand with him in the possession of his miss—

Wood. If any one beside yourself, sir, durst tell such a falsehood, it would cost a life.

Gov. H. Yes, and if any one beside myself durst tell me such a truth, it would cost a soul perhaps. [*Exit.*

Capt. H. This is more unintelligible than all the rest.

Lord G. To end these altercations, upon yourself, Woodville, shall depend the fortune of this wretch to whom you have been so gross a dupe as to justify the imputation of folly. Why, even without knowing me, she ridiculed your passion, and offered to leave you.

Wood. Impossible!

Lord G. Dare you disbelieve me, sir?—Nay, she shall be produced, and obliged to confess her arts; then blush and obey. Here, Vane! Governor! the keys! [*Exit.*

Capt. H. Now could I find in my heart to make this story into a ballad, as a warning to all meddling puppies; and then hang myself, that it may conclude with a grace. Zounds! he must be endued with supernatural intelligence! Just when I was saying a thousand civil things to myself on my success, to have my mine sprung before my eyes by the enemy; and instead of serving my friend and myself, become a mere tool to old Gravity's revenge. Psha! however, we must make the best of a bad matter. (*Aside.*) Woodville, what dost mean to do, man?

Wood. Let them produce my Cecilia, I will then seize and protect her to the last moment of my life.

Capt. H. And I will assist you to the last moment of mine. [friendship.

Wood. My generous cousin! this is indeed

Capt. H. Not so very generous, if you knew all.

Re-enter LORD GLENMORE *and* GOVERNOR HARCOURT, *with* BRIDGET, *disguised, and* VANE.

Wood. My love! my life! do I once again behold thee? Fear nothing; you here are safe from all the world! Will you not bless me with one look?

Brid. Oh, dear me!

Lord G. I have put it out of your power to marry, sir, otherwise you may take her.

Wood. Take her? What poor farce is this?

Capt. H. Heyday! more incomprehensibilities.

Vane. Now for the *éclaircissement*, since if the Governor doesn't acknowledge her in his first rage and confusion, I may never be able to make him. (*Aside.*) I humbly hope Mr. Woodville will pardon me, if, with her own consent and my lord's, I this morning married this young lady.

Gov. H. Zounds! you dog, what's that? You married her? Why, how did you dare? And you too, my lord! what the devil, did you consent to this? [was your daughter.

Vane. Believe me, sir, I didn't then know she

Lord G. Daughter!

Gov. H. So it's out, after all. (*Aside.*) It's a lie, you dog, you did know she was my daughter; you all knew it; you all conspired to torment me!

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Gov. H. Ha, ha, ha! confound your mirth! As if I hadn't plagues enough already. And you have great reason to grin too, my lord, when you have thrown my gawky on your impudent valet.

Lord G. Who could ever have dreamt of—ha, ha, ha!—of finding this your little wonder of the country, brother? [the town, too.

Capt. H. Nay, my lord, she's the little wonder of

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Gov. H. Mighty well, mighty well, mighty well! Pray, take your whole laugh out, good folks, since this is positively the last time of my entertaining you in this manner. A cottage shall henceforth be her portion, and a rope mine.

Brid. If you are my papa, I think you might give some better proof of your kindness. But I sha'n't stir. Why, I married on purpose that I might not care for you.

Gov. H. Why, thou eternal torment! my original sin! whose first fault was the greatest frailty of woman, and whose second, her greatest folly! Dost thou, or the designing knave who has entrapped thee merely for that purpose, imagine my wealth shall ever reward incontinence and ingratitude? No; go knit stockings to some regiment, where he is preferred to be drummer; warm yourself when the sun shines; soak every hard-earned crust in your own tears, and repent at leisure. [*Exit.*

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord G. He to ridicule my mode of education! But what is the meaning of all this?

Wood. Truly, my lord, I believe it would be very hard to find any for either my uncle's words

or actions. I am equally at a loss to guess as to Bridget here.

Vane. Eh, what? Bridget, did you say, sir? Why, you little ugly witch, are you really Bridget?

Brid. Why I told you so all along; but you

All. Ha, ha, ha! [wouldn't believe me.

Brid. Oh, dear heart! I am now as much afeard of my new husband as father.

Lord G. For thee, wench!

Brid. (*Kneels.*) Oh! no more locking up, for goodness' sake, my lord; I be sick enough of passing for a lady; but, if old Scratch ever puts such a trick again in my head, I hope—your lordship will catch me, that's all. [*Exit.*

Vane. I shall run distracted! have I married an —and all for nothing too?

Lord G. A punishment peculiarly just, as it results from abusing my confidence. Hence, wretch! nor ever, while you live, appear again in my presence. [*Exit Vane, looking furiously after Bridget.*

Lord G. 'Tis time to return to ourselves. We shall soon come to an *éclaircissement*, Woodville! since you won't marry, I will.

Wood. My lord!

Lord G. And you shall judge of my choice. [*Exit.*

Capt. H. Now for it: whatever devil diverts himself among us to-day, I see he owes my sagacious lord here a grudge, as well as the rest; and I foresee that his wife and the Governor's daughter will prove equally entertaining.

Re-enter Lord Glenmore, *leading* Cecilia, *followed by* Miss Mortimer.

Lord G. This lady, sir, I have selected; a worthy choice. [your's?

Wood. I dream, surely! that lady your choice?

Lord G. Ungrateful son, had such been your's—

Wood. Why, this very angel is mine; my Cecilia, my first, my only love.

Lord G. How?

Cecil. Yes, my lord; you now know the unhappy object at once of your resentment, contempt, and admiration. My own misfortunes I had learned to bear, but those of Woodville overpower me. I deliver myself up to your justice; content to be every way his victim, so I am not his ruin.

Lord G. But to find you in this house—

Cecil. Your generous nephew and the amiable Miss Mortimer distinguished me with the only asylum could shelter me from your son.

Lord G. They distinguished themselves! Oh, Woodville! did I think an hour ago I could be more angry with you? How durst you warp a mind so noble?

Wood. It is a crime my life cannot expiate; yet, if the sincerest anguish—

Lord G. I have one act of justice still in my power: my prejudice in favour of birth, and even a stronger prejudice, is corrected by this lovely girl. Of her goodness of heart, and greatness of mind, I have had incontestible proofs; and, if I thought you, Frank—

Cecil. Yet stay, my lord! nor kill me with too much kindness. Once your generosity might have made me happy, now only miserable. My reason, my pride, nay, even my love, induces me to refuse, as the only way to prove I deserve him. He has taught me to know the world too late; nor will I retort on him the contempt I have incurred. Mr. Woodville will tell you whether I have not solemnly vowed—

Wood. Not to accept me without the consent of both fathers: and if mine consents, what doubt—

Gov. H. (*Without.*) Stop that old man! Stop that mad parson! Stop him!

Grey. (*Without.*) Nothing shall stop me in pursuit of my— *Enter* Grey.

Ha! she is—she is here, indeed! Providence has at length directed me to her. (*Runs to Cecilia.*)

Cecil. My father! covered with shame let me sink before you.

Lord G. and Capt. H. Her father!

Re-enter Governor Harcourt.

Grey. Rise, my glorious girl! rise purified and forgiven! rise to pity with me the weak minds that know not all thy value, and venerate the noble ones that do.

Gov. H. Eh! is it possible? Grey, is this my—

Grey. Yes, sir, this is your Cecilia; my Cecilia; the object of your avowed rejection and contempt.

Gov. H. Rejection and contempt! stand out of the way: let me embrace my daughter; let me take her once more to my heart. (*Embraces her.*)

Lord G. His daughter!

Gov. H. Yes, my friend, this is really my daughter; my own Cecilia; as sure as I am an old fool after being a young one, this good girl has a right to call me by the name of father: hasn't she, Grey? Why, my lord, this is the very parson I told you of. (*Takes Cecilia's hand.*) And now, young sir, what do you say to your uncle's freaks? (*To Wood.*)

Wood. Say, sir? that had you ten thousand such, I would go through a patriarchal servitude, in hopes of Cecilia's hand for my reward.

Gov. H. And had I ten millions of money, and this only girl, thou shouldst have her, and that too for thy noble freedom! And what says my Cecilia to her father's first gift?

Cecil. Astonishment and pleasure leave me hardly power to say, that a disobedience to you, sir, would only double my fault; nor to worship that heaven which led me through such a trial to such a reward! Take all I have left myself to give you, Woodville, in my hand. (*Woodville kisses her.*)

Grey. Now let me die, my darling child! since I have seen thee once more innocent and happy.

Gov. H. And now kiss me, my Cecilia! kiss me. 'Od! Miss Mortimer shall kiss me too, for loving my poor girl here. Kiss me, all of you, old and young, men, women, and children! 'Od, I am so overjoyed, I dread the consequences.—D'ye hear there? Fetch me a surgeon and a bottle of wine. I must both empty and fill my veins on this occasion! Zooks, I could find in my heart to frisk it merrily in defiance of the gout, and take that cursed vixen below, whoever she is, for my partner.

Lord G. Methinks, all seem rewarded by my poor Sophia here; and her protection of Cecilia deserves the highest recompense.—But whenever, my dear, you can present me the husband of your choice, I will present him with a fortune fit for my daughter.

Gov. H. Protect Cecilia! 'Od! she is a good girl, and a charming girl, and I honour the very tip of her feathers now! If she could but fancy our Charles, I'd throw in something pretty on his side, I promise you.

Miss M. Frankness is the fashion. What would you say, sir, and you, my lord, if I had fancied your Charles so much as to make him mine already?

Lord G. Heyday! more discoveries! How's this, boy?

Capt. H. Even so, sir, indeed.

Lord G. It completes my satisfaction.

Gov. H. 'Od, brother! Who'd have thought you in the right all the while? We'll never separate again, by the lord Harry! but knock down our Welsh friend's old house, and raise him one on the ruins large enough to contain the whole family of us, where he shall reign sole sovereign over all our future little Woodvilles and Cecilias.

Cecil. Oppressed with wonder, pleasure, gratitude, I must endeavour to forgive myself, when heaven thus graciously proves its forgiveness, in allying me to every human being my heart distinguishes.

Grey. Yes, my Cecilia, you may believe him, who never gave you a bad lesson, that you are now most truly entitled to esteem; since it requires a far greater exertion to stop your course down the hill of vice, than to toil slowly up toward virtue.

[*Exeunt,*

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY G. COLMAN AND D. GARRICK.



Act II.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

LORD OGLEBY	SERGEANT FLOWER	BRUSH	FANNY
SIR JOHN MELVIL	TRAVERSE	SERVANTS	BETTY
STERLING	TRUEMAN	MRS. HEIDELBERG	CHAMBERMAID
LOVEWELL	CANTON	MISS STERLING	TRUSTY

ACT I.—SCENE I.—*A Room in Sterling's house.*

Enter MISS FANNY, *and* BETTY *meeting.*

Bet. (*Running in.*) Ma'am! Miss Fanny!

Fan. What's the matter, Betty? [ma'am!

Bet. Oh la! Ma'am! as sure as I am alive, here is your husband: I saw him crossing the court-yard in his boots.

Fan. I am glad to hear it. But pray now, my dear Betty, be cautious. Don't mention that word again on any account. You know we have agreed never to drop any expressions of that sort, for fear of an accident.

Bet. Dear, ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth than I am: though I say it, I am as secret as the grave; and if it is never told till I tell it, it may remain untold till doomsday for Betty.

Fan. I know you are faithful; but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

Bet. Very true, ma'am; and yet I vow and protest there's more plague than pleasure with a secret; especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

Fan. Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then I hope you may mention it to anybody. Mr. Lovewell will acquaint the family with the nature of our situation as soon as possible.

Bet. The sooner the better, I believe; for if he does not tell it, there's a little tell-tale, I know of, will come and tell it for him.

Fan. Fie, Betty!

Bet. Ah! you may well blush. But you're not so sick, and so pale, and so wan, and so many qualms— [you.

Fan. Have done! I shall be quite angry with

Bet. Angry! Bless the dear puppet! I am sure I shall love it as much as if it was my own. I meant no harm, heaven knows.

Fan. Well, say no more of this; it makes me uneasy.—All I have to ask of you is, to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter till we disclose it to the family ourselves.

Bet. Me reveal it! If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world; and as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother. But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evening. For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as—

Fan. See there now again! Pray be careful.

Bet. Well, well; nobody hears me. Man and wife—I'll say no more.—What I tell you is very true, for all that.

Love. (*Within.*) William!

Bet. Hark! I hear your husband—

Fan. What!

Bet. I say here comes Mr. Lovewell. Mind the caution I gave you: I'll be whipped now if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. However, if you choose it, it's nothing at all to me: as you sow, so you must reap; as you brew, so you must bake. I'll e'en slip down the back stairs, and leave you together. [*Exit.*

Fan. I see, I see, I shall never have a moment's ease till our marriage is made public. New distresses crowd in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health, and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. My love! How's this? In tears? Indeed this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own, be comforted. Why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity?

Fan. Oh, Mr. Lovewell! the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me. I walk about the house like a

guilty wretch: I imagine myself the object of the suspicion of the whole family, and am under the perpetual terrors of a shameful detection.

Love. Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy. To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling, is the continual employment of my thoughts. Everything now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a discovery; and I have no doubt of it's concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

Fan. End how it will, I am resolv'd it shall end soon—very soon. I would not live another week in this agony of mind to be mistress of the universe.

Love. Do not be too violent neither, Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion. I have brought letters from Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil to Mr. Sterling. They will be here this evening; and, I dare say, within this hour.

Fan. I am sorry for it.

Love. Why so?

Fan. No matter: only let us disclose our marriage

Love. As soon as possible. [immediately.

Fan. But directly.

Love. In a few days you may depend on it.

Fan. To-night; or to-morrow morning.

Love. That, I fear, will be impracticable.

Fan. Nay, but you must.

Love. Must! Why? [ing reasens for it.

Fan. Indeed you must: I have the most alarm-

Love. Alarming, indeed! for they alarm me, even before I am acquainted with them. What are they?

Fan. I cannot tell you.

Love. Not tell me?

Fan. Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with everything.

Love. Sorry they are coming! Must be discovered! what can this mean? Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

Fan. Do not disturb yourself with conjectures; but rest assur'd, that though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery, be it what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

Love. You put me upon the rack: I would do anything to make you easy; but you know your father's temper. Money (you will excuse my frankness) is the spring of all his actions, which nothing but the idea of acquiring nobility or magnificence, can ever make him forego; and these he thinks his money will purchase. You know, too, your aunt's, Mrs. Heidelberg's, notions of the splendour of high life; her contempt for everything that does not relish of what she calls quality; and that from the vast fortune in her hands, left her by her late husband, she absolutely governs Mr. Sterling and the whole family. Now if they should come to the knowledge of this affair too abruptly, they might perhaps be incensed beyond all hopes of reconciliation.

Fan. Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

Love. But in the meantime make yourself easy.

Fan. As easy as I can, I will. We had better not remain together any longer at present.

Enter Sterling.

Ster. Hey-day! who have we got here?

Fan. (*Confused.*) Mr. Lovewell, sir.

Ster. And where are you going, hussy?

Fan. To my sister's chamber, sir. [*Exit.*

Ster. Ah, Lovewell! What! always getting my foolish girl yonder into a corner? Well, well, let us but once see her eldest sister fast married to Sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

Love. Would to heaven, sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation.

Ster. Yourself, eh, Lovewell?

Love. With your pleasure, sir.

Ster. Mighty well!

Love. And I flatter myself, that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to Miss Fanny.

Ster. Better and better!

Love. And if I could but obtain your consent, sir—

Ster. What! You marry Fanny? no, no; that will never do, Lovewell. You're a good boy, to be sure; I have a great value for you; but can't think of you for a son-in-law. There's no stuff in the case; no money, Lovewell.

Love. My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are but moderate; but though not equal to splendour, sufficient to keep us above distress,—add to which, that I hope by dilligence to increase it, and have love, honour—

Ster. But not the stuff, Lovewell. Add one little round 0 to the sum total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me. You know I've a regard for you—would do anything to serve you—anything on the footing of friendship; but—

Love. If you think me worthy of your friendship, sir, be assured that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

Ster. Psha! psha! that's another thing, you know. Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

Love. But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

Ster. Inclinations! why you would persuade me that the girl is in love with you, eh, Lovewell?

Love. I cannot absolutely answer for Miss Fanny, sir; but am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life depends entirely upon her.

Ster. Why, indeed, now, if your kinsman, Lord Ogleby, would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible—No, no—'twill never do. I must hear no more of this. Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

Love. (*Hesitating.*) I am afraid, sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you, if I did promise.

Ster. Why, you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

Love. Marry her, sir! (*Confused.*)

Ster. Ay, marry her, sir! I know very well, that a warm speech or two from such a dangerous young spark as you are, would go much further towards persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers, or mothers, or uncles, or aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's affections, and destroy the peace of my family in that manner. I must insist on it, that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

Love. Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—beg, sir,—Pray, sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

Ster. Promise, then, that you will carry this matter no further without my approbation.

Love. You may depend on it, sir, that it shall go no further.

Ster. Well, well, that's enough. I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you. Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense! What's doing in town? Any news upon 'Change?

Love. Nothing material.

Ster. Have you seen the currants, the soap, and Madeira, safe in the warehouse? Have you compared the goods with the invoice, and bills of lading, and are they all right?

Love. They are, sir.

Ster. And how are stocks?

Love. Fell one and a half this morning.

Ster. Well, well; some good news from America, and they'll be up again. But how are Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil? When are we to expect them?

Love. Very soon, sir. I came on purpose to

bring you their commands. Here are letters from both of them. (*Giving letters.*)

Ster. Let me see; let me see. 'Slife! how his lordship's letter is perfumed! It takes my breath away. (*Opening it.*) And French paper too!—with a slippery gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes. *My dear Mr. Sterling*—(*Reading.*)—Mercy on me! his lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercise.—But how's this? Eh! *With you to-night—Lawyers to-morrow morning.*—To-night! That's sudden indeed. Where's my sister Heidelberg? She should know of this immediately. Here, John! Harry! Thomas! (*Calling the Servants.*) Harkye, Lovewell!

Love. Sir.

Ster. Mind, now, how I'll entertain his lordship and Sir John. We'll show your fellows at the other end of the town how we live in the city. They shall eat gold, and drink gold, and lie in gold. Here, cook! butler! (*Calling.*) What signifies your birth, and education, and title? Money, money! that's the stuff that makes the great man [in this country.

Love. Very true, sir.

Ster. True, sir! Why then have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business. Where are these fellows? John! Thomas! (*Calling.*) Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course.—Ah! Lovewell! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe. 'Slife! man, a rich English merchant may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob. Where are all my rascals? Here, William! [*Exit calling.*

Love. So; as I suspected: quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with great displeasure. What's best to be done? Let me see. Suppose I get Sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to Lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. I can open my mind also more freely to Sir John. He told me, when I left him in town, that he had something of consequence to communicate, and that I could be of use to him. I am glad of it: for the confidence he reposes in me, and the service I may do him, will ensure me his good offices. Poor Fanny! it hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause adds to my anxiety. Something must be done upon her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Miss Sterling's Dressing-room.*

MISS STERLING *and* FANNY *discovered.*

Miss S. O, my dear sister, say no more. This is downright hypocrisy. You shall never convince me that you don't envy me beyond measure. Well, after all, it is extremely natural. It is impossible to be angry with you.

Fan. Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

Miss S. And you really pretend not to envy me?

Fan. Not in the least.

Miss S. And you don't in the least wish that you was just in my situation?

Fan. No, indeed, I don't. Why should I?

Miss S. Why should you? What! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title! But I had forgot: there's that dear sweet creature, Mr. Lovewell, in the case. You would not break your faith with your true-love now for the world, I warrant you.

Fan. Mr. Lovewell! always Mr. Lovewell! Lord! what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

Miss S. Pretty peevish soul! O, my dear, grave, romantic sister! a perfect philosopher in petticoats! Love, and a cottage! eh, Fanny? Ah, give me indifference and a coach and six!

Fan. And why not a coach and six without the indifference? But pray, when is this happy marriage of your's to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

Miss S. In a day or two: I cannot tell exactly. Oh, my dear sister! I must mortify her a little: (*Aside.*) I know you have a pretty taste. Pray, give me your opinion of my jewels. How do you like the style of this esclavage. (*Shewing jewels.*)

Fan. Extremely handsome, and well fancied.

Miss S. What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father set round with diamonds to one, and Sir John's to the other; and this pair of ear-rings, set transparent. Here, the tops, you see, will take off, to wear in a morning, or in an undress: how d'ye like them?

Fan. Very much, I assure you. Bless me, sister! you have a prodigious quantity of jewels: you'll be the very queen of diamonds.

Miss S. Ha, ha, ha! very well, my dear! I shall be as fine as a little queen indeed. I have a bouquet to come home to-morrow, made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts; jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixed; the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life! The jeweller says I shall set out with as many diamonds as anybody in town, except Lady Brilliant, and Polly What-d'ye-call-it, Lord Squander's kept mistress.

Fan. But what are your wedding-clothes, sister?

Miss S. O, white and silver, to be sure, you know. I bought them at Sir Joseph Lutestring's, and sat above an hour in the parlour behind the shop, consulting Lady Lutestring about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

Fan. Fie, sister! how could you be so abominably provoking?

Miss S. Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knights' ladies. Did you ever observe the airs of Lady Lutestring, dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown whist at Haberdasher's-hall; whilst the civil smirking Sir Joseph, with a snug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new cut yew hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?

Fan. Indeed, indeed, sister, this is too much. If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a by-word in the city. You must never venture on the inside of Temple-bar again.

Miss S. Never do I desire it: never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor-square! far, far from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick, and Farringdon Without and Within! My heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at court. Gilt chariot! pieballed horses! laced liveries! and then the whispers buzzing round the circle—"Who is that young lady? Who is she?" "Lady Melvil, ma'am!"—Lady Melvil! my ears tingle at the sound. And then at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking, "Any news upon 'Change?" to cry, "Well, Sir John! anything new from Arthur's?" or to say to some other woman of quality, "Was your ladyship at the Duchess of Rubber's last night? Did you call at Lady Thunder's? In the immensity of crowd, I swear I did not see you. Scarce a soul at the Opera last Saturday. Shall I see you at Carlisle-house next Thursday?" Oh, the dear beau monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world.

Fan. And so, in the midst of all this happiness, you have no compassion for me; no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

Miss S. (*Affectedly.*) You? You're above pity. You would not change conditions with me. You're over head and ears in love, you know. Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortably, I dare say. He will mind his business; you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family; and once in a season, perhaps, you'll sit

together in a front box at a benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing-master's, you know; and perhaps I may meet you in the summer, with some other citizens, at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations. You sha'n't want my countenance, I assure you.

Fan. Oh, you're too kind, sister!

Enter Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. H. Here this evening! I vow and pertest we shall scarce have time to provide for them. Oh, my dear! (*to Miss Sterling*) I am glad to see you're not quite in a dish-abille. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil will be here to-night.

Miss S. To-night, ma'am?

Mrs. H. Yes, my dear; to-night. Oh, put on a smarter cap, and change those ordinary ruffles. Lord! I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian lutestring. Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper?

Enter Trusty.

Oh, here, Trusty! do you know that people of quality are expected here this evening?

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well; do you be sure now that everything is done in the most genteelest manner, and to the honour of the family.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, but mind what I say to you.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. His lordship is to lie in the chintz bed-chamber; d'ye hear? and Sir John in the blue damask-room: his lordship's valet-de-chamb in the opposite.

Trus. But Mr. Lovewell is come down; and you know that's his room, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, well; Mr. Lovewell may make shift, or get a bed at the George. But harkye,

Trus. Ma'am! [Trusty.

Mrs. H. Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. Unpaper the curtains, take the kivers off the couch and the chairs; and, do you hear? take the China dolls out of my closet, and put them on the mantlepiece immediately.

Trus. Yes, ma'am. (*Going.*)

Mrs. H. And mind, as soon as his lordship comes in, be sure you set all their heads a-nodding,

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Be gone, then! fly, this instant! Where's my brother, Sterling?

Trus. Talking to the butler, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Very well. [*Exit Trusty.*] Miss Fanny, I pertest I did not see you before. Lord, child! what's the matter with you?

Fan. With me? nothing, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Bless me! why your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colours, I vow and pertest. And then you have drest yourself as loose and as big! I declare, there is not such a thing to be seen now, as a young woman with a fine waist. You all make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child! You know the qualaty will be here by-and-by. Go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. [*Exit Fanny.*] She is gone away in tears; absolutely crying, I vow and pertest. This ridicalous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect nataral of the girl.

Miss S. Poor soul! she can't help it. (*Affectedly.*)

Mrs. H. Well, my dear; now I shall have an opportunity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me concerning Sir John Melvil's behaviour to you.

Miss S. Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness. But indeed, ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that Sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks, and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family. I have heard of flames and darts, but Sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

Mrs. H. Oh, fie, my dear; I am perfectly ashamed of you. That's so like the notions of your poor sister. What you complain of as coldness and indiffarence, is nothing but the extreme gentilaty of his address; an exact pictur of the manners of qualaty.

Miss S. O, he is the very mirror of complaisance; full of formal bows and set speeches. I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him. [of who, pray?

Mrs. H. Jealous! I say jealous, indeed. Jealous

Miss S. My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favourite than I am; and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

Mrs. H. Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, cannot distinguish between the genteel and the vulgar part of the family? Between you and your sister, for instance; or me and my brother? Be advised by me, child. It is all purliteness and good-breeding. Nobody knows the qualaty better than I do.

Miss S. In my mind, the old lord, his uncle, has ten times more gallantry about him than Sir John. He is full of attentions to the ladies, and smiles, and grins, and leers, and ogles, and fills every wrinkle of his old wizen face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweetheart.

Enter Sterling.

Ster. No fish? Why, the pond was dragged but yesterday morning; there's carp and tench in the boat. Plague on't! if that dog, Lovewell, had any thought, he would have brought down a turbot, or some of the land-carriage mackerel.

Mrs. H. Lord, brother! I am afraid his lordship and Sir John will not arrive while it is light.

Ster. I warrant you. But pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dressed to-morrow, and some venison; and let the gardener cut some pine-apples, and get out some ice. I'll answer for wine, I warrant you. I'll give them such a glass of champagne as they never drank in their lives; no, not at a duke's table.

Mrs. H. Pray now, brother, mind how you behave. I am always in a fright about you with people of qualaty. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff, and that will keep you awake. And don't burst out with your horrible loud horse-laughs. It is monstrous vulgar.

Ster. Never fear, sister. Who have we here?

Mrs. H. It is Mons. Cantoon, the Swish gentleman that lives with his lordship, I vow and pertest.

Enter Canton.

Ster. Ah, mounseer! your servant. I am very glad to see you, mounseer.

Can. Mosh oblige to Mons. Sterling. Ma'am, I am yours: Matemoiselle, I am your—(*Bowing round.*)

Mrs. H. Your humble servant, Mr. Cantoon!

Can. Kiss your hand, matam!

Ster. Well, mounseer; and what news of your good family? When are we to see his lordship and Sir John?

Can. Mons. Sterling, mi Lor Ogleby and Sir Jean Melvil will be here in one quarter hour.

Ster. I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. H. O, I am perdigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afeard of some accident. Will you please to have anything, Mr. Cantoon, after your journey?

Can. No, tank you, ma'am. [sir?

Mrs. H. Shall I go and shew you the apartments,

Can. You do me great honour, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Come, then! Come, my dear! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.—Scene I.—*An Ante-Room to Lord Ogleby's bed-chamber. Table with chocolate, and small case for medicines.*

Brush *and Chambermaid discovered.*

Brush. You shall stay, my dear, I insist upon it.

Cham. Nay pray, sir, don't be so positive; I cannot stay indeed.

Brush. You shall drink one cup to our better acquaintance.

Cham. I seldom drinks chocolate; and, if I did, one has no satisfaction with such apprehensions about one. If my lord should wake, or the Swish gentleman should see one, or Madam Heidelberg should know of it, I should be frightened to death; besides, I have had my tea already this morning: I'm sure I hear my lord. (*In a fright.*)

Brush. No, no, madam, don't flutter yourself. The moment my lord wakes, he rings his bell, which I answer sooner or later, as it suits my convenience. [ing—

Cham. But should he come upon us without ring-

Brush. I'll forgive him if he does. This key (*Takes a phial out of the case*) locks him up till I please to let him out.

Cham. La! sir, that's potecary's stuff.

Brush. It is so; but without this he can no more get out of bed, than he can read without spectacles. (*Sips.*) What with qualms, age, rheumatism, and a few surfeits in his youth, he must have a great deal of brushing, oiling, screwing, and winding-up, to set him a-going for the day.

Cham. (*Sips.*) That's prodigious indeed. (*Sips.*) My lord seems quite in a decay.

Brush. Yes, he's quite a spectacle: (*Sips.*)—a mere corpse, till he is revived and refreshed from our little magazine here. When the restorative pills and cordial waters warm his stomach, and get into his head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he sets up for the lover, the rake, and the fine gentleman.

Cham. (*Sips.*) Poor gentleman! but should the Swish gentleman come upon us. (*Frightened.*)

Brush. Why then the English gentleman would be very angry. No foreigner would break in upon my privacy. (*Sips.*) But I can assure you, Monsieur Canton is otherwise employed. He is obliged to skim the cream of half a score newspapers for my lord's breakfast: ha, ha, ha! Pray, madam, drink your cup peaceably. My lord's chocolate is remarkably good; he won't touch a drop, but what comes from Italy.

Cham. (*Sipping.*) 'Tis very fine indeed! (*Sips.*) and charmingly perfumed: it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

Brush. You have an excellent taste, madam; and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking. (*Takes them out of a drawer in the table.*) And in return, I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. (*Kisses her.*) A small return of favours, madam, will make, I hope, this country and retirement agreeable to us both. (*He bows, she courtesies.*) Come, pray sit down. Your young ladies are fine girls, faith! (*Sips.*) though, upon my soul, I am quite of my old lord's mind about them; and were I inclined to matrimony, I should take the youngest. (*Sips.*)

Cham. Miss Fanny! The most affablest, and the most best-natur'd creter!

Brush. And the eldest a little haughty or so.

Cham. More haughtier and pronder than Saturn himself; but this I say quite confidential to you; for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know. (*Sips.*)

Brush. By no means; but you cannot hurt it with us. We don't consider tempers: we want money, Mrs. Nancy. Give us plenty of that, we'll abate you a great deal in other particulars; ha, ha, ha!

Cham. Bless me, here's somebody! (*Bell rings.*) Oh, 'tis my lord! Well, your servant, Mr. Brush. I'll cleau the cups in the next room.

Brush. Do so; but never mind the bell: I sha'n't go this half hour. Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

Cham. Not for the world, Mr. Brush. I'll be here to set all things to rights; but I must not drink tea indeed; and so, your servant.

[*Exit, with teaboard. Bell rings again.*

Brush. Yes, yes; I hear you. It is impossible to stupify one's self in the country for a week, without some little flirting with the abigails. This is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan for her. (*Bell rings.*) O, my lord! (*Going.*)

Enter CANTON, *with newspapers in his hand.*

Can. Monsieur Brush! Maistre Brush! my lor stirra yet?

Brush. He has just rung his bell: I am going to him. [*Exit.*

Can. Depêchez vous donc. (*Puts on his spectacles.*) I wish de deveil had all dese papiers. I forget as fast as I read. De Advertise put out of my head de Gazette, de Chronique, and so dey all go l'un après l'autre. I must get some nouvelle for my lor, or he'll be enragé contre moi. Voyons! (*Reads the paper.*) Here is noting but Anti-Sejanus and advertise—

Enter Maid with chocolate things.

Vat you want, chil?

Maid. Only the chocolate things, sir.

Can. O, ver well; dat is good girl: and very prit too. [*Exit Maid.*

Lord O. (*Within.*) Canton! he, he! (*Coughs.*) Canton!

Can. I come, my—Vat shall I do? I have no news: he will make great tintamarre!

Lord O. (*Within.*) Canton! I say, Canton! Where are you?

Enter LORD OGLEBY, *leaning on* BRUSH.

Can. Here, my lor! I ask pardon, my lor, I have not finish de papiers.

Lord O. D—n your pardon and your papiers; I want you here, Canton.

Can. Den I run, dat is all. (*Shuffles along. Lord Ogleby leans upon Canton too, and comes forward.*)

Lord O. You Swiss are the most unaccountable mixture: you have the language and the impertinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutchmen.

Can. 'Tis very true, my lor; I can't help—

Lord O. (*Cries out.*) O Diavolo!

Can. You are not in pain, I hope, my lor?

Lord O. Indeed, but I am, my lor. That vulgar fellow, Sterling, with his city politeness, would force me down his slope last night to see a clay-coloured ditch, which he calls a canal; and what with the dew and the east wind, my hips and shoulders are absolutely screwed to my body.

Can. A littel veritable ean d'arquibusade vil set all to right. (*Lord Ogleby sits down, and Brush gives chocolate.*)

Lord O. Where are the palsy drops, Brush?

Brush. Here, my lord! (*Pours out.*)

Lord O. Quelle nouvelle avez vous, Canton?

Can. A great deal of papier, but no news at all.

Lord O. What! nothing at all, you stupid fellow?

Can. Oui, my lor, I have little advertise here vil give you more plaisir den all de lies about noting at all. La voila! (*Puts on his spectacles.*)

Lord O. Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis, and good discretion.

Can. I vil, my lor. (*Reads.*) *Dere is no question but dat de cosmetique royale vil utterly take away all heats, pimps, frecks, oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de wrinque of old age, &c. &c.* A great deal more, my lor. *Be sure to ask for de cosmetique royale, signed by de docteur own hand. Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vil tink.* Eh bien, my lor?

Lord O. Eh bien, Canton! Will you purchase any?

Can. For you, my lor?

Lord O. For me, you old puppy! for what?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Do I want cosmetics?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Look in my face; come, be sincere. Does it want the assistance of art?

Can. (*With his spectacles.*) En verité, non. 'Tis

very smooth and brillian; but tote dat you might take a littel by way of prevention.

Lord O. You thought like an old fool, monsieur, as you generally do. Try it upon your own face, Canton; and if it has any effect, the doctor cannot have a better proof of the efficacy of his nostrum. The surfeit water, Brush! (*Brush pours out.*) What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with? Eh!

Brush. Very well to marry in, my lord; but it would never do to live with.

Lord O. You are right, Brush; there is no washing the blackmoor white. Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Blackfriars; always taste of the Borachio; and the poor woman, his sister, is so busy, and so notable, to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over the fatigue of her first receptioo; it almost amounted to suffocation! I think the daughters are tolerable. Where's my cephalic snuff? (*Brush gives him a box.*) [at noting else, ma foi.

Can. Dey tiok so of you, my lor; for dey look

Lord O. Did they? Why, I think they did a little. Where's my glass? (*Brush puts one on the table.*) The youngest is delectable. (*Takes snuff.*)

Can. O oui, my lor, very delect inteed; she made doux yeux at you, my lor.

Lord O. She was particular. The eldest, my nephew's lady, will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother. Some peppermint-water, Brush. How happy is it, Canton, for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook everything in their marriage contract but their fortune.

Can. C'est bien heureux, et commode aussi.

Lord O. Brush, give me that pamphlet by my bedside. (*Brush goes for it.*) Canton, do you wait in the ante-chamber, and let nobody interrupt me till I call you.

Can. Mush good may do your lordship. [*Exit.*

Lord O. (*To Brush, who brings the pamphlet.*) And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies. [*Exit Brush.*] What can I possibly do among these women here, with this confounded rheumatism? It is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. (*Gets off his chair.*) Eh! courage, my lor! by heavens, I'm another creature! (*Hums and dances a little.*) It will do, faith! Bravo, my lor! These girls have absolutely inspir'd me. If they are for a game of romps; me voilà prêt! (*Sings and dances.*) Oh! that's an ugly twinge; but it's gone. I have rather too much of the lily this morning in my complexion; a faint tincture of the rose will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day. (*Unlocks a drawer at the bottom of the glass, and takes out rouge; while he is painting himself, a knocking at the door.*) Who's there? I won't be disturb'd.

Can. (*Within.*) My lor! my lor! here is Monsieur Sterling, to pay his devoir to you this morn in your chambre.

Lord O. What a fellow! (*Softly.*) I am extremely honoured by Mr. Sterling. Why don't you see him in, monsieur? (*Aloud.*) I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal. (*Softly. Door opens.*) Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honour.

Enter Sterling *and* Lovewell.

Ster. I hope, my lord, that your lordship slept well last night. I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have. I spare no pains to get them, nor money to buy them. His majesty, God bless him! don't sleep upon a better out of his palace; and if I had said in too, I hope no treason, my lord.

Lord O. Your beds are like everything else about you, incomparable! They not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. What say you then, my lord, to another walk in the garden? You must see my water by daylight, and my walks, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flowering trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips. Matters look'd but dim last night, my lord. I feel the dew in my great toe; but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about: I may be laid up to-morrow.

Lord O. I pray heaven you may. (*Aside.*)

Ster. What say you, my lord?

Lord O. I was saying, sir, that I was in hopes of seeing the young ladies at breakfast: Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world; he, he, he, he!

Can. Bravissimo, my lor! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Ster. They shall meet your lordship in the garden; we won't lose our walk for them; I'll take you a little round before breakfast, and a larger before dinner; and in the evening you shall go the grand tour, as I call it; ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Not a foot, I hope, Mr. Sterling; consider your gout, my good friend: you'll certainly be laid by the heels for your politeness; he, he, he!

Can. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis admirable, en verité!

Ster. If my young man here (*to Lovewell*) would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as mounseer does at your's, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

Lord O. What say you, Canton, will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the most companionable laugh I ever met with, and never out of tune.

Can. But when your lordship is out of spirits.

Lord O. Well said, Canton! But here comes my nephew, to play his part.

Enter Sir John Melville.

Well, Sir John, what news from the island of love? Have you been sighing and serenading this morning?

Sir J. I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

Lord O. I'm sorry to see you so dull, sir. What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! They make love with faces as if they were burying the dead; though, indeed, a marriage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living; eh, Mr. Sterling? [lord; ha, ha, ha!

Ster. Not if they have enough to live upon, my

Can. Dat is all Monsieur Sterling tink of.

Sir J. Pr'ythee, Lovewell, come with me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you, and I must communicate it directly. (*Apart to Lovewell.*)

Love. We'll go together. (*Apart.*) If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden.

[*Exeunt Sir John Melvil and Lovewell.*

Ster. My girls are always ready; I make them rise soon, and to bed early; their husbands shall have them with good constitutions and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

Lord O. Fine things, Mr. Sterling!

Ster. Fine things, indeed, my lord! Ah, my lord, had you not run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

Lord O. Very pleasant; he, he, he!

Ster. Here's mounseer now, I suppose, is pretty near your lordship's standing; but having little to eat, and little to spend in his own country, he'll wear three of your lordship out. Eating and drinking kills us all.

Lord O. Very pleasant, I protest. What a vulgar dog! (*Aside.*)

Can. My lor so old as me! He is chicken to me; and look like a boy to pauvre me.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! Well said, mounseer: keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world. Ha, ha, ha! But, my lord, I will wait upon you in the garden; we have but a little time to breakfast. I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a little walk with you, and then for the hot rolls and butter! [*Exit.*

Lord O. I shall attend you with pleasure. Hot rolls and butter in July! I sweat with the thoughts

Can. C'est un barbare. [of it.

Lord O. He is a vulgar dog; and if there was not

so much money in the family, which I can't do without, I would leave him and his hot rolls and butter directly. Come along, monsieur! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL *and* LOVEWELL.

Love. In my room this morning? Impossible.

Sir J. Before five this morning, I promise you.

Love. On what occasion?

Sir J. I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you that I could not sleep in my bed; but I found that you could not sleep neither. The bird was flown, and the nest long since cold. Where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Pooh! pr'ythee, ridiculous.

Sir J. Come, now, which was it; Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue! or Miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul too; or— [business.

Love. Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your

Sir J. Well, but where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Walking, writing; what signifies where I was?

Sir J. Walking! yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet, refreshing showers, to walk in! No, no, Lovewell. Now would I give twenty pounds to know which of the maids—

Love. But your business! your business, Sir John!

Sir J. Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

Love. Psha!

Sir J. Poor Lovewell! he can't bear it, I see. (*Aside.*) She charged you not to kiss and tell, eh, Lovewell? However, though you will not honour me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine. What do you think of Miss Sterling?

Love. What do I think of Miss Sterling?

Sir J. Ay, what do you think of her?

Love. An odd question! but I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

Sir J. All mischief and malice, I doubt.

Love. How!

Sir J. But her person: what d'ye think of that?

Love. Pretty and agreeable.

Sir J. A little grisette thing.

Love. What is the meaning of all this?

Sir J. I'll tell you. You must know, Lovewell, that notwithstanding all appearances—(*a loud laugh heard without.*) We are interrupted. When they are gone, I'll explain.

Enter LORD OGLEBY, STERLING, CANTON, MRS. HEIDELBERG, MISS STERLING, *and* FANNY.

Lord O. Great improvements indeed, Mr. Sterling; wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the bason with Neptune in the middle, are in the very extreme of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde-park corner.

Ster. The chief pleasure of a country house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expense, not I. This is quite another guess sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees. I cut down above fifty to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and the sun, smack smooth, as you see. Then I made a green-house out of the old laundry, and turned the brew-house into a pinery. The high octagon summer-house, you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East Indian captain, who has turned away a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road. All the coaches, and chariots, and chaises, pass and repass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord.

Lord O. No, I thank you, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle; and so you shall say, my lord.

Lord O. Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling; for it looks like a cabin in the air. If flying chairs were in use, the captain might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha! [wind.

Mrs. H. My brother's a little comical in his ideas, my lord. But you'll excuse him. I have a little Gothic dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste. In the evening, I shall hope for the honour of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a sullybub warm from the cow.

Lord O. I have every moment a fresh opportunity of admiring the elegance of Mrs. Heidelberg, the very flower of delicacy and cream of politeness.

Mrs. H. O, my lord! (*Leers at Lord Ogleby.*)

Lord O. O, madam! (*Leers at Mrs. Heidelberg.*)

Ster. How d'ye like these close walks, my lord?

Lord O. A most excellent serpentine! It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a true-lover's knot.

Ster. Ay, here's none of your strait lines here; but all taste; zigzag, crinkum-crankum, in and out, right and left, to and again; twisting and turning like a worm, my lord.

Lord O. Admirably laid out indeed, Mr. Sterling! one can hardly see an inch beyond one's nose anywhere in these walks. You are a most excellent economist of your land, and make a little go a great way. It lies together in as small parcels as if it were placed in pots out at your window in Gracechurch-street.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. What d'ye laugh at, Canton?

Can. Ah! que cette similitude est drôle! so clever what you say, my lor!

Lord O. You seem mightily engaged, madam. What are those pretty hands so busily employed about? (*To Fanny.*)

Fan. Only making up a nosegay, my lord! Will your lordship do me the honour of accepting it?

Lord O. I'll wear it next my heart, madam. I see the young creature dotes on me. (*Aside.*)

Miss S. Lord, sister! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook, or the nurse, carries to town, on a Monday morning, for a beaupot. Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose and a sprig of sweetbriar?

Lord O. The truest emblems of yourself, madam! all sweetness and poignancy. A little jealous, poor soul! (*Aside.*)

Ster. Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

Mrs. H. You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with over-walking, brother.

Lord O. Not at all, madam. We're in the garden of Eden, you know; in the region of perpetual spring, youth, and beauty! (*Leers at the women.*)

Mrs. H. Quite the man of qualaty, I vow and pertest. (*Aside.*)

Can. Take-a my arm, my lor! (*L. O. leans on him.*)

Ster. I'll only shew his lordship my ruins, and the cascade, and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

Lord O. Ruins, did you say, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay; ruins, my lord; and they are reckoned very fine ones, too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases.

Lord O. (*Going, stops.*) What steeple's that we see yonder? The parish church, I suppose.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord! it is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord!

Lord O. Very ingenious indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than this I see before me: (*leers at the women:*) simple, yet varied; bounded, yet extensive. Get away, Canton! (*Pushes Canton away.*) I want no assistance; I'll walk with the

Ster. This way, my lord. [ladies.

Lord O. Lead on, sir. We young folks here will follow you. Madam; Miss Sterling; Miss Fanny; I attend you. [*Exit after Ster., gallanting the ladies.*

Can. (*Following.*) He is cook o'de game, ma foi! [*Exit.*

Sir J. Hark ye, Lovewell; you must not go. At length, thank Heaven! I have an opportunity to unbosom. I know you are faithful, Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me.

Love. Be assured you may depend upon me.

Sir J. You must know then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between Miss Sterling and me will come to nothing.

Love. How!

Sir J. It will be no match, Lovewell.

Love. No match?

Sir J. No.

Love. You amaze me. What should prevent it?

Sir J. I.

Love. You! Wherefore?

Sir J. I don't like her.

Love. Very plain indeed! I never supposed that you were extremely devoted to her from inclination; but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience rather than affection.

Sir J. Very true. I came into the family without any impressions on my mind; with an unimpassioned indifference, ready to receive one woman as soon as another. I looked upon love, serious sober love, as a chimera, and marriage as a thing of course, as you know most people do. But I, who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries. In short, my defection from Miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

Love. Another? So, so! here will be fine work. And pray who is she?

Sir J. Who is she? who can she be but Fanny; the tender, amiable, engaging Fanny?

Love. Fanny! What Fanny?

Sir J. Fanny Sterling, her sister. Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

Love. Her sister? Confusion! (*Aside.*) You must not think of it, Sir John.

Sir J. Not think of it! I can think of nothing else. Nay, tell me, Lovewell, was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction towards her? You seem confounded. Why don't you answer me?

Love. Indeed, Sir John, this event gives me infinite concern. Why did not you break this affair to the family before?

Sir J. Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been, can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? Nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now; and yet I think I know Mr. Stirling so well, that strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.

Love. But even suppose he should, which I very much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addresses.

Sir J. You are deceived a little in that particular.

Love. You'll find I'm in the right.

Sir J. I have some little reason to think otherwise. [already?

Love. You have not declared your passion to her

Sir J. Yes, I have. [receive it?

Love. Indeed! And—and—and how did she

Sir J. I think it is not very easy for me to make my addresses to any woman, without receiving some little encouragement. [encouragement?

Love. Encouragement! Did she give you any

Sir J. I don't know what you call encouragement; but she blushed, and cried, and desired me not to think of it any more: upon which I pressed her hand; kissed it; swore she was an angel; and I could see it tickled her to the soul.

Love. And did she express no surprise at your declaration?

Sir J. Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprised; and she got away from me too before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter for me.

Love. I! a letter! I had rather have nothing—

Sir J. Nay, you promised me your assistance; and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion. You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

Love. As to that, I—your commands, you know; that is, if she—Indeed, Sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

Sir J. Well, well, that's my concern. Ha! there she goes, by heaven! along that walk yonder, d'ye see? I'll go to her immediately!

Love. You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing. [universe.

Sir J. I would not lose this opportunity for the

Love. Nay, pray don't go! Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits. The shock will be too much for her. (*Detains him.*)

Sir J. Nothing shall prevent me. Ha! now she turns into another walk. Let me go. (*Breaks from him.*) I shall lose her. (*Going, turns back.*) Be sure now to keep out of the way! If you interrupt us, I shall never forgive you. [*Exit hastily.*

Love. 'Sdeath! I can't bear this. In love with my wife! acquaint me with his passion for her! make his addresses before my face! I shall break out before my time. This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness. She could not encourage him; I am sure she could not. Ha! they are turning into the walk, and coming this way. Shall I leave the place? Leave him to solicit my wife? I can't submit to it. They come nearer and nearer. If I stay, it will look suspicious. It may betray us, and incense him. They are here. I must go. I am the most unfortunate fellow in the world! [*Exit.*

Re-enter Sir John Melvil *and* Fanny.

Fan. Leave me, Sir John; I beseech you, leave me! Nay, why will you persist to follow me with idle solicitations, which are an affront to my character, and an injury to your own honour?

Sir J. I know your delicacy, and tremble to offend it: but let the urgency of the occasion be my excuse. Consider, madam, that the future happiness of my life depends on my present application to you. Consider that this day must determine my fate; and these are perhaps the only moments left me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to entreat you not to oppose the proposals I mean to open to your father.

Fan. For shame, for shame, Sir John! Think of your previous engagements. Think of your own situation, and think of mine. What have you discovered in my conduct, that might encourage you to so bold a declaration? I am shocked that you should venture to say so much, and blush that I should even dare to give it a hearing. Let me be gone.

Sir J. Nay, stay, madam, but one moment. Your sensibility is too great. Engagements! what engagements have been pretended on either side, more than those of family convenience? I went on in the trammels of a matrimonial negotiation, with a blind submission to your father and Lord Ogleby; but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in your's.

Fan. Have a care, Sir John! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretences of the heart, half our sex are made fools, and a greater part of your's despise them for it.

Sir J. Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix; but when it is once inviolably attach-

ed, inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection. When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

Fan. You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit—nay, if I did not even express the quickest resentment at your behaviour, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you in honour to my sister; and be assured, sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph that must result from the blackest treachery to her. (*Going, he stops her.*)

Sir J. One word, and I have done. Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me, or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclined to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united. Now, as they cannot, shall not be connected, otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false delicacy, oppose a measure so conducive to my happiness, and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you, and hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling: if then you don't absolutely loath, abhor, and scorn me; if there is no other happier man—

Fan. Hear me, sir; hear my final determination. Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them; were my heart for ever to remain disengaged to any other—I could not listen to your proposals. What! you, on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I, living under the same roof with her, bound not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness, and not to conspire against her peace, the peace of a whole family, and that of my own too! Away, away, Sir John! At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror. Nay, you must detain me no longer; I will go.

Sir J. Do not leave me in absolute despair. Give me a glimpse of hope. (*Falls on his knees.*)

Fan. I cannot. Pray, Sir John. (*Struggles to go.*)

Sir J. Shall this hand be given to another? (*Kisses her hand.*) No, I cannot endure it. My whole soul is your's, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

Re-enter MISS STERLING.

Fan. Ha! my sister here! Rise, for shame,

Sir J. Miss Sterling! (*Rises.*) [Sir John.

Miss S. I beg pardon, sir! You'll excuse me, madam; I have broke in upon you a little inopportunely, I believe; but I did not mean to interrupt you: I only came, sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotion.

Sir J. I am very sensible, Miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but—

Miss S. O dear, Sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology; the thing explains itself.

Sir J. It will soon, madam. In the meantime, I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honour and integrity of my intentions. And—and—your humble servant, madam! [*Exit in confusion.*

Miss S. Respect! Insolence! Esteem! Very fine truly. And you, madam! my sweet, delicate, innocent, sentimental sister! will you convince my papa too of the integrity of your intentions?

Fan. Do not upbraid me, my dear sister. Indeed I don't deserve it. Believe me, you can't be more offended at his behaviour than I am, and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

Miss S. Make me miserable! You are mightily deceived, madam; it gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you. A base fellow! As for you, miss, the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good-nature, never imposed upon me. I always knew you to be sly, envious, and deceitful.

Fan. Indeed you wrong me.

Miss S. Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure! Did not I find him on his knees before you? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand? Did not I hear his protestations? Was not I a witness of your dissembled modesty? No, no, my dear! don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

Fan. Sir John, I own, is to blame; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

Miss S. We shall try that, madam. I hope, miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my papa and my aunt, for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you. [*Exit.*

Fan. How unhappy I am! My distresses multiply upon me. Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with Sir John's behaviour to me, and in a manner that may add to his uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgressions, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcilably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace. Yet, at all events, I am determined on a discovery. I dread it, and am resolved to hasten it. It is surrounded with more horrors every instant, as it appears every instant more necessary. [*Exit.*

ACT III.—SCENE I.—*A Hall.*

Enter a Servant, conducting in SERGEANT FLOWER *and* COUNSELLORS TRAVERSE *and* TRUEMAN, *all booted.*

Serv. This way, if you please, gentlemen. My master is at breakfast with the family at present, but I'll let him know, and he will wait on you immediately.

Flow. Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

Serv. Please to favour me with your names, gentlemen.

Flow. Let Mr. Sterling know, that Mr. Sergeant Flower, and two other gentlemen of the bar, are come to wait on him according to his appointment.

Serv. I will, sir. (*Going.*)

Flow. And harkye, young man. (*Servant returns.*) Desire my servant—Mr. Sergeant Flower's servant—to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall, with my portmanteau.

Serv. I will, sir. [*Exit.*

Flow. Well, gentlemen; the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough, almost just on the eve of the circuits. Let me see; the Home, the Midland, and Western; ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations. Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

Trav. The day after to-morrow.

Flow. That is commission-day with us at Warwick, too; but my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there next morning. Besides I've half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again; so I'll take the evening before me, and then *currente calamo*, as I say, eh, Traverse?

Trav. True; and pray, Mr. Sergeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas, at Lincoln?

Flow. I am: for the plaintiff.

Trav. And what do you think on't?

Flow. A nonsuit.

Trav. I thought so.

Flow. Oh, no manner of doubt on't—*luce clarius*—we have no right in us. We have but one chance.

Trav. What's that?

Flow. Why, my lord chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

True. Ay, that may do indeed; if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendant's counsel.

Flow. True. Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for Lord Ogleby in this affair?

True. I am, sir. I have the honour to be re-

lated to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire; go to the Western circuit, and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interests and property lie in that part of the kingdom.

Flow. Ha! and pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

True. About nine years and three quarters.

Flow. Ha! I don't know that I ever had the pleasure of seeing you before. I wish you success, young gentleman!

Enter Sterling.

Ster. Oh, Mr. Sergeant Flower, I am glad to see you. Your servant, Mr. Sergeant. Gentlemen, your servant. Well, are all matters concluded? Has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret, of Gray's Inn, settled the articles at last? Do you approve of what he has done? Will his tackle hold tight and strong? Eh, master serjeant?

Flow. My friend Ferret's slow and sure, sir; but then, *serius aut citius*, as we say, sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do. My clerk has brought the writings, and all other instruments along with him; and the settlement is, I believe, as good a settlement as any settlement on the face of the earth.

Ster. But that d—n'd mortgage of sixty thousand pounds. There don't appear to be any other incumbrances, I hope?

Trav. I can answer for that, sir; and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of Miss Sterling's portion. You agree, on your part, to come down with eighty thousand pounds?

Ster. Down on the nail. Aye, aye, my money is ready to-morrow if he pleases. He shall have it in India bonds, or notes, or how he chooses. Your lords and your dukes, and your people at the court end of the town, stick at payments sometimes. Debts unpaid, no credit lost with them; but no fear of us substantial fellows, eh, Mr. Sergeant?

Flow. Sir John having last term, according to agreement, levied a fine, and suffered a recovery, has hitherto cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate, for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate, a jointure of two thousand pounds per annum is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster, and the whole estate, after the death of the aforesaid earl, descends to the heirs male of Sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforesaid Elizabeth Sterling lawfully to be begotten.

Trav. Very true; and Sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate, as lies in the manors of Hogmore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand pounds per annum, and at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand—

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Ster. Ah, sir John! Here we are, hard at it; paving the road to matrimony. First the lawyers, then comes the doctor. Let us but despatch the long-robe, we shall soon get pudding-sleeves to work, I warrant you.

Sir J. I am sorry to interrupt you, sir; but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me. Having something very particular for your private ear, I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately. (*To Ster.*)

Ster. Ay, with all my heart! Gentlemen,—Mr. Sergeant,—you'll excuse it; business must be done, you know. The writings will keep cold till to-morrow morning. [*day after.*

Flow. I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the

Ster. Nay, nay, I sha'n't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you. My house is very full, but I have beds for you all, beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses. Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? or will you amuse yourself on the green, with a game at bowls and a cool tankard? My servants shall attend you. Do you choose any other refreshment? Call for what you please; do as you please; make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you. Here, Thomas! Harry! William! wait on these gentlemen!—(*Follows the Lawyers out, bawling and talking, and then returns to Sir John.*) And now, sir, I am entirely at your service. What are your commands with me, Sir John?

Sir J. After having carried the negotiation between our families to so great a length; after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part, I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

Ster. Uneasiness! what uneasiness? Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions, to receive my daughter for a wife; on the same conditions I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

Sir J. Pardon me, sir, more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; Miss Sterling, I know, is extremely disconcerted too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

Ster. What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

Sir J. In one word, then, it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfil my engagements in regard to Miss Sterling.

Ster. How, Sir John? Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What! refuse to—

Sir J. Be assured, sir, that I neither mean to affront nor forsake your family. My only fear is, that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family, by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

Ster. Why, did you not tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

Sir J. True. But you have another daughter, sir.

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart. I have already declared my passion to her; nay, Miss Sterling herself is also apprised of it; and if you will but give a sanction to my present addresses, the uncommon merit of Miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal, if not superior rank to myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with Miss Fanny.

Ster. Mighty fine, truly! Why what the plague do you make of us, Sir John? Do you come to market for my daughters, like servants at a statute-fair? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the grand seignior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as he pleases? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave-trade with them, and—

Sir J. A moment's patience, sir. Nothing but the excess of my passion for Miss Fanny should have induced me to take any step that had the least appearance of disrespect to any part of your family; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression, by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

Ster. Compensation! what compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, Sir John?

Sir J. Come, come, Mr. Sterling; I know you to be a man of sense, a man of business, a man of the world. I'll deal frankly with you; and you shall see that I don't desire a change of measures

for my own gratification, without endeavouring to make it advantageous to you.

Ster. What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, Sir John?

Sir J. I'll tell you, sir. You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with Miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of eighty thousand pounds.

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Now, if you will but consent to my waiving that marriage—

Ster. I agree to your waiving that marriage? Impossible, Sir John!

Sir J. I hope not, sir; as, on my part, I will agree to waive my right to thirty thousand pounds of the fortune I was to receive with her.

Ster. Thirty thousand, d'ye say?

Sir J. Yes, sir; and accept of Miss Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of fourscore.

Ster. Fifty thousand— (*Pausing.*)

Sir J. Instead of fourscore.

Ster. Why, why, there may be something in that. Let me see. Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsy with fourscore. But how can this be, Sir John? for you know I am to pay this money into the hands of my Lord Ogleby, who, I believe, between you and me, Sir John, is not overstocked with ready money at present; and threescore thousand of it, you know, is to go to pay off the present encumbrances on the estate, Sir John.

Sir J. That objection is easily obviated. Ten of the twenty thousand, which would remain as a surplus of the fourscore, after paying off the mortgage, was intended by his lordship for my use, that we might set off with some little eclat on our marriage; and the other ten for his own. Ten thousand pounds, therefore, I shall be able to pay you immediately; and for the remaining twenty thousand, you shall have a mortgage on that part of the estate which is to be made over to me, with whatever security you shall require for the regular payment of the interest, till the principal is duly discharged.

Ster. Why, to do you justice, Sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family—

Sir J. Nothing was ever further from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling. And after all, the whole affair is nothing extraordinary; such things happen every day; and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

Ster. True, true; and since you only transfer from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

Sir J. The very thing!

Ster. Odso! I had quite forgot. We are reckoning without our host here. There is another difficulty.

Sir J. You alarm me. What can that be?

Ster. I can't stir a step in this business without consulting my sister, Heidelberg. The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offence.

Sir J. But if you come into this measure, surely she will be so kind as to consent.

Ster. I don't know that; Betsy is her darling, and I can't tell how far she may resent any slight that seems to be offered to her favourite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you. You shall go and break the matter to her first; and by that time I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to reinforce your arguments.

Sir J. I'll fly to her immediately. You promise

Ster. I do. [me your assistance?

Sir J. Ten thousand thanks for it! And now, success attend me! (*Going.*)

Ster. Harkye, Sir John! (*Sir J. returns.*) Not a word of the thirty thousand to my sister, Sir John.

Sir J. O, I am dumb, I am dumb, Sir. (*Going.*)

Ster. You'll remember it is thirty thousand?

Sir J. To be sure I do.

Ster. But, Sir John! one thing more. (*Sir J. returns.*) My lord must know nothing of this stroke of friendship between us.

Sir J. Not for the world. Let me alone! let me alone! (*Offering to go.*)

Ster. (*Holding him.*) And when everything is agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held fast to the bargain.

Sir J. To be sure. A bond, by all means; a bond, or whatever, you please. [*Exit hastily.*

Ster. I should have thought of more conditions. He's in a humour to give me everything. Why, what mere children are your fellows of quality, that cry for a plaything one minute, and throw it by the next! As changeable as the weather, and as uncertain as the stocks. Special fellows to drive a bargain! and yet they are to take care of the interest of the nation, truly! Here does this whirligig man of fashion offer to give up thirty thousand pounds in hard money, with as much indifference as if it were a China orange. By this mortgage, I shall have a hold on his terra firma; and if he wants more money, as he certainly will, let him have children by my daughter or no, I shall have his whole estate in a net for the benefit of my family. Well, thus it is, that the children of citizens who have acquired fortunes, prove persons of fashion; and thus it is, that persons of fashion, who have ruined their fortunes, reduce the next generation to cits. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter MRS. HEIDELBERG *and* MISS STERLING.

Miss S. This is your gentle-looking, soft-speaking, sweet-smiling, affable Miss Fanny, for you!

Mrs. H. My Miss Fanny! I disclaim her. With all her arts, she never could insinuate herself into my good graces; and yet she has a way with her, that deceives man, woman, and child, except you and me, niece.

Miss S. O, ay; she wants nothing but a crook in her hand, and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

Mrs. H. Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations.

Miss S. And then she's so mighty good to servants.—"Pray, John, do this; pray, Thomas, do that: thank you, Jenny;"—and then so humble to her relations—"To be sure, papa;—as my aunt pleases;—my sister knows best." But with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be Lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

Mrs. H. She Lady Melvil! Compose yourself, niece. I'll ladyship her, indeed: a little creppin, cantin—She sha'n't be the better for a farden of my money. But tell me, child, how does this intriguing with Sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatunation here.

Miss S. There I was deceived, madam. I took all their whisperings and stealings into corners, to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me. I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

Mrs. H. My spurit to a T. My dear child! (*Kisses her.*) Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of parliament, because I would not demean myself to be slabbered about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheesemongers, and tallow-chandlers. However, neice, I can't help diffuring a little in opinion from you in this matter. My experunce and sagucity makes me still suspect that there is

something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of Sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded, indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns too; but Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another-guess sort of a figur! and were as perfect a pictur of two distressed lovers as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to Sir John and Fanny, I want a matter-of-fact.

Miss S. Matter-of-fact, madam! Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? Was not Sir John kneeling at her feet, and kissing her hand? Did not he look all love, and she all confusion? Is not that matter-of-fact? And did not Sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyer-men, get up from breakfast, and follow him immediately? And I warrant you that by this time he has made proposals to him to marry my sister. Oh, that some other person, an earl or a duke, would make his addresses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster!

Mrs. H. Be cool, child. You shall be Lady Melvil, in spite of all their caballins, if it costs me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this fammaly.

Miss S. As I live, madam, yonder comes Sir John. A base man! I can't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. (*Disordered.*)

Mrs. H. Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child. I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by-and-by I'll come and let you know all that has past between us.

Miss S. Pray do, madam. (*Looking back.*) A vile wretch! [*Exit in a rage.*

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Sir J. Your most obedient humble servant, madam. (*Bowing very respectfully.*)

Mrs. H. Your servant, Sir John. (*Dropping a half curtsey and pouting.*)

Sir J. Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coolness of your behaviour to me, madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what passed this morning.

Mrs. H. I am very sorry, Sir John, to be made acquainted with anything that should induce me to change the opinion which I would always wish to entertain of a person of qualaty. (*Pouting.*)

Sir. J. It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh circumstances, I flatter myself—

Mrs. H. You do flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behaviour to my niece, Sir John. And give me leave to tell you, Sir John, that you have been drawn into an action much beneath you, Sir John; and that I look upon every injury offered to Miss Betty Sterling, as an affront to myself, Sir John. (*Warmly.*)

Sir J. I would not offend you for the world, madam; but when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a point of honour to renounce engagements which I could not fulfil so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honour of being your niece, madam.

Mrs. H. I disclaim her as a niece, Sir John; Miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister; and the whole fammaly must disclaim her, for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

Sir J. Indeed she has been guilty of none, madam. Her hand and her heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself and Mr. Sterling. And if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, madam.

Mrs. H. Indeed?

Sir J. Quite certain, madam.

Enter Sterling *unperceived.*

Ster. (*Behind.*) So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance. (*Sterling advances by degrees.*)

Mrs. H. To marry Fanny?

Sir J. Yes, madam. [say?

Mrs. H. My brother has given his consent, you

Sir J. In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, madam. (*Sees Sterling.*) Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

Mrs. H. What! have you consented to give up your eldest daughter in this manner, brother?

Ster. Give her up? heaven forbid! No, not give her up, sister; only in case that you—Zounds! I am afraid you have said too much, Sir John. (*Apart to Sir J.*)

Mrs. H. Yes, yes; I see now that it is true enough what my niece told me. You are all plotting and caballin against her. Pray, does Lord Ogleby know of this affair? [it, madam.

Sir J. I have not yet made him acquainted with

Mrs. H. No, I warrant you. I thought so. And so his lordship and myself, truly, are not to be consulted till the last!

Ster. What! did not you consult my lord? Oh, fie for shame, Sir John!

Sir J. Nay, but Mr. Sterling—

Mrs. H. We, who are the persons of most consequence and experunce in the two fammalies, are to know nothing of the matter, till the whole is as good as concluded upon. But his lordship, I am sure, will have more generosaty than to countenance such a perceding. And I could not have expected such behaviour from a person of your qualaty, Sir John. And as for you, brother—

Ster. Nay, nay, but hear me, sister.

Mrs. H, I am perfectly ashamed of you. Have you no spurrit? no more concern for the honour of our fammaly than to consent—

Ster. Consent! I consent! As I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent. Did I consent, Sir John?

Sir. J. Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's concurrence. But in case of her approbation—

Ster. Ay, in case, I grant you; that is, if my sister approved. But that's quite another thing, you know. (*To Mrs. H.*)

Mrs. H. Your sister approve, indeed! I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling. What! approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands, and exchanged for the younger? I am surprised how you could listen to such a scandalous proposal.

Ster. I tell you, I never did listen to it. Did not I say that I would be entirely governed by my sister, Sir John? And unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny—

Mrs. H. I agree to his marrying Fanny!—abominable! The man is absolutely out of his senses. Can't that wise head of your's foresee the consequence of all this, brother Sterling? Will Sir John take Fanny without a fortune? No! After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest? No! Does not this overturn the whole systum of the fammaly? Yes, yes, yes!

Ster. Do you see now what you've done? Don't betray me, Sir John. (*Apart to Sir J.*)

Mrs. H. You know I was always for my niece Betsy's marrying a person of the very first qualaty. That was my maxum: and, therefore, much the largest settlement was of course to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common councilman, for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

Sir. J. But if a better match should offer itself, why should it not be accepted, madam?

Mrs H. What! at the expense of her elder sister? O fie, Sir John! How could you bear to hear such an indignaty, brother Sterling?

Ster. I! Nay, I sha'n't hear of it, I promise you. I can't hear of it, indeed, Sir John.

Mrs. H. But you have heard of it, brother Sterling; you know you have, and sent Sir John to propose it to me. But if you can give up your daughter, I sha'n't forsake my niece, I assure you. Ah! if my poor dear Mr. Heidelberg, and our sweet babes had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

Ster. Did I, Sir John? Nay, speak! Bring me off, or we are ruined. (*Apart to Sir J.*)

Sir J. Why, to be sure, to speak the truth—

Mrs. H. To speak the truth!—To speak the truth, I'm ashamed of you both. But have a care what you are about, brother! have a care, I say. The counsellors are in the house, I hear; and if everything is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these hundred years. I'll go over to Holland, and settle with Mr. Vanderspracken, my poor husband's first cousin, and my own fammaly shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you. [*Exit.*

Ster. I thought so. I knew she would never agree to it. [do, Mr. Sterling?

Sir J. 'Sdeath, how unfortunate! What can we

Ster. Nothing.

Sir J. What, must our agreement break off the moment it is made, then?

Ster. It can't be helped, Sir John. The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself, that she threatens to leave us. My brother Heidelberg was a warm man—a very warm man, and died worth a plum at least. A plum! ay, I warrant you, he died worth a plum and a half.

Sir J. Well; but if I—

Ster. And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three per cents. and old South Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to

Sir J. I can only say, sir— [our family.

Ster. Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand was very fair and handsome, to be sure,

Sir J. Nay, but I am willing to— [Sir John.

Ster. Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose above a hundred thousand; so you see the balance is against you, Sir John.

Sir J. Suppose I was to prevail on Lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her?

Ster. I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it than any other person in the family. She has a great respect for Lord Ogleby. She loves a lord.

Sir J. I'll apply to him this very day. And if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay, ay, I shall be glad to oblige you, when it is in my power; but as the account stands now, you see it is not upon the figures. And so your servant, Sir John. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—*A Room.*

Enter MR. STERLING, MRS. HEIDELBERG, *and* MISS STERLING.

Ster. What! will you send Fanny to town, sister?

Mrs. H. To-morrow morning: I've given orders

Ster. Indeed! [about it already.

Mrs. H. Posatively.

Ster. But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

Mrs. H. Not half so odd as her behaviour, brother. This time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

Ster. I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsy?

Miss. S. No, indeed, papa. My aunt knows that it is not. For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do or say anything to hurt her with you or my aunt, for the world.

Mrs. H. Hold your tongue, Betsy; I will have my way. When she is packed off, everything will go on as it should do. Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can act with vigour on our part; and the sending her out of the way, shall be the purluminary step to all the rest of my perceedings.

Ster. Well, but sister—

Mrs. H. It does not signify talking, brother Sterling, for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will. Come along, child. (*To Miss S.*) The postshay shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if Miss Fanny does not get into it, why I will; and so there's an end of the matter. (*Bounces out with Miss Sterling, then returns.*) One word more, brother Sterling. I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to Lord Ogleby of Sir John Melvil's behaviour. Do this, brother; show a proper regard for the honour of your fammaly yourself, and I shall thrown in my mite to the raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind: so act as you please, and take the consequences. [*Exit.*

Ster. The devil's in the women for tyranny!—Mothers, wives, mistresses, or sisters, they always will govern us. As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it.—"I will do this," and "you shall do that," and "you shall do t'other, or else the fammaly sha'n't have a farden of it." (*Mimicking.*) So absolute with her money! But to say the truth, nothing but money can make us absolute, and so we must e'en make the best of her. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter LORD OGLEBY *and* CANTON.

Lord O. What! Mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away? Why? Wherefore? What's the meaning of all this?

Can. Je ne sçais pas; I know nothing of it.

Lord O. It can't be: it sha'n't be:—I protest against the measure. She's a fine girl, and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated, than that she should leave us. Her vulgar father, that's the very abstract of Change-alley; the aunt, that's always endeavouring to be a fine lady; and the pert sister, for ever shewing that she is one, are horrid company indeed, and without her would be intolerable. Ah, la petite Fanchon! she's the thing: isn't she, Canton?

Can. Dere is very good sympatie entre vous and dat young lady, my lor.

Lord O. I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals;-your Sterlings, your Heidelbergs, and Devilbergs: if she goes, I'll positively go too.

Can. In de same post-chay, my lor? You have no objection to dat, I believe, nor mademoiselle neither too—Ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Pr'ythee hold thy foolish tongue, Canton. Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires? My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects. I fly as naturally to a fine girl—

Can. As de fine girl to you, mi lor, ha, ha, ha! you always fly togedre, like un pair de pigeons—

Lord O. Like un pair de pigeons. (*Mocks him.*) Vous êtes un sot, Monsieur Canton. Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues, and never see'st me badiner, but you suspect mischief, you old fool, you.

Can. I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, mi lor, he, he, he!

Lord O. He, he, he! Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse one. Thou art like my rappee, here, (*takes out his box*) a most ridiculous superfluity; but a pinch of thee now and then is a most delicious treat.

Can. You do me great honneur, mi lor.

Lord O. 'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art pro-

perly my cephalic snuff, and art no bad medicine against megrims, vertigoes, and profound thinking —ha, ha, ha! [prode.

Can. Your flatterie, mi lor, vil make me too

Lord O. The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure: but pr'ythee, Cant. is not that Miss Fanny yonder?

Can. (*Looks with a glass.*) Ah—la voila! En verité, 'tis she, mi lor—'tis one of de pigeons—de pigeons d'amour.

Lord O. Don't be ridiculous, you old monkey.

Can. I am monkee. I am ole; but I have eye, I have ear, and a little understand, now and den.

Lord O. Taisez vous, bête. [love to you.

Can. Elle vous attend, my lor.—She vil make a

Lord O. Will she? Have at her then! A fine girl can't oblige me more. 'Egad, I find myself a little enjoué. Come along, Cant.; she is but in the next walk; but there is such a deal of this d—d crinkum-crankum, as Sterling calls it, that one sees people for half an hour before one can get to them. Allons! Mousieur Canton, allons! done.

[*Exeunt singing in French.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Garden.*

Enter LOVEWELL *and* FANNY.

Love. My dear Fanny, I cannot bear your distress; it overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery. [parture?

Fan. But how can it be effected before my de-

Love. I'll tell you.—Lord Ogleby seems to entertain a visible partiality for you; and, notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behaviour, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess; but withal extremely good-natured, and would do anything to recommend himself to a lady. Do you open the whole affair of our marriage to him immediately. It will come with more irresistible persuasion from you than from myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and authority will put an end to Sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and the whole family to our marriage.

Fan. Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

Love. I have heard him and Canton, since dinner, singing French songs under the great walnuttree, by the parlour-door. If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately. To-morrow morning is fixed for your departure, and if we lose this opportunity, we may wish in vain for another. He approaches: I must retire. Speak, my dear Fanny, speak, and make us happy! [*Exit.*

Fan. What shall I do? What shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

Enter LORD OGLEBY *and* CANTON.

Lord O. To see so much beauty so solitary, madam, is a satire upon mankind; and it is fortunate that one man has broken in upon your reverie for the credit of our sex. I say one, madam; for poor Canton here, from age and infirmities, stands

Can. Noting at all, indeed. [for nothing.

Fan. Your lordship does me great honour. I have a favour to request, my lord.

Lord O. A favour, madam? To be honoured with your commands is an inexpressible favour done to me, madam.

Fan. If your lordship could indulge me with the honour of a moment's—What's the matter with me? (*Aside.*)

Lord O. The girl's confused—Hey!—here's something in the wind, faith. I'll have a tête-à-tête with her. (*Aside.*) Allez vous en. (*To Canton.*)

Can. I go.—Ah, pauvre mademoiselle! Mi lor, have pitié upon the poor pigeone. (*Apart to Lord O.*)

Lord O. I'll knock you down, Cant. (*Smiles.*)

Can. Den I go. (*Shuffles along.*) You are mosh please, for all dat. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Fan. I shall sink with apprehension. (*Aside.*)

Lord O. What a sweet girl!—she's a civilized being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of the family. (*Aside.*)

Fan. My lord, I— (*Curtseys and blushes.*)

Lord O. I look upon it, madam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my life, that I have, at this moment, the honour of receiving your commands, and the satisfaction of confirming with my tongue, what my eyes, perhaps, have but too weakly expressed—that I am literally the humblest of your servants.

Fan. I think myself greatly honoured by your lordship's partiality to me; but it distresses me that I am obliged, in my present situation, to apply to it for protection.

Lord O. I am happy in your distress, madam, because it gives me an opportunity to shew my zeal. Beauty, to me, is a religion, in which I was born and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr. I'm in tolerable spirits, faith! (*Aside.*)

Fan. There is not, perhaps, at this moment, a more distressed creature than myself. Affection, duty, hope, despair, and a thousand different sentiments, are struggling in my bosom; and even the presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for protection, adds to my perplexity.

Lord O. Does it, madam? Venus forbid!—My old fault; the devil's in me, I think, for perplexing young women. (*Aside, and smiling.*) Take courage, madam! dear Miss Fanny, explain. You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you. My heart, madam—I am attached to you by all the laws of sympathy and delicacy—by my honour, I am.

Fan. Then I will venture to unburthen my mind —Sir John Melvil, my lord, by the most misplaced and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

Lord O. How, madam? Has Sir John made his addresses to you?

Fan. He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say that my duty to my father, love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great respect I entertain for your lordship,—(*Curtseys.*)—made me shudder at his addresses. [Fanny, proceed.

Lord O. Charming girl! Proceed, my dear Miss

Fan. In a moment—give me leave, my lord:— But if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure—

Lord O. Impossible! by all the tender powers! Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

Fan. Then, my lord, Sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time—as —as—(*hesitates.*)

Lord O. As what, madam?

Fan. As—pardon my confusion—I am entirely devoted to another.

Lord O. If this is not plain, the devil's in it!—(*aside.*) But tell me, my dear Miss Fanny, for I must know; tell me the how, the when, and the where. Tell me—

Re-enter CANTON, *hastily.*

Can. Mi lor, mi lor, mi lor!

Lord O. D—n your Swiss impertinence! how durst you interrupt me in the most critical, melting moment that ever love and beauty honoured me with?

Can. I demand pardonne, mi lor; Sir John Melvil, mi lor, sent me to beg you do him de honneur to speak a little to you, mi lor.

Lord O. I'm not at leisure; I am busy. Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swiss rascal, or I'll—

Can. Fort bien, mi lor. (*Goes out on tiptoe.*)

Lord O. By the laws of gallantry, madam, this interruption should be death; but as no punishment ought to disturb the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty.

Fan. The entrance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it; and yet I must open my heart with a discovery, or it will break with its burthen. (*Aside.*)

Lord O. What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation: (*Aside.*) I presume, madam, (and as you have flattered me, by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption) that—

Fan. Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord, and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend—

Lord O. Upon me, madam?

Fan. Upon you, my lord. (*Sighs.*)

Lord O. There's no standing this: I have caught the infection; her tenderness dissolves me. (*Sighs.*)

Fan. And should you too severely judge of a rash action which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed—

Lord O. (*Takes her hand.*) Thou amiable creature! command my heart, for it is vanquished. Speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them.

Fan. I cannot, my lord; indeed, I cannot. Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses; and when you know them, pity and protect me. [*Exit in tears.*

Lord O. How the devil could I bring her to this? It is too much—too much; I can't bear it: I must give way to this amiable weakness. (*Wipes his eyes.*) My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired. (*Stifles a tear.*) Can I be a man and withstand it? No; I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her. But here comes the father, quite apropos. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby-house to-morrow morning. But what the devil! Miss Sterling too!—What mischief's in the wind now? no conquest there: no, no, that would be too much desolation in the family.

Enter Sterling *and* Miss Sterling.

Ster. My lord, your servant: I am attending my daughter here upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsy.

Lord O. Your eyes, Miss Sterling, for I always read the eyes of a young lady, betray some little emotion. What are your commands, madam?

Miss S. I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord.

Lord O. I cannot commend my kinsman's behaviour, madam. He has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostacy.—Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

Miss S. Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of Sir John's inconstancy.

Lord O. Nay now, my dear Miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for Miss Fanny; but believe me, my dear Miss Sterling, believe me, Miss Fanny has no passion for Sir John. She has a passion, indeed, a most tender passion. She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed. (*Conceitedly.*)

Miss S. Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord.

Lord O. Lovewell! no, poor lad! she does not think of him. (*Smiles.*) I know better: however, a little time will solve all mysteries.

Miss S. Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of Sir John's artifice, and my sister's dissimulation. You don't know her; indeed, my lord, you don't know her; a base, insinuating, perfidious—It is too much! She has been before-hand with me, I perceive, endeavouring to prejudice your lordship in her favour; and I am to be laughed at by everybody. Such unnatural behaviour to me! But since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved that, some way or other, I will have revenge. [*Exit.*

Ster. This is foolish work, my lord.

Lord O. I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty. [moving for a father.

Ster. It is touching indeed, my lord; and very

Lord O. To be sure, sir: you, with your exquisite feelings, must he distressed beyond measure. Wherefore, to divert your too exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject, and proceed to

Ster. With all my heart, my lord. [business.

Lord O. You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families by the proposed marriage.

Ster. And I am very sorry to see it, my lord.

Lord O. Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. 'Tis my only wish, at present, my omnium, as I may call it.

Lord O. Your wishes shall be fulfilled.

Ster. Shall they, my lord? but how—how?

Lord O. I'll marry in your family.

Ster. What! my sister Heidelberg?

Lord O. You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No; not your sister, but your daughter.

Ster. My daughter!

Lord O. Fanny: now the murder's out.

Ster. What! you, my lord?

Lord O. Yes; I, I, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. No, no, my lord; that's too much. (*Smiles.*)

Lord O. Too much! I don't comprehend you.

Ster. What you, my lord, marry my Fanny! Bless me! what will the folks say?

Lord O. Why, what will they say?

Ster. That you are a bold man, my lord; that's all.

Lord O. Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit, for aught I know. Do you court my alliance?

Ster. To be sure, my lord.

Lord O. Then I'll explain. My nephew won't marry your eldest daughter, nor I neither. Your youngest daughter won't marry him: I will marry your youngest daughter. [tune, my lord?

Ster. What! with a youngest daughter's for-

Lord O. With any fortune, or no fortune at all sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the demon, interest, sinks before him. So, sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter; your youngest daughter will marry me.

Ster. Who told you so, my lord?

Lord O. Her own sweet self, sir.

Ster. Indeed!

Lord O. Yes, sir; our affection is mutual—your advantage double and treble: your daughter will be a countess directly, I shall be the happiest of beings, and you'll be father to an earl instead of a baronet. [daughter?

Ster. But what will my sister say? and my

Lord O. I'll manage that matter; nay, if they won't consent, I'll run away with your daughter in spite of you.

Ster. Well said, my lord! your spirit's good; I wish you had my constitution; but if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

Lord O. I'll answer for your sister, sir. Apropos—the lawyers are in the house: I'll have articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

Ster. Very well; and I'll dispatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want: you must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match.—He, he, he! what will the folks say? [*Exit.*

Lord O. What a fellow am I going to make a father of! He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse. But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family. *Re-enter* Lovewell, *hastily.*

Love. I beg your lordship's pardon; are you alone, my lord?

Lord O. No, my lord, I am not alone; I am in company—the best company.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I never was in such exquisite, enchanting company, since my heart first conceived, or my senses tasted pleasure.

Love. What are they, my lord! (*Looks about.*)

Lord O. 'In my mind's eye, Horatio.'

Love. What company have you there, my lord?

Lord O. My own ideas, sir, which so crowd upon my imagination, and kindle in it such a delirium of ecstacy, that wit, wine, music, poetry, all combined, and each in perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity. [joice at it.

Love. I see that your lordship is happy, and I re-

Lord O. You shall rejoice at it, sir: my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

Love. Shall I, my lord? then I understand you; —you have heard;—Miss Fanny has informed you—

Lord O. She has; I have heard, and she shall be happy: 'tis determined.

Love. Then I have reached the summit of my wishes. And will your lordship pardon the folly?

Lord O. O yes: poor creature, how could she help it? 'Twas unavoidable—fate and necessity.

Love. It was indeed, my lord. Your kindness distracts me.

Lord O. And so it did the poor girl, faith!

Love. She trembled to disclose the secret, and declare her affections? [affections ill placed.

Lord O. The world, I believe, will not think her

Love. (*Bows.*) You are too good, my lord.—And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

Lord O. From my very soul, Lovewell.

Love. (*Bows.*) I was afraid of her meeting with a

Lord O. More fool you then— [cold reception.

Who pleads her cause with never failing beauty,
Here finds a full redress. (*Strikes his breast.*)

She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

Love. Her beauty, my lord, is the least merit. She has an understanding—

Lord O. Her choice convinces me of that.

Love. (*Bows.*) That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

Lord O. No, no, not altogether; it began with interest, and ended in passion.

Love. Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart, and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person—

Lord O. I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and so totally of your mind, touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that, were it not for the cold, unfeeling impediments of the law, I would marry her to-morrow morning.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I would, by all that's honourable in man, and amiable in woman!

Love. Marry her! Who do you mean, my lord?

Lord O. Miss Fanny Sterling, that is; the Countess of Ogleby, that shall be.

Love. I am astonished!

Lord O. Why, could you expect less from me?

Love. I did not expect this, my lord. [feeling.

Lord O. Trade and accounts have destroyed your

Love. No, indeed, my lord, (*Sighs.*)

Lord O. The moment that love and pity entered my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony, and shorten the girl's tortures. I never do any thing by halves, do I, Lovewell?

Love. No indeed, my lord. (*Sighs.*) What an accident! (*Aside.*)

Lord O. What's the matter, Lovewell? thou seem'st to have lost thy faculties. Why don't you wish me joy, man?

Love. O, I do, my lord. (*Sighs.*)

Lord O. She said that you would explain what she had not power to utter; but I wanted no interpreter for the language of love.

Love. But has your lordship considered the consequences of your resolution?

Lord O. No, sir, I am above consideration, when my desires are kindled.

Love. But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew, Sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr. Lovewell.

Love. Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to Sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter. [my lord?

Love. But what will become of Miss Sterling,

Lord O. What's that to you? You may have her, if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city philosophy to be reconciled to Lord Ogleby's being his son-in-law, instead of Sir John Melvil, baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought to that, without having recourse to his calculations, eh, Lovewell?

Love. But my lord, that is not the question.

Lord O. Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer. I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

Enter Sir John Melvil.

What news with you, Sir John? You look all hurry and impatience, like a messenger after a battle.

Sir J. After a battle indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement; and, wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered up resolution to declare, what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

Lord O. To the business then, and be as concise as possible, for I am upon the wing; eh, Lovewell? (*Smiles, and Lovewell bows.*)

Sir J. I find 'tis in vain, my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

Lord O. Very true, nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion—sha'n't I, Lovewell? (*Smiles, and Lovewell bows.*)

Sir J. Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you that I cannot marry Miss Sterling.

Lord O. I am not at all surprised at it; she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but, as you were to swallow it and not I, it was your business, not mine.—Anything more?

Sir J. But this, my lord; that I may be permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

Lord O. O yes, by all means; have you any hopes there, nephew? Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell? (*Smiles, and winks at Lovewell.*)

Love. I think not, my lord. (*Gravely.*)

Lord O. I think so too; but let the fool try.

Sir J. Will your lordship favour me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match, the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

Lord O. Mrs. Heidelberg? Had not you better begin with the young lady first? It will save you a great deal of trouble, won't it, Lovewell? (*Smiles.*) But do what you please, it will be the same thing to me—won't it, Lovewell? (*Conceitedly.*) Why don't you laugh at him?

Love. I do, my lord. (*Forces a smile.*)

Sir J. And your lordship will endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with Miss Fanny?

Lord O. I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg about the adorable Fanny as soon as possible.

Sir J. Your generosity transports me.

Lord O. Poor fellow, what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town! (*Aside.*)

Sir J. And your lordship is not in the least offended at this seeming inconstancy?

Lord O. Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity. I look upon women as the *feræ naturæ*, lawful game, and every man who is qualified, has a natural right to pursue them —Lovewell as well as you, and you as well as he, and I as well as either of you. Every man shall do his best, without offence to any—what say you, kinsmen?

Sir J. You have made me happy, my lord.

Love. And me, I assure you, my lord.

Lord O. And I am superlatively so—*allons donc!* To horse and away, boys!—you to your affairs, and I to mine—*suivons l'amour.* (*Sings.*) [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*Fanny's Apartment.*

Enter LOVEWELL *and* FANNY, *followed by* BETTY.

Fan. Why did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed, and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber-door.

Bet. My mistress is right, sir; evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure you are both too good, not to expect mischief from them.

Love. But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

Bet. I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, sir, to expect the worst.

Fan. I do expect the worst. Pr'ythee, Betty, return to the outward door, and listen if you hear anybody in the gallery, and let us know directly.

Bet. I warrant you, madam; the lord bless you both. [*Exit.*

Fan. What did my father want with you this evening?

Love. He gave me the key of his closet, with orders to bring from London some papers relating to Lord Ogleby.

Fan. And why did you not obey him?

Love. Because I am certain that his lordship has opened his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account. But, as we shall discover all to-morrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.

Fan. Hark!—hark! bless me, how I tremble! I feel the terrors of guilt. Indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me; this situation may have very unhappy consequences. (*Weeps.*)

Love. But it sha'n't. I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risk of maintaining you by the hardest labour, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity. What! shall I sacrifice all my best hopes and affections, in your dear health and safety, for the mean (and in such case the meanest) consideration, of our fortune? Were we to be abandoned by all our relations, we have that in our hearts and minds will weigh against the most affluent circumstances. I should not have proposed the secresy of our marriage, but for your sake; and with hopes that the most generous sacrifice, you have made to love and me, might be less injurious to you, by waiting a lucky moment of reconciliation.

Fan. Hush, hush! for heaven's sake, my dear Lovewell, don't be so warm! your generosity gets the better of your prudence: you will be heard, and we shall be discovered. I am satisfied, indeed I am. Excuse this weakness, this delicacy, this what you will. My mind's at peace, indeed it is; think no more of it, if you love me.

Love. That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience: it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you a moment. (*Kisses her.*)

Re-enter BETTY.

Bet. (*In a low voice.*) I'm sorry to disturb you.

Fan. Ha! what's the matter?

Love. Have you heard anybody?

Bet. Yes, yes, I have; and they have heard you too, or I'm mistaken; if they had seen you too, we should have been in a fine quandary.

Fan. Pr'ythee don't prate now, Betty.

Love. What did you hear?

Bet. I was preparing myself, as usual, to take

Love. A nap! [me a little nap—

Bet. Yes, sir, a nap; for I watch much better so than wide awake; and when I had wrapped this handkerchief round my head, for fear of the earache from the key-hole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so

Fan. Well, well; and so— [with my hand.

Bet. And so, madam, when I heard Mr. Lovewell a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder too; and, pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise.—(*Makes an indistinct noise, like speaking.*)

Fan. Well, and what did they say? [was said.

Bet. Oh! I could not understand a word of what

Love. The outward door is locked?

Bet. Yes; and I bolted it too, for fear of the worst. [if they were near.

Fan. Why did you? they must have heard you,

Bet. And I did it on purpose, madam, and coughed a little too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice: when I was silent, they were silent, and so I came to tell you.

Fan. What shall we do?

Love. Fear nothing; we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon.—But Betty might fancy this noise; she's in the conspiracy, and can make a man a mouse at any time.

Bet. I can distinguish a man from a mouse as well as my betters: I am sorry you think so ill of me, sir.

Fan. He compliments you—don't be a fool.—Now you have set her tongue a-running, she'll mutter for an hour. (*To Lovewell.*) I'll go and hearken myself. [*Exit.*

Bet. I'll turn my back upon no girl for sincerity and service. (*Half aside, muttering.*)

Love. Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, for one and the other.

Bet. I am not mercenary neither: I can live on a little, with a good carreter.

Re-enter FANNY.

Fan. All seems quiet. Suppose, my dear, you go to your own room; I shall be much easier then, and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

Bet. You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret. (*Half aside.*)

Love. Should I leave you now, if they still are on the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult upon to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the outward door after her; we can fasten this; and, when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

Bet. Shall I, madam?

Fan. Do let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after.

Love. I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be gone this moment. (*Going.*) [her—

Fan. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of

Bet. They'll have the wrong sow by the ear, I can tell them that. (*Going hastily.*)

Fan. Softly, softly, Betty; don't venture out, if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you. See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

Love. But love, Fanny, makes amends for all.

[*Exeunt, softly.*

SCENE II.—*A gallery, which leads to several bed-chambers. The stage dark.*

Enter MISS STERLING, *leading* MRS. HEIDELBERG, *in a night-cap.*

Miss S. This way, dear madam, and then I'll tell you all.

Mrs. H. Nay but, niece, consider a little—don't drag me out this figure; let me put on my fly-cap. If any of my lord's fammaly, or the counsellors at law should be stirring, I should be prodigus disconcerted.

Miss S. But, my dear madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber!—O! she's all craft and wickedness.

Mrs. H. Well, but softly, Betsy; you are all in emotion; your mind is too much flustrated; you can neither eat, nor drink, nor take your nataral rest. Compose yourself, child; for, if we are not as warisome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole fammaly.

Miss S. We are disgraced already, madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself; or if any body, it is my sister: my father, for the sake of a better bargain, would marry me to a 'Change broker: so that if you, madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me

—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy—the fruits of her treachery—trample with scorn upon the rights of her elder sister—the will of the best of aunts—and the weakness of a too interested father. (*She pretends to be bursting into tears during this speech.*)

Mrs. H. Don't, Betsy—keep up your spurit: I hate whimpering—I am your friend; depend upon me in every partiklar. But be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discovered.

Miss S. I had no desire to sleep, and would not undress myself, knowing that my Machiavel sister would not rest till she had broke my heart: I was so uneasy that I could not stay in my room, but when I thought that all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward; she immediately came back and told me, that they were in high consultation; that she heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conducting Sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

Mrs. H. And how did you conduct yourself in this dilemma?

Miss S. I returned with her, and could hear a man's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly; and you may depend upon it, that Sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before the morning, if we don't prevent them.

Mrs. H. Why, the brazen slut! she has got her sister's husband, (that is to be,) lock'd up in her chamber! at night too! I tremble at the thoughts!

Miss S. Hush, madam! I hear something.

Mrs. H. You frighten me:—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this figur for the world.

Miss S. 'Tis dark, madam; you can't be seen.

Mrs. H. I protest, there's a candle coming, and a man too!

Miss S. Nothing but servants; let us retire a moment. (*They retire.*)

Enter Brush, *half drunk, laying hold of the Chambermaid, who has a candle in her hand.*

Cham. Be quiet, Mr. Brush; I shall drop down with terror.

Brush. But my sweet, and most amiable chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason; that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

Cham. But you may do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm too; pray let me go; I am ruined if they hear you! I tremble like an asp.

Brush. But they sha'n't hear us; and if you have a mind to be ruined, it shall be the making of your fortune, you little slut, you! therefore, I say it again, if you have no love, hear a little reason!

Cham. I wonder at your impurence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town-rake, I see, and now you are a little in liquor, you fear nothing.

Brush. Nothing, by heavens! but your frowns, most amiable chambermaid; I am a little electrified, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink port, and your master's is so heady, that a pint of it oversets a claret-drinker. Come, now, my dear little spider-brusher!

Cham. Don't be rude! bless me!—I shall be ruined—what will become of me? [able!

Brush. I'll take care of you, by all that's honour-

Cham. You are a base man to use me so—I'll cry out if you don't let me go. That is Miss Sterling's chamber, that Miss Fanny's, and that Madam Heidelberg's.

Brush. We know all that. And that Lord Ogleby's and that my Lady What-d'ye-call-em's: I don't mind such folks when I'm sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that, too.

Cham. More shame for you, Mr. Brush! you terrify me; you have no modesty.

Brush. O, but I have, my sweet spider-brusher: for instance, I reverence Miss Fanny; she's a most delicious morsel, and fit for a prince. With all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself:—but for her sister— [story!

Miss S. (*Within.*) There, there, madam, all in a

Cham. Bless me, Mr. Brush!—I heard something.

Brush. Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon; if it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two d—'d things at once.

Cham. La! la! how you blaspheme! we shall have the house upon our heads for it.

Brush. No, no, it will last our time;—but as I was saying, the eldest sister, Miss Jezebel—

Cham. Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

Brush. No; we have smoked her already; and, unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us.—No, no, she won't do—we are a little too nice.

Cham. You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

Brush. Why, for that matter, my dear, I am a little inclined to mischief; and if you don't have pity upon me, I will break open that door, and ravish Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. H. (*Coming forward.*) There's no bearing this—you profligate monster!

Cham. Ha! I am undone!

Brush. Zounds! here she is, by all that's monstrous. (*Runs off.*) [fellow.

Miss S. A fine discourse you have had with that

Mrs. H. And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster!

Miss S. What have you to say for yourself?

Cham. I can say nothing—I'm so frightened, and so ashamed.—But, indeed, I am vartuous—I am vartuous, indeed.

Mrs. H. Well, well—don't tremble so; but tell us what you know of this horrable plot here.

Miss S. We'll forgive you if you'll discover all.

Cham. Why, Madam, don't let me betray my fellow-servants; I sha'n't sleep in my bed, if I do.

Mrs. H. Then you shall sleep somewhere else to-morrow night.

Cham. O dear! what shall I do?

Mrs. H. Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

Cham. Why, our butler has been treating us below in his pantry; Mr. Brush forced us to make a kind of holiday night of it.

Miss S. Holiday! for what?

Cham. Nay, I only made one.

Miss S. Well, well! but upon what account?

Cham. Because as how, madam, there was a change in the family, they said—that his honour, Sir John, was to marry Miss Fanny instead of your ladyship. [Very fine!

Miss S. And so you make a holiday for that.—

Cham. I did not make it, ma'am.

Mrs. H. But do you know nothing of Sir John's being to run away with Miss Fanny to-night?

Cham. No, indeed, ma'am.

Miss S. Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

Cham. No, as I hope for marcy, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, I'll put an end to all this directly; do you run to my brother Sterling—

Cham. Now, ma'am? 'Tis so very late, ma'am—

Mrs. H. I don't care how late it is. Tell him there are thieves in the house—that the house is on fire—tell him to come here immediately. Go, I say.

Cham. I will, I will, though I'm frighten'd out of my wits. [*Exit.*

Mrs. H. Do you watch here, my dear; and I'll put myself in order to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counterplot 'em too. [*Exit.*

Miss S. I have as much pleasure in this revenge, as in being made a countess. Ha! they are unlocking the door. Now for it! (*Retires.*)

Fanny's door is unlocked, and BETTY *comes out, Miss Sterling approaches.*

Bet. (*Calling within.*) Sir! sir! now's your time—all's clear. (*Seeing Miss Sterling.*) —Stay, stay—not yet—we are watch'd.

Miss S. And so you are, Madam Betty. (*Miss Sterling lays hold of her, while Betty locks the door, and puts the key into her pocket.*)

Bet. (*Turning round.*) What's the matter, madam?

Miss S. Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, madam.

Bet. I am no tell-tale, madam, and no thief; they'll get nothing from me. (*Aside.*)

Miss S. You have a great deal of courage, Betty, and, considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

Bet. My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, ma'am.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. What's all this? What's the matter? Why am I disturb'd in this manner?

Miss S. This creature, and my distresses, sir, will explain this matter.

Re-enter MRS. HEIDELBERG, *with another head-dress.*

Mrs. H. Now I'm prepared for the rancounter.—Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness?

Ster. Not I—but what is it? speak. I was got into my little closet, all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my senses in the confusion of Lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak; and whether it's fire, or thieves, or murder, or a rape, I'm quite in the dark.

Mrs. H. No, no; there's no rape, brother. All parties are willing, I believe.

Miss S. Who's in that chamber? (*Detaining Betty, who seemed to be stealing away.*)

Bet. My mistress.

Miss S. And who's with your mistress?

Bet. Why, who should there be?

Miss S. Open the door, then, and let us see.

Bet. The door is open, madam. (*Miss Ster. goes to the door.*) I'll sooner die than peach. [*Exit hastily.*

Miss S. The door is locked; and she has got the key in her pocket.

Mrs. H. There's impudence, brother! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school!

Ster. But, zounds! what is all this about? You tell me of a sum total, and you don't produce the particulars.

Mrs. H. Sir John Melvil is locked up in your daughter's bed-chamber—There is the particular.

Ster. The devil he is!—That's bad.

Miss S. And he has been there some time, too.

Ster. Ditto!

Mrs. H. Ditto! worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the whole house, and expose him to my lord, and the whole fammaly.

Ster. By no means! we shall expose ourselves, sister. The best way is to insure privately:—let me alone! I'll make him marry her to-morrow morning.

Miss S. Make him marry her! this is beyond all patience!—You have thrown away all your affection, and I shall do as much by my obedience; unnatural fathers make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it. Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world: but the deriders shall be derided; and so—Help, help, there! —Thieves! thieves! [girl.

Mrs. H. Tit-for-tat, Betsy! you are right, my

Ster. Zounds! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family—the devil's in the girl.

Mrs. H. No, no; the devil's in you, brother: I am ashamed of your principles. What! would you connive at your daughter's being locked up with her sister's husband? Help! Thieves! thieves! Isay.

Ster. Sister, I beg of you! daughter, I command you!—If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves! We shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood, and getting above twenty per cent. for our money.

Miss S. What, by my disgrace and my sister's triumph? I have a spirit above such mean considerations: and to shew you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar, 'Change-alley spirit.—Help! help! Thieves! thieves! thieves! I say.

Ster. Ay, ay, you may save your lungs; the house is in an uproar.

Enter CANTON, *in a night-gown and slippers.*

Can. Eh, diable! vat is de raison of dis great noise, dis tintamarre?

Ster. Ask those ladies, sir; 'tis of their making.

Lord O. (*Calls within.*) Brush!—Brush!—Canton!—Where are you?—What's the matter?—(*Rings a bell.*) Where are you?

Ster. 'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

Can. I com, mi lor! (*Lord O. still rings.*) [*Exit.*

Flow. (*Calls within.*) A light! a light here!—Where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

Ster. Lights here! lights for the gentlemen! [*Exit.*

Mrs. H. My brother feels, I see:—your sister's turn will come next.

Miss S. Ay, ay, let it go round, madam, it is the only comfort I have left.

Re-enter STERLING *with lights, before* SERGEANT FLOWER, *with a boot and a slipper, and* TRAVERSE.

Ster. This way, sir; this way, gentlemen.

Flow. Well, but Mr. Sterling, no danger, I hope? Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarmed about thieves at circuit time. They would be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

Trav. No danger, Mr. Sterling;—no trespass, I hope? [making.

Ster. None, gentlemen, but of those ladies'

Mrs. H. You'll be ashamed to know, gentlemen, that all your labours and studies about this young lady, are thrown away—Sir John Melvil is at this moment locked up with this lady's younger sister.

Flow. The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure; but, why were we to be frightened out of our beds for this? Could not we have tried this cause to-morrow morning?

Miss S. But, sir, by to-morrow morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service:—the birds now in that cage would have flown away.

Enter LORD OGLEBY, *in his robe-de-chambre, night-cap, &c. leaning on* CANTON.

Lord O. I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest. What's the matter with you all?

Ster. Ay, ay, 'tis all over!—Here's my lord, too.

Lord O. What's all this shrieking and screaming? Where's my angelic Fanny? She's safe, I hope.

Mrs. H. Your angelic Fanny, my lord, is locked up with your angelic nephew in that chamber.

Lord O. My nephew! Then I will be excommunicated.

Mrs. H. Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with Miss Fanny, and Miss Fanny has been plotting to run away with your nephew: and if we had not watched them, and called up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

Lord O. Look ye, ladies! I know that Sir John has conceived a violent passion for Miss Fanny; and I know too, that Miss Fanny has conceived a violent passion for another person; and I am so well convinced of the rectitude of her affections, that I will support them with my fortune, my honour, and my life.—Eh, sha'n't I, Mr. Sterling? (*Smiling.*) What say you?

Ster. (*Sulkily.*) To be sure, my lord. These bawling women have been the ruin of everything. (*Aside.*)

Lord O. But, come, I'll end this business in a

trice.—If you, ladies, will compose yourselves, and Mr. Sterling will ensure Miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow with a whisper through the key-hole.

Mrs. H. The horrid creatures!—I say, my lord, break the door open.

Lord O. Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate! Now to our experiment! (*Advancing towards the door.*)

Miss S. Now, what will they do? My heart will beat through my bosom.

Re-enter Betty *with the key.*

Bet. There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be ashamed of, and my mistress shall face her enemies. (*Going to unlock the door.*)

Mrs. H. There's impudence!

Lord O. The mystery thickens. Lady of the bedchamber, (*To Betty.*) open the door, and entreat Sir John Melvil (for the ladies will have it that he is there) to appear, and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors. Call Sir John Melvil into court!

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Sir J. I am here, my lord.

Mrs. H. Hey-day!

Sir J. What's all this alarm and confusion? There is nothing but hurry in this house? What is the reason of it?

Lord O. Because you have been in that chamber; —have been! nay, you are there at this moment, as these ladies have protested, so don't deny it—

Trav. This is the clearest alibi I ever knew,

Flow. Luce clarius. [Mr. Sergeant.

Lord O. Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolics, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But, come, (*To Betty.*) open the door and entreat your amiable mistress to come forth, and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

Bet. (*Opening the door.*) Madam, you are wanted in this room. (*Pertly.*)

Enter Fanny, *in great confusion.*

Miss S. You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in. [Her guilt confounds her!

Mrs. H. Ready to pack off, bag and baggage!

Flow. Silence in the court, ladies.

Fan. I am confounded, indeed, madam.

Lord O. Don't droop, my beauteous lily! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind. Pour conviction into their ears, and rapture into mine. (*Smiling.*)

Fan. I am, at this moment, the most unhappy—most distressed—the tumult is too much for my heart—and I want the power to reveal a secret, which, to conceal, has been the misfortune and misery of my— (*Faints away.*)

Lovewell *rushes out of the chamber.*

Love. My Fanny in danger! I can contain no longer. Prudence were now a crime; all other cares were lost in this. Speak, speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny! let me but hear thy voice: open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life.

Miss S. Lovewell!—I am easy.

Mrs. H. I am thunderstruck!

Lord O. I am petrified!

Sir J. And I undone.

Fan. (*Recovering.*) O, Lovewell! even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face. [sir?

Ster. What now? Did not I send you to London,

Lord O. Eh! What? How's this? By what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bedchamber?

Love. By that right which makes me the happiest of men; and by a title which I would not forego for any the best of kings could give.

Bet. I could cry my eyes out to hear his mag-

Lord O. I am annihilated! [nanimity.

Ster. I have been choked with rage and wonder; but now I can speak.—Lovewell, you are a villain; —you have broken your word with me.

Fan. Indeed, sir, he has not: you forbade him to think of me, when it was out of his power to obey you—we have been married these four months.

Ster. And he sha'n't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery! As for you, you shall repent this step as long as you live, madam!

Fan. Indeed, sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable for ever without your forgiveness.

Ster. Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly; and you shall follow him, madam!

Lord O. And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Lookye, Mr. Sterling, there have been some mistakes, which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget them, is to forgive the cause of them, which I do from my soul. Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune; it is a debt of honour, and must be paid. You swore as much too, Mr. Sterling; but your laws in the city will excuse you, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without —errors excepted.

Ster. I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of other fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls, like herself, to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

Love. I hope there will be no danger of that, sir. Young ladies, with minds like my Fanny's, would startle at the very shadow of vice; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

Mrs. H. Indiscretion, quotha! a mighty pretty delicat word to express disobedience!

Lord O. For my part, I indulge my own passions too much to tyrannize over those of other people. Poor souls! I pity them. And you must forgive them, too. Come, come, melt a little of your flint, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. Why, why as to that, my lord—to be sure, he is a relation of your's, my lord—What say you, sister Heidelberg?

Mrs. H. The girl's ruined, and I forgive her.

Ster. Well! so do I then. Nay, no thanks. (*To Love. and Fan. who seem preparing to speak.*) There's an end of the matter. [*Exit Flow. Trav. and Betty.*

Lord O. But, Lovewell, what makes you dumb all this while?

Love. Your kindness, my lord. I can scarcely believe my own senses—they are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation, and gratitude. I ever was, and am now more bound in duty to your lordship.—For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will, in some measure, compensate the want of fortune, you, perhaps, will not repent your goodness to me. And you, ladies, I flatter myself, will not, for the future, suspect me of artifice and intrigue—I shall be happy to oblige and serve you. As for you, Sir John—

Sir J. No apologies to me, Lovewell; I do not deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened, is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, yourself, and that lady, (who I hope will pardon my behaviour) a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you, that light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honour enough to rejoice at your happiness.

Love. And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are, seemingly, the happiest of beings, yet all our joys would be damped, if his lordship's generosity and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness should not be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation, and consent of these our best benefactors. (*To the audience.*)

THE CONFEDERACY;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY SIR JOHN VANBRUGH.



Act V.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

MONEYTRAP	JESSAMINE	CORINNA
GRIPE	CLIP	FLIPPANTA
DICK	CLARISSA	MRS. AMLET
BRASS	ARAMINTA	MRS CLOGGIT

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter MRS. AMLET *and* MRS. CLOGGIT.

Mrs. A. Good morrow, neighbour! good morrow, neighbour Cloggit! How does all at your house this morning?

Mrs. C. Thank you kindly, Mrs. Amlet; thank you kindly; how do you do, I pray?

Mrs. A. At the old rate, neighbour, poor and honest; these are hard times, good lack!

Mrs. C. If they are hard with you, what are they with us? You have a good trade going; all the great folks in town help you off with your merchandise.

Mrs. A. Yes, they do help us off with them, indeed! they buy all.

Mrs. C. And pay—

Mrs. A. For some.

Mrs. C. Well, 'tis a thousand pities, Mrs. Amlet, they are not as ready at one as they are at t'other; for, not to wrong them, they give very good rates.

Mrs. A. Oh! for that, let's do them justice, neighbour; they never make two words upon the price, all they haggle about is the day of payment.

Mrs. C. There's all the dispute, as you say.

Mrs. A. But that's a wicked one: for my part, neighbour, I'm just tired off my legs with trotting after them; besides it eats out all our profit. Would you believe it, Mrs. Cloggit, I have worn out four pair of pattens, with following my old Lady Youthful, for one set of false teeth, and but three pots of paint?

Mrs. C. Look you there, now!

Mrs. A. If they would but once let me get enough by them to keep a coach to carry me a dunning after them, there would be some conscience in it.

Mrs. C. Ay, that were something. But now you talk of conscience, Mrs. Amlet, how do you speed amongst your city customers?

Mrs. A. City customers! Now, by my truth, neighbour, between the city and the court, with reverence be it spoken, there's not a pin to choose. My ladies in the city, in times past, were as full of gold as they were of religion, and as punctual in their payments as they were in their prayers; but since they have set their minds upon quality, adieu one, adieu t'other! their money and their consciences are gone, heaven knows where!

Mrs. C. But what the murrain have they to do with quality? Why don't their husbands make them mind their shops?

Mrs. A. Their husbands! their husbands, say'st thou, woman? Alack, alack! they mind their husbands, neighbour, no more than they do a sermon.

Mrs. C. Good lack-a-day! that women born of sober parents, should be prone to follow ill examples! But now we talk of equity, when did you hear of your son Richard, Mrs. Amlet? My daughter Flipp says she met him t'other day, in an officer's dress, with three fine ladies, his footman at his heels, and as gay as a bridegroom.

Mrs. A. Is it possible? Ah! the rogue! Well, neighbour, all's well that's end well! But Dick will be hanged.

Mrs. C. That were pity.

Mrs. A. Pity, indeed! for he's a hopeful young

man to look on; but he leads a life—Well; where he has it, heaven knows! but they say, he pays his club with the best of them. I have seen him but once these three months, neighbour, and then the varlet wanted money; but I bid him march, and march he did to some purpose; for, in less than an hour, back comes my gentleman into the house, walks to and fro in the room, with his hat on one side, whistling a minuet, and tossing a purse of gold from one hand to t'other, with no more respect, heaven bless us! than if it had been an orange. "Sirrah," says I, "where have you got that?" He answers me never a word, but sets his arms a-kimbo, cocks his saucy hat in my face, turns about his ungracious heel, and I've never set eyes on him since.

Mrs. C. Look you there, now! to see what the youth of this age are come to!

Mrs. A. See what they will come to, neighbour! Heaven shield, I say! but Dick's upon the gallop. Well, I must bid you good-morrow: I'm going where I doubt I shall meet but a sorry welcome.

Mrs. C. To get in some old debt, I warrant you?

Mrs. A. Neither better nor worse.

Mrs. C. From a lady of quality?

Mrs. A. No, she's but a scrivener's wife; but she lives as well, and pays as ill, as the stateliest countess of them all. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*The Street, with Moneytrap's house.*

Enter Brass.

Brass. Well, surely, through the world's wide extent, there never appeared so impudent a fellow as my school-fellow Dick! to pass himself upon the town for a gentleman, drop into all the best company with an easy air, as if his natural element were in the sphere of quality; when the rogue had a kettle-drum to his father, who was hanged for robbing a church, and has a pedler to his mother, who carries her shop under her arm. But here he comes.

Enter Dick.

Dick. Well, Brass, what news? Hast thou given my letter to Flippanta?

Brass. I am but just come; I haven't knocked at the door yet. But I have a pretty piece of news for you.

Dick. As how?

Brass. We must quit this country.

Dick. We'll be hanged first!

Brass. So you will, if you stay.

Dick. Why, what's the matter?

Brass. There's a storm coming.

Dick. From whence?

Brass. From the worst point in the compass, the law.

Dick. The law! Why, what have I to do with the law?

Brass. Nothing; and, therefore, it has something to do with you.

Dick. Explain.

Brass. You know you cheated a young fellow at piquet, t'other day, of the money he had to raise his company.

Dick. Well, what then?

Brass. Why, he's sorry he lost it.

Dick. Who doubts that?

Brass. Ay, but that is not all, he's such a fool to think of complaining on't.

Dick. Then I must be wise to stop his mouth.

Brass. How?

Dick. Give him a little back: if that won't do, strangle him.

Brass. You are very quick in your methods.

Dick. Men must be so, that will despatch business.

Brass. Hark you! Colonel, your father died in his bed? [fool.

Dick. He might have done if he had not been a

Brass. Why, he robbed a church.

Dick. Ay, but he forgot to make sure of the sexton.

Brass. Are not you a great rogue?

Dick. Or I should wear worse clothes.

Brass. Hark you! I would advise you to change your life.

Dick. And turn ballad-singer?

Brass. Not so, neither.

Dick. What, then?

Brass. Why, if you can get this young wench, reform, and live honest.

Dick. That's the way to be starved.

Brass. No; she has money enough to buy you a good place, and pay me into the bargain for helping her to so good a match. You have but this throw left to save you; for you are not ignorant, youngster, that your morals begin to be pretty well known about town: have a care your noble birth and your honourable relations are not discovered, too; there needs but that, to have you tossed in a blanket for the entertainment of the first company of ladies you intrude into; and then, like a dutiful son, you may dangle about with your mother, and sell paint; she's old and weak, and wants somebody to carry her goods after her. How like a dog will you look, your hair cropped up to your ears, and a band-box under your arm!

Dick. Why, faith! Brass! I think thou art in the right on't; I must fix my affairs quickly, or Madam Fortune will be playing some of her tricks with me; therefore, I'll tell thee what we'll do: we'll pursue this old rogue's daughter heartily; we'll cheat his family to some purpose, and they shall atone for the rest of mankind.

Brass. Have at her, then; I'll about your business presently.

Dick. Success attend thee! Adieu, my dear Brass! [*Exit.*

Brass. Adieu, my dear—d—d rogue! Well, I say nothing. But when I have got matters into a good posture, he shall sign and seal, or I'll have him tumbled out of the house like a cheese. Now for Flippanta. (*Knocks.*)

Enter Flippanta.

Flip. Who's that? Brass?

Brass. Flippanta!

Flip. What want you, rogue's face?

Brass. Is your mistress dressed?

Flip. What, already? Is the fellow drunk?

Brass. Why, with respect to her looking-glass, it is almost two.

Flip. What then, fool?

Brass. Why, then, it is time for the mistress of the house to come down, and look after her family.

Flip. Pr'ythee, don't be an owl. Those that go to bed at night may rise in the morning; we that go to bed in the morning, may rise in the afternoon.

Brass. When does she make her visits, then?

Flip. By candle-light; we women hate inquisitive sun-shine: but, do you know that my lady is going to turn good housewife?

Brass. What, is she going to die?

Flip. Die!

Brass. Why, that's the only way to save money for her family.

Flip. No; but she has thought of a project to save chair-hire.

Brass As how?

Flip. Why, all the company she used to keep abroad, she now intends shall meet at her own house. Your master has advised her to set up a faro bank.

Brass. Nay, if he advised her to it, it's right; but has she acquainted her husband with it yet?

Flip. What to do? When the company meet, he'll see them.

Brass. Nay, that's true, as you say, he'll know it soon enough.

Flip. Well, I must begone; have you any business with my lady?

Brass. Yes, as ambassador from Araminta, I have a letter for her.

Flip. Give it me.

Brass. Hold! and, as first minister-of-state to the Colonel, I have an affair to communicate to thee.

Flip What is it? quick!

Brass. Why, he's in love.

Flip. With what?

Brass. A woman—and her money together.

Flip. Who is she?

Brass. Corinna. He has ordered me to demand her of thee in marriage.

Flip. Of me?

Brass. Why, when a man of quality has a mind to a city fortune, wouldst have him apply to her father and mother?

Flip. No.

Brass. No, so I think: men of our end of the town are better bred than to use ceremony. Will you slip this letter into her prayer-book, my little queen? It's a very passionate one; it's sealed with a heart and a dagger; you may see by that what he intends to do with himself.

Flip. Are there any verses in it? If not, I won't touch it.

Brass. Not one word in prose; it's dated in rhyme.

Flip. (*Takes the letter.*) Well, but, have you brought nothing else?

Bruss. Gad forgive me! I'm the forgetfullest dog—I have a letter for you, too; here 'tis, in a purse, but it's in prose; you won't touch it.

Flip. Yes, hang it! it is not good to be too dainty.

Brass. How useful a virtue is humility! Well, child, we shall have an answer to-morrow, sha'n't we?

Flip. I can't promise you that; for our young gentlewoman is not so often in my way as she should be. Her father, who is a citizen from the foot to the forehead of him, seldom lets her converse with her mother-in-law and me, for fear she should learn the airs of a woman of quality. But I'll take the first occasion: hark! there's my lady, go in and deliver your letter to her.

[*Exeunt, with much ceremony.*

SCENE III.—*A Parlour.*

CLARISSA *discovered reclining on a sofa. Enter* FLIPPANTA *and* BRASS.

Clar. No messages this morning, from anybody, Flippanta? Lard! how dull that is! Oh! there's Brass! I did not see thee, Brass. What news dost thou bring?

Brass. Only a letter from Araminta, madam.

Clar. Give it to me: open it for me, Flippanta, I am so lazy to-day.

Brass. (*To Flip.*) Be sure you, now, deliver my master's as carefully as I do this.

Flip. Don't trouble thyself, I'm no novice.

Clar. (*To Brass.*) 'Tis well; there needs no answer, since she'll be here so soon.

Brass. Your ladyship has no farther commands, then?

Clar. Not at this time, honest Brass! Flippanta! [*Exit Brass.*

Flip. Madam!

Clar. My husband's in love.

Flip. In love?

Clar. With Araminta.

Flip. Impossible!

Clar. This letter from her is to give me an account of it.

Flip. Methinks, you are not very much alarmed.

Clar. No; thou know'st I am not much tortured with jealousy.

Flip. Nay, you are much in the right on't, madam; for jealousy's a city passion; 'tis a thing unknown amongst people of quality.

Clar. Fie! a woman must, indeed, be of a mechanic mould, who is either troubled or pleased with anything her husband can do to her. Pr'ythee, mention him no more: 'tis the dullest theme—

Flip. 'Tis splenetic, indeed. But when once you open your faro bank, I hope that will put him out of your head.

Clar. Alas! Flippanta, I begin to grow weary even of the thoughts of that, too.

Flip. How so?

Clar. Why, I have thought on't a day and a night already; and four-and-twenty hours, thou knowest, is enough to make one weary of anything.

Flip. Now, by my conscience! you have more woman in you than all your sex together: you never know what you would have.

Clar. Thou mistakest the thing quite. I always know what I want, but I am never pleased with what I have. The want of a thing is perplexing enough, but the possession of it is intolerable.

Flip. Well, I don't know what you are made of, but other women would think themselves blest in your case: handsome, witty, loved by everybody, and of so happy a composure to care a fig for nobody. You have no one passion, but that of your pleasures; and you have, in me, a servant devoted to all your desires, let them be as extravagant as they will: yet, all this is nothing; you can still be out of humour.

Clar. Alas! I have too much cause.

Flip. Why, what have you to complain of?

Clar. Alas! I have more subjects for spleen than one: is it not a most horrible thing that I should be but a scrivener's wife? Come, don't flatter me; don't you think nature designed me for something *plus-elevée?*

Flip. Nay, that's certain; but, on t'other side, methinks, you ought to be, in some measure, content, since you live like a woman of quality, though you are none.

Clar. Oh, fie! the very quintessence of it is [wanting.

Flip. What's that?

Clar. Why, I dare abuse nobody: I'm afraid to affront people, though I don't like their faces; or to ruin their reputations, though they pique me to it, by taking ever so much pains to preserve them: I dare not raise a lie of a man, though he neglects to make love to me; nor report a woman to be a fool, though she's handsomer than I am. In short, I dare not so much as bid my footman kick the people out of doors, though they come to ask me for what I owe them.

Flip. All this is very hard, indeed.

Clar. Ah! Flippanta, the perquisites of quality are of an unspeakable value.

Flip. They are of some use, I must confess; but we must not expect to have everything. You have wit and beauty, and a fool to your husband: come, come, madam, that's a good portion for one.

Clar. Alas! what signifies beauty and wit, when one dares neither jilt the men, nor abuse the women? I have been sometimes almost choked with scandal, and durst not cough it up for want of being a countess.

Flip. Poor lady!

Clar. Oh! liberty is a fine thing, Flippanta; it's a great help in conversation to have leave to say what one will. I have seen a woman of quality, who has not had one grain of wit, entertain a whole company the most agreeably in the world, only with her malice. But 'tis in vain to repine, I can't mend my condition till my husband dies; so I'll say no more on't, but think of making the most of the state I am in.

Flip. That's your best way, madam; and, in order to do it, pray, consider how you'll get some ready money to set your faro bank a-going: for that's necessary.

Clar. Thou say'st true: but what trick I shall play my husband to get some, I don't know; for my pretence of losing my diamond necklace has put the man into such a passion, I am afraid he won't hear reason.

Flip. No matter; he begins to think 'tis lost in earnest; so, I fancy, you may venture to sell it, and raise money that way.

Clar, That can't be, for he has left odious notes with all the goldsmiths in town.

Flip. Well, we must pawn it, then.

Clar. I am quite tired of dealing with those pawnbrokers.

Flip. I'm afraid you'll continue the trade a great while, for all that. (*Aside.*)

Enter JESSAMINE.

Jess. Madam, there's the woman below that sells paint and patches, false teeth, and all sorts of things for the ladies; I can't think of her name. [*Exit.*

Flip. 'Tis Mrs. Amlet; she wants money.

Clar. Well, I ha'n't enough for myself; it is an unreasonable thing she should think I have any for her.

Flip. She's a troublesome jade!

Clar. So are all people who come a dunning.

Flip. What will you do with her?

Clar. I have just now thought on't. She is very rich, that woman is, Flippanta; I'll borrow some money of her.

Flip. Borrow! sure, you jest, madam.

Clar. No, I am in earnest; I give thee commission to do it for me.

Flip. Me!

Clar. Why dost thou stare, and look so ungainly? Don't I speak to be understood?

Flip. Yes, I understand you well enough; but Mrs. Amlet—

Clar. But Mrs. Amlet must lend me some money; where shall I have any to pay her else?

Flip. That's true; I never thought of that, truly! But here she is.

Enter MRS. AMLET.

Clar. (*Retires to the sofa.*) How do you do? How do you do, Mrs. Amlet? I haven't seen you these thousand years; and yet, I believe, I am down in your books.

Mrs. A. Oh! madam, I don't come for that, alack!

Flip. Good-morrow, Mrs. Amlet!

Mrs. A. Good-morrow, Mrs. Flippanta!

Clar. How much am I indebted to you, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. Nay, if your ladyship desires to see your bill, I believe I may have it about me. There, madam, if it ben't too much fatigue to you to look it over.

Clar. Let me see it, for I hate to be in debt—where I am obliged to pay. (*Aside. Reads.*) "*Imprimis. For bolstering out the Countess of Crump's left hip*"—Oh, fie! this does not belong to me.

Mrs. A. I beg your ladyship's pardon. I mistook, indeed: 'tis a countess's bill I have writ out to little purpose. I furnished her, two years ago, with three pair of hips, and am not paid for them yet: but some are better customers than some. There's your ladyship's bill. (*Giving the bill.*)

Clar. (*Reads.*) "*For the idea of a new invented corset*"—Ay, this may be mine, but 'tis of a preposterous length. (*Unrolling the bill.*) Do you think I can waste time to read every article, Mrs. Amlet? I'd as lief read a sermon.

Mrs. A. Alack-a-day! there's no need of fatiguing yourself at that rate; cast an eye only, if your honour pleases, upon the sum total.

Clar. Total, fifty-six pounds and odd things.

Flip. But six-and-fifty pounds!

Mrs. A. Nay, another body would have made it twice as much, but there's a blessing goes along with a moderate profit.

Clar. Flippanta, go to my cashier, let him give you six-and-fifty pounds. (*Adjusting her dress.*) Make haste: don't you hear me? six-and-fifty pounds. Is it so difficult to be comprehended?

Flip. No, madam, I—I comprehend; six-and-fifty pounds. But—

Clar. But go and fetch it, then.

Flip. What she means, I don't know; but I shall, I suppose, before I bring her the money. [*Aside and exit.*

Clar. (*Setting her hair in a pocket-glass.*) The trade you follow gives a great deal of trouble, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. Alack-a-day! a world of pain, madam; and yet there's small profit, as your honour sees by your bill.

Clar. Poor woman! Sometimes you have great losses, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. I have two thousand pounds owing me, of which I shall never get ten shillings.

Clar. Poor woman! you have a great charge of children, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. Only one wicked rogue, madam, who, I think, will break my heart.

Clar. Poor woman!

Mrs. A. He'll be hanged, madam; that will be the end of him. Where he gets it, heaven knows! but he's always shaking his heels with the ladies, and his elbows with the lords. He's as fine as a prince, and as trim as the best of them; but the ungracious rogue tells all he comes near that his mother is dead, and I am but his nurse.

Clar. Poor woman!

Mrs. A. Alas! madam, he's like the rest of the world! everybody's for appearing to be more than they are, and that ruins all.

Clar. Well, Mrs. Amlet, you'll excuse me, I have a little business; Flippanta will bring you your money presently. Adieu, Mrs. Amlet! [*Exit.*

Mrs. A. And I return your honour many thanks. Ah! there's my good lady, not so much as read her bill; if the rest were like her I should soon have money enough to go as fine as Dick himself.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Sure, Flippanta must have given my letter by this time; I long to know how it has been received.

Mrs. A. Misericorde! what do I see?

Dick. Fiends and hags! the witch my mother! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. A. Nay, 'tis he. Ah! my poor Dick! what art thou doing here?

Dick. What a misfortune! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. A. Good lard! now thou art bravely decked! But it's all one: I am thy mother still! and, though thou art a wicked child, nature will speak. I love thee, Dick, still. Ah, Dick! my poor Dick! (*She attempts to kiss him, he passes under her arm.*)

Dick. Blood and thunder! will you ruin me?

Mrs. A. Ah! the blasphemous rogue! how he swears!

Dick. You destroy all my hopes.

Mrs. A. Will your mother's kiss destroy you, varlet? Thou art an ungracious bird! kneel down and ask my blessing, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies!

Mrs. A. Ah! he's a proper young man; see what a shape he has! Ah! poor child! (*Running to embrace him, he escapes from her.*)

Dick. Oons! keep off! the woman's mad! If anybody comes, my fortune's lost.

Mrs. A. What fortune, eh? speak, graceless! Ah! Dick, thou'lt be hanged, Dick.

Dick. Good, dear mother, now, don't call me Dick here.

Mrs. A. Not call thee Dick! Is it not thy name? What shall I call thee, Mr. Amlet, eh? Art not thou a presumptuous rascal? Hark you! sirrah, I hear of your tricks; you disown me for your mother, and say I am but your nurse. Is not this true?

Dick. No; I love you; I respect you; (*taking her hand*) I am all duty. But if you discover me here, you ruin the fairest prospect that man ever had.

Mrs. A. What prospect, eh? Come, this is a lie now.

Dick. No, my honoured parent, what I say is true. I am about a great fortune. I'll bring you home a daughter-in-law, in a coach and six horses, if you'll be quiet: I can't tell you more now.

Mrs. A. Is it possible?

Dick. 'Tis true, by Jupiter!

Mrs. A. My dear lad—

Dick. For heaven's sake—

Mrs. A. But, tell me, Dick—

Dick. I'll follow you home in a moment, and tell you all.

Mrs. A. What a shape is there!

Dick. Pray, mother, go.

Mrs. A. I must receive some money here first, which shall go for thy wedding dinner.

Dick. Here's somebody coming! Sdeath! she'll betray me.

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Dick. (*Makes signs to his mother.*) Good-morrow, dear Flippanta; how do all the ladies within?

Flip. At your service, Colonel; as far, at least, as my interest goes.

Mrs. A. Colonel! La you now! how Dick's respected! (*Aside.*)

Dick. Waiting for thee, Flippanta, I was making acquaintance with this old gentlewoman here.

Mrs. A. The pretty lad! he's as impudent as a lord. (*Aside.*)

Dick. Who is this good woman, Flippanta?

Flip. A gin of all trades; an old daggling cheat, that hobbles about from house to house to bubble the ladies of their money. I have a small business of your's in my pocket, Colonel. (*Aside to Dick.*)

Dick. An answer to my letter?

Flip. So quick, indeed? No, it's your letter itself.

Dick. Hast thou not given it, then, yet?

Flip. I haven't had an opportunity: but 'twon't be long first. Won't you go in and see my lady?

Dick. Yes, I'll go make her a short visit. But dear Flippanta, don't forget; my life and fortune are in your hands.

Flip. Never fear, I'll take care of them.

Mrs. A. How he traps them! let Dick alone. (*Aside.*)

Dick. (*To his mother.*) Your servant, good madam. [*Exit.*

Mrs. A. Your honour's most devoted. A pretty, civil, well-bred gentleman this, Mrs. Flippanta. Pray, whom may he be?

Flip. A man of great note; Colonel Shapely.

Mrs. A. Is it possible! I have heard much of him, indeed, but never saw him before: one may see quality in every limb of him; he's a fine man, truly!

Flip. I think you are in love with him, Mrs. Amlet.

Mrs. A. Alas! those days are done with me; but if I were as fair as I was once, and as much money as some folks, Colonel Shapely should not catch cold for want of a bed-fellow. I love your men of rank, they have something in their air does so distinguish them from the rascality.

Flip. People of quality are fine things, indeed, Mrs. Amlet, if they had but a little more money; but for want of that, they are forced to do things their great souls are ashamed of. For example: here's my lady, she owes you but six-and-fifty pounds—

Mrs. A. Well!

Flip. Well, and she has it not by her to pay you.

Mrs. A. How can that be?

Flip. I don't know: her cash-keeper's out of humour; he says he has no money.

Mrs. A. What a presumptuous piece of vermin is a cash-keeper! Tell his lady he has no money! Now, Mrs. Flippanta, you may see his bags are full, by his being so saucy.

Flip. If they are, there's no help for it; he'll do what he pleases, till he comes to make up his yearly accounts.

Mrs. A. But madam plays sometimes: so when she has good fortune, she can pay me out of her winnings.

Flip. Oh! never think of that, Mrs. Amlet; if she had won a thousand pounds, she'd rather die in a gaol than pay off a farthing with it.

Mrs. A. Why, what shall we do, then: for I haven't one penny to buy bread.

Flip. I'll tell you—it just now comes into my head: I know my lady has a little occasion for money at this time; so, if you lend her a hundred pounds, do you see?, then she may pay you your six-and-fifty out of it.

Mrs. A. Sure, Mrs. Flippanta, you think to make a fool of me?

Flip. No, the deuce fetch me if I do! You shall have a diamond necklace in pawn.

Mrs. A. Oh, ho! a pawn! That's another case. And when must she have the money?

Flip. In a quarter of an hour.

Mrs. A. Say no more. Bring the necklace to my house; it shall be ready for you.

Flip. I'll be with you in a moment.

Mrs. A. Adieu, Mrs. Flippanta!

Flip. Adieu, Mrs. Amlet! [*Exit Mrs. A.*] So! this ready money will make us all happy. This spring will set our faro table going, and that's a wheel will turn twenty others. My lady's young and handsome: she'll have a dozen intrigues upon her hands, before she has been twice at her prayers. So much the better; the more the grist, the richer the miller. Sure, never wench got into so hopeful a place! here's a fortune to be sold, and a master to be ruined. If I don't feather my nest, and get a good husband, I deserve to die both a maid and a beggar. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Gripe's House.*

CLARISSA *and* DICK *discovered, seated on a sofa.*

Clar. What, in the name of dulness, is the matter with you, Colonel? You are as studious as a cracked chymist.

Dick. My head, madam, is full of your husband.

Clar. The worst furniture for a head in the universe.

Dick. I am thinking of his passion for your friend Araminta.

Clar. Passion! Dear Colonel, give it a less violent name.

Enter BRASS.

Dick. Well, sir, what want you?

Brass. The affair I told you of goes ill. There's an action out. (*Aside to Dick.*)

Dick. The devil there is!

Clar. What news brings Brass?

Dick. Before gad! I can't tell, madam; the dog will never speak out. My Lord What-d'ye-call-him waits for me at my lodgings: is not that it?

Brass. Yes, sir.

Dick. Madam, I ask your pardon.

Clar. Your servant, sir. [*Exit Dick with Brass.*] Jessamine!

Enter Jessamine.

Jess. Madam!

Clar. Where's Corinna? Call her to me, if her father hasn't locked her up; I want her company.

Jess. Madam, her guitar-master is with her.

[*Exit.*

Clar. Psha! she's always taken up with her impertinent guitar-man. Flippanta stays an age with that old fool, Mrs. Amlet; and Araminta, before she can come abroad, is so long placing her coquet-patch, that I must be a year without company. How insupportable is a moment's uneasiness to a woman of spirit and pleasure.

Enter Flippanta.

Oh! art thou come at last? Pr'ythee, Flippanta, learn to move a little quicker, thou know'st how impatient I am.

Flip. Yes, when you expect money.

Clar. Well, hast thou brought me any after all?

Flip. Yes, I have brought some. There! (*giving her a purse*) the old hag has struck off her bill, the rest is in that purse.

Clar. 'Tis well; but take care, Flippanta, my husband don't suspect anything of this; 'twould vex him, and I don't love to make him uneasy; so I would spare him these little sort of troubles, by keeping them from his knowledge.

Flip. See the tenderness she has for him, and yet he's always complaining of you.

Clar. 'Tis the nature of them, Flippanta; a husband is a growling animal.

Flip. How exactly you define them!

Clar. Oh! I know them, Flippanta: though I confess my poor wretch diverts me sometimes with his ill-humours. I wish he would quarrel with me to-day a little, to pass away the time, for I find myself in a violent spleen. My cloak and gloves, and the coach to the door!

Flip. Why, whither are you going?

Clar. I can't tell yet; but I would go spend some money, since I have it.

Flip. Why, you want nothing that I know of.

Clar. How awkward an objection now is that, as if a woman of education bought things because she wanted them.

Enter Araminta.

Lard! what a tedious while you have let me expect you! I was afraid you were not well; how do you do to-day?

Aram. As well as a woman can do, that has not slept all night.

Flip. Methinks, madam, you are pretty well awake, however.

Aram. Oh! 'tis not a little thing will make a woman of my spirit look drowsy.

Clar. But, pr'ythee, what was't disturbed you?

Aram. Not your husband, don't trouble yourself; at least, I am not in love with him yet.

Clar. Well remembered, I had quite forgot that matter. I wish you much joy; you have made a noble conquest, indeed.

Aram. Do you know 'tis in my power to ruin this poor thing of your's? his whole estate is at my service.

Flip. Strike him, madam, and let my lady go your halves. There's no sin in plundering a husband, so his wife has share of the booty.

Aram. Whenever she gives me her orders, I shall be very ready to obey them.

Clar. Why, as odd a thing as such a project may seem, Araminta, I believe I shall have a little serious discourse with you about it. But, pr'ythee, tell me how you have passed the night? For I am sure your mind has been roving upon some pretty thing or other.

Aram. Why, I have been studying all the ways my brain could produce to plague my husband.

Clar. No wonder, indeed, you look so fresh this morning, after the satisfaction of such pleasing ideas all night.

Aram. Why, can a woman do less than study mischief, when she has tumbled and tossed herself into a burning fever, for want of sleep. But we'll discourse more of these matters as we go, for I must make a tour among the shops.

Clar. My coach waits at the door, we'll talk of them as we rattle along. [*Exit with Araminta.*

Flip. What a pretty little pair of amiable persons are there gone to hold a council of war together! Poor birds! what would they do with their time, if the plaguing their husbands did not help them to employment? Well, if idleness be the root of all evil, then matrimony's good for something, for it sets many a poor woman to work. But here comes miss. I hope I shall help her into the holy state, too, ere long; and when she's once there, if she don't play her part as well as the best of them, I'm mistaken. Haven't I lost the letter I am to give her? No, here 'tis; so, now we shall see how pure nature will work with her, for art she knows none yet.

Enter Corinna.

Cor. What does my mother-in-law want with me, Flippanta? they tell me she was asking for me.

Flip. She's just gone out; so, I suppose, 'twas no great business.

Cor. Then I'll go into my chamber again.

Flip. Nay, hold a little, if you please. I have some business with you myself, of more concern than what she had to say to you.

Cor. Make haste, then, for you know my father won't let me keep you company; he says you'll spoil me.

Flip. I spoil you! he's an unworthy man to give you such ill impressions of a woman of my honour.

Cor. Nay, never take it to heart, Flippanta, for I don't believe a word he says. But he does so plague me with his continual scolding, I am almost weary of my life.

Flip. Why, what is it he finds fault with?

Cor. Nay, I don't know, for I never mind him; when he has babbled for two hours together, methinks I have heard a mill going, that's all. It does not at all change my opinion, Flippanta, it only makes my head ache.

Flip. Nay, if you can bear it so, you are not to be pitied so much as I thought.

Cor. Not pitied! Why, is it not a miserable thing, such a young creature as I am should be kept in perpetual solitude, with no other company but a parcel of old frightful masters, to teach me geography, arithmetic, philosophy, and a thousand useless things? fine entertainment, indeed, for a young girl at sixteen! methinks, one's time might be better employed.

Flip. Those things will improve your wit.

Cor. Fiddle faddle! haven't I wit enough already? My mother-in-law has learned none of this trumpery, and is not she as happy as the day is long?

Flip. Then you envy her, I find.

Cor. And well I may. Does she not do what she has a mind to, in spite of her husband's teeth?

Flip. Look you there now! If she has not already conceived that to be the supreme blessing of life! (*Aside.*)

Cor. I'll tell you what, Flippanta, if my mother-in-law would but stand by me a little, and encourage me, and let me keep her company, I'd rebel against my father to-morrow, and throw all my books in the fire. Why, he can't touch a groat of my portion; do you know that, Flippanta?

Flip. So, I shall spoil her! Pray heaven the girl don't spoil me. (*Aside.*)

Cor. Look you! in short, he may think what he pleases; he may think himself wise; but thoughts are free, and I may think in my turn. I am but a girl, 'tis true, and a fool, too, if you believe him; but let him know, a foolish girl may make a wise man's heart ache; so he had as good be quiet. Now it's out! (*Skips about.*)

Flip. Very well: I love to see a young woman have spirit; it's a sign she'll come to something.

Cor. Ah! Flippanta, if you would but encourage me, you'd find me quite another thing. I am a devilish girl in the bottom; I wish you'd but let me make one amongst you.

Flip. That never can be, till you are married. Come, examine your strength a little. Do you think you durst venture upon a husband?

Cor. A husband! why, a—if you would but encourage me. Come, Flippanta, be a true friend, now. I'll give you advice when I have got a little more experience. Do you in your very conscience and soul think I am old enough to be married?

Flip. Old enough! Why, you are sixteen, are you not?

Cor. Sixteen! I am sixteen, two months, and odd days, woman! I keep an exact account.

Flip. The deuce you are!

Cor. Why, do you, then, truly and sincerely think I am old enough?

Flip. I do upon my faith, child!

Cor. Why, then, to deal as fairly with you, Flippanta, as you do with me, I have thought so any time these three years.

Flip. Now I find you have more wit than ever I thought you had; and to shew you what an opinion I have of your discretion, I'll shew you a thing I thought to have thrown in the fire.

Cor. What is it, for Jupiter's sake?

Flip. Something will make your heart chuck within you.

Cor. My dear Flippanta!

Flip. What do you think it is?

Cor. I don't know nor I don't care, but I'm mad to have it. (*Flippanta shews the letter.*) Oh, lard! a letter! Is there ever a token in it?

Flip. Yes, and a precious one, too. There's a handsome young gentleman's heart.

Cor. A handsome young gentleman's heart! Nay, then, it's time to look grave. (*Aside.*)

Flip. There! (*Presenting the letter.*)

Cor. I sha'n't touch it.

Flip. What's the matter now?

Cor. I sha'n't receive it.

Flip. Sure, you jest.

Cor. You'll find I don't. I understand myself better than to take letters, when I don't know who they are from.

Flip. I am afraid I commended your wit too soon.

Cor. 'Tis all one; I sha'n't touch it, unless I know who it comes from.

Flip. Heyday! open it, and you'll see.

Cor. Indeed I shall not.

Flip. Well, then, I must return it where I had it.

Cor. That won't serve your turn, madam; my father must have an account of this.

Flip. Sure, you are not in earnest?

Cor. You'll find I am.

Flip. So, here's fine work! This 'tis to deal with girls.

Cor. Confess who you had it from, and, perhaps, for this once, I mayn't tell my father.

Flip. Why, then, since it must out, 'twas the Colonel: but why are you so scrupulous, madam?

Cor. Because if it had come from anybody else, I would not have given a farthing for it. (*Twitching it eagerly out of her hand.*)

Flip. Ah! my dear little rogue! (*embracing her*) you frightened me out of my wits.

Cor. Let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, I say! Um—*Cupid's*—um—*darts*—um—*beauty*—um—*charms*—um—*angel*—um—*goddess*—(*kissing the letter*)—um—*truest lover*—um—*eternal constancy*—um—*cruel*—um—*racks*—um—*tortures*—um—*fifty daggers*—um—*bleeding heart*—um—*dead man.* Very well, a mighty civil letter, I promise you; not one naughty word in it; I'll go lock it up in my work-box.

Flip. Well, but what does he say to you?

Cor. Not a word of news, Flippanta, 'tis all about business.

Flip. Does he not tell you he is in love with you?

Cor. Ay, but he told me that before.

Flip. How so? he never spoke to you.

Cor. He sent me word by his eyes.

Flip. Did he so? Mighty well! I thought you had been to learn that language.

Cor. Oh! but you thought wrong, Flippanta. What, because I don't go a visiting, and see the world, you think I know nothing. But you should consider, Flippanta, that the more one's alone, the more one thinks; and 'tis thinking that improves a girl. Well, Flippanta, if you'll encourage me—

Flip. Oh! by all means, an answer.

Cor. Well, since you say it, then, I'll e'en in and do it; though I protest to you, lest you should think me too forward, now, he is the only man that wears a beard I'd ink my fingers for. May be, if I marry him, in a year or two's time, I mayn't be so nice. [*Aside, and exit.*

Flip. Now heaven give him joy! he is like to have a rare wife of thee. But where there's money, a man has a plaster to his sore. They have a blessed time on't, who marry for love! See, here comes an example—Araminta's dread lord.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Ah! Flippanta, how do you do, good Flippanta? how do you do?

Flip. Thank you, sir, well, at your service.

Mon. And how does the good family, your master and your fair mistress? are they at home?

Flip. Neither of them; my master has been gone out these two hours, and my lady is just gone with your wife.

Mon. Well, I won't say I have lost my labour, however, as long as I have met with you, Flippanta; for I have wished a great while for an opportunity to talk with you a little. You won't take it amiss if I should ask you a few questions?

Flip. Provided you leave me to my liberty in my answers. What's this cot-quean going to pry into now? (*Aside.*)

Mon. Pr'ythee, good Flippanta, how do your master and mistress live together?

Flip. Live! like man and wife; generally out of humour, complain of one another, and, perhaps, have both reason. In short, 'tis much as 'tis at your house.

Mon. Good lack! but whose side are you generally of?

Flip. Of the right side always—my lady's. And, if you'll have me give you my opinion of these matters, sir, I do not think a husband can ever be in the right.

Mon. Ah!

Flip. Little, peeping, creeping, sneaking, stingy, covetous, cowardly, dirty, cuckoldy things.

Mon. Ah!

Flip. Hark you, sir! shall I deal plainly with you? had I got a husband I would put him in mind that he was married as well as I. (*Sings.*)

> "*For were I the thing call'd a wife,*
> *And my fool grew too fond of his power,*
> *He should look like an ass all his life,*
> *For a prank that I'd play him in an hour.*
> *Tol lol la ra tol lol,*" &c.

Do you observe that, sir?

Mon. I do; and think you would be in the right

on't. But, pr'ythee, why dost not give this advice to thy mistress?

Flip. For fear it should go round to your wife, sir; for you know they are play-fellows.

Mon. Oh! there's no danger of my wife; she knows I'm none of those husbands.

Flip. Are you sure she knows that, sir?

Mon. I am sure she ought to know it, Flippanta; for, really, I have but four faults in the world.

Flip. And, pray, what may they be?

Mon. Why, I am a little slovenly.

Flip. Fie!

Mon. I am sometimes out of humour.

Flip. Provoking!

Mon. I don't give her so much money as she'd have.

Flip. Insolent!

Mon. And a—perhaps, I mayn't be quite so young as I was.

Flip. The devil!

Mon. Oh! but then, consider how 'tis on her side, Flippanta. She ruins me with dressing, is always out of humour, ever wanting money, and will never be older.

Flip. That last article, I must confess, is a little hard upon you.

Mon. Ah! Flippanta, didst thou but know the daily provocations I have, thou wouldst be the first to excuse my faults. But now I think on't, thou art none of my friend, thou dost not love me at all; no, not at all.

Flip. And whither is this little reproach going to lead us, now?

Mon. You have power over your fair mistress, Flippanta.

Flip. Sir!

Mon. But what then? you hate me.

Flip. I understand you not.

Mon. There's not a moment's trouble her naughty husband gives her, but I feel it, too.

Flip. I don't know what you mean.

Mon. If she did but know what part I take in her sufferings—

Flip. Mighty obscure!

Mon. Well, I'll say no more; but—

Flip. All Hebrew!

Mon. If thou wouldst but tell her on't—

Flip. Still darker and darker!

Mon. I should not be ungrateful.

Flip. Ah! now I begin to understand you.

Mon. Flippanta, there's my purse. (*Gives her his purse.*)

Flip. Say no more; now you explain, indeed: you are in love?

Mon. Bitterly! and I do swear by all the gods—

Flip. Hold! spare them for another time, you stand in no need of them now. An usurer that parts with his purse gives sufficient proof of his sincerity.

Mon. I hate my wife, Flippanta.

Flip. That we'll take upon your bare word.

Mon. She's the devil, Flippanta!

Flip. You like your neighbour's better.

Mon. Oh! an angel!

Flip. What a pity it is the law don't allow changing!

Mon. If it did, Flippanta!

Flip. But since it don't, sir—keep the reins upon your passion; don't let your flame rage too high, lest my lady should be cruel, and it should dry you up to a mummy.

Mon. 'Tis impossible she can be so barbarous, to let me die. Alas! Flippanta, a very small matter would save my life.

Flip. Then you're dead; for we women never grant anything to a man who will be satisfied with a little.

Mon. Dear Flippanta, that was only my modesty; but, since you'll have it out, I am a very dragon; and so your lady will find. Now, I hope, you'll stand my friend.

Flip. Well, sir, as far as my credit goes, it shall be employed in your service.

Mon. My best Flippanta! tell her I am all her's; tell her my body's her's; tell her my soul's her's; and tell her my estate's her's. Lord have mercy upon me! how I am in love!

Flip. Poor man! but, hark! I hear my master; for heaven's sake, compose yourself a little.

Mon. Ah, dear! I am in such an emotion, I dare not be seen. [*Exit.*

Flip. A rare adventurer by my troth! This will be curious news to the wives. Fortune has now put their husbands into their hands, and I think they are too sharp to neglect its favours.

Enter Gripe.

Gripe. Oh! here's the right hand; the rest of the body can't be far off. Where's my wife, huswife?

Flip. An admirable question! Why, she's gone abroad, sir.

Gripe. Abroad, abroad! abroad already? Why, she used to be in her bed three hours after this time, as late as it is. What makes her gadding so soon?

Flip. Business, I suppose.

Gripe. Business! she has a pretty head for business, truly! Oh, ho! let her change her way of living, or I'll make her change a light heart for a heavy one.

Flip. And why would you have her change her way of living. She never looked better in her life.

Gripe. Don't tell me of her looks, I have done with her looks long since. But I'll make her change her life, or—

Flip. Indeed, sir, you won't.

Gripe. Why, what shall hinder me, insolence?

Flip. That which hinders most husbands—contradiction.

Gripe. Suppose I resolve I won't be contradicted?

Flip. Suppose she resolves you shall?

Gripe. A wife's resolution is not good by law.

Flip. Nor a husband's by custom.

Gripe. I tell thee, I will not bear it.

Flip. I tell you, sir, you will bear it.

Gripe. Oons! I have borne it three years already.

Flip. By that you see 'tis but giving your mind to it.

Gripe. My mind to it! Death and the devil! My mind to it! She is, then, in thy opinion, a reasonable woman?

Flip. By my faith, I think so.

Gripe. I shall run mad! Name me an extravagance in the world she is not guilty of.

Flip. Name me an extravagance in the world she is guilty of.

Gripe. Come, then: does she not put the house in disorder?

Flip. Not that I know of, for she never comes into it but to sleep.

Gripe. Does she employ any one moment of her life in the government of her family?

Flip. She is so submissive a wife, she leaves it entirely to you.

Gripe. Admirable! Does she not spend more money in coach-hire and chair-hire, than would maintain six children?

Flip. She's too nice of your credit to be seen daggling in the streets.

Gripe. Good! Do I set eye on her sometimes in a week together?

Flip. That, sir, is because you are never stirring at the same time; you keep odd hours; you are always going to bed when she's rising, and rising just when she's coming to bed.

Gripe. Yes, truly! night into day, and day into

night, that's her trade: but these are trifles; has she not lost her diamond necklace? answer me to that, trapes!

Flip. Yes; and has sent as many tears after it as if it had been her husband.

Gripe. Ah! the devil take her!—but, enough: 'tis resolved, and I will put a stop to her course of life, and so she shall know, the first time I meet with her—which, though we are man and wife, and lie under one roof, 'tis very possible may not be this fortnight. [*Aside, and exit.*

Flip. Nay, thou hast a blessed time on't, that must be confessed. What a miserable devil is a husband! insupportable to himself, and a plague to everything about him. But he'd as good be still, for he'll miss of his aim. If I know her, which I think I do, she'll set his blood in such a ferment, it shall bubble out at every pore of him; whilst her's is so quiet in her veins, her pulse shall go like a pendulum. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Mrs. Amlet's House.*

Enter Dick.

Dick. Where's this old woman? Eh! what the devil, nobody at home! Ah! her strong box! and the key in it! 'tis so. Now, fortune, be my friend! What the deuce, not a penny of money in cash! nor a check, or note! nor a bank-bill! (*searches the box*) nor a crooked stick! nor a—mum!—here's something: a diamond necklace, by all the gods! Oons! the old woman! Zest! (*Puts the necklace in his pocket.*)

Enter Mrs. Amlet.

Pray, mother, pray to—(*Runs to her and asks her blessing.*)

Mrs. A. Is it possible! Dick upon his humble knee! Ah! my dear child! may heaven be good unto thee!

Dick. I am come, my dear mother, to pay my duty to you, and to ask your consent to—

Mrs. A. What a shape is there!

Dick. To ask your consent, I say, to marry a great fortune; for what are riches in this world without a blessing? and how can there be a blessing without respect and duty to parents?

Mrs. A. What a nose he has!

Dick. And, therefore, it being the duty of every good child not to dispose of himself in marriage without the—

Mrs. A. Now the Lord love thee, (*kissing him*) for thou art a goodly young man! Well, Dick, and how goes it with the lady? are her eyes open to thy charms? does she see what is for her own good? Is she sensible of the blessings thou hast in store for her? Eh! is all sure? Hast thou broken a piece of money with her? Speak, bird! do: don't be modest, and hide thy love from thy mother, for I am an indulgent parent.

Dick. Nothing under heaven can prevent my good fortune, but its being discovered I am your son.

Mrs. A. Then thou art still ashamed of thy natural mother, graceless! Why, I'm no harlot, sirrah!

Dick. I know you are not. Who the devil would make you one? (*Aside.*)

Mrs. A. No: my reputation is as good as the best of them; and, though I'm old, I'm chaste, you rascal, you!

Dick. Lord! that is not the thing we talk of, mother; but—

Mrs. A. I think, as the world goes, they may be proud of marrying their daughter into a vartuous family.

Dick. Oons! vartue is not the case.

Mrs. A. Where she may have a good example before her eyes.

Dick. Oh, lord! oh, lord! oh, lord!

Mrs. A. I am a woman that don't so much as encourage an incontinent look towards me.

Dick. I tell you—'Sdeath!—I tell you—

Mrs. A. If a man should make an uncivil motion to me, I'd spit in his face; and all this you may tell them, sirrah!

Dick. Death and furies! the woman's out of her—

Mrs. A. Don't you swear, you rascal, you! don't you swear.

Dick. Why, then, in cold blood, hear me speak to you: I tell you it's a city fortune I am about; she cares not a fig for your virtue, she'll hear of nothing but quality; she has quarrelled with one of her friends for having a better complexion, and is resolved she'll marry to take place of her.

Mrs. A. What a cherry lip is there!

Dick. Therefore, good, dear mother, now have a care, and don't discover me; for if you do, all's lost.

Mrs. A. Dear, dear! how thy fair bride will be delighted! go, get thee gone, go: go, fetch her home; go, fetch her home. I'll give her a sack-posset, and a pillow of down she shall lay her head upon. Go, fetch her home, I say.

Dick. Take care, then, of the main chance, my dear mother; remember, if you discover me—

Mrs. A. Go, fetch her home, I say.

Dick. You promise me, then—

Mrs. A. March!

Dick. But swear to me—

Mrs. A. Begone, sirrah!

Dick. Well, I'll rely upon you: but one kiss before I go. [*Kisses her heartily, and runs off.*

Mrs. A. Now the Lord love thee! for thou art a comfortable young man! [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*Gripe's House.*

Enter Flippanta *and* Corinna.

Cor. But, hark you! Flippanta, if you don't think he loves me dearly, don't give him my letter, after all.

Flip. Let me alone.

Cor. When he has read it, let him give it you again.

Flip. Don't trouble yourself.

Cor. But, remember, 'tis you who make me do all this now; so, if any mischief comes on't, 'tis you must answer for't.

Flip. I'll be your security.

Cor. I am young, and know nothing of the matter; but you have experience, so it is your business to conduct me safe.

Flip. Poor innocence!

Cor. But tell me, in serious sadness, Flippanta, does he love me with the very soul of him?

Flip. I have told you so a hundred times, and yet you are not satisfied.

Cor. But, methinks, I'd fain have him tell me so himself.

Flip. Have patience, and it shall be done.

Cor. Why, patience is a virtue; that we must all confess; but, I fancy, the sooner it's done the better, Flippanta.

Enter Jessamine.

Jess. Madam, yonder is your geography-master waiting for you. [*Exit.*

Cor. Ah! how I am tired with these old fumbling fellows, Flippanta.

Flip. Well, don't let them break your heart; you shall be rid of them all ere long.

Cor. Nay, 'tis not the study I am so weary of, Flippanta, 'tis the odious thing that teaches me. Were the Colonel my master, I fancy I could take pleasure in learning everything he could shew me.

Flip. And he can shew you a great deal, I can tell you that. But, get you gone; here's somebody coming; we must not be seen together.

Cor. I will, I will, I will! Oh! the dear Colonel! [*Runs off.*

Enter Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. Oh, ho! Mrs. Amlet. What brings you so soon to us again, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. Ah! my dear Mrs. Flippanta, I'm in a furious fright.

Flip. Why, what's come to you?

Mrs. A. Ah! mercy on us all! madam's diamond necklace—

Flip. What of that?

Mrs. A. Are you sure you left it at my house?

Flip. Sure I left it! a very pretty question, truly!

Mrs. A. Nay, don't be angry; say nothing to madam of it, I beseech you: it will be found again, if it be heaven's good will. At least, 'tis I must bear the loss of it. 'Tis my rogue of a son has laid his bird-lime fingers on it.

Flip. Your son, Mrs. Amlet! Do you breed your children up to such tricks as these, then?

Mrs. A. What shall I say to you, Mrs. Flippanta? Can I help it? He has been a rogue from his cradle, Dick has. But he has his deserts, too. And now it comes into my head, mayhap, he may have no ill design in this neither.

Flip. No ill design, woman! He's a pretty fellow if he can steal a diamond necklace with a good one.

Mrs. A. You don't know him, Mrs. Flippanta, so well as I that bore him. Dick's a rogue, 'tis true; but—mum!

Flip. What does the woman mean?

Mrs. A. Hark you! Mrs. Flippanta, is not here a young gentlewoman in your house that wants a husband?

Flip. Why do you ask?

Mrs. A. By way of conversation only; it does not concern me; but when she marries I may chance to dance at the wedding. Remember, I tell you so, I who am but Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. You dance at her wedding! You!

Mrs. A. Yes, I, I! but don't trouble madam about her necklace; perhaps it mayn't go out of the family. Adieu, Mrs. Flippanta. [*Exit.*

Flip. What—what—what does the woman mean? The necklace lost—and her son Dick—and a fortune to marry—and she shall dance at the wedding—and—she does not intend, I hope, to propose a match between her son Dick and Corinna. By my conscience, I believe she does. An old beldam!

Enter Brass.

Brass. Well, hussy! how stand our affairs? Has miss writ us an answer yet? My master's very impatient yonder.

Flip. And why the deuce does not he come himself? What does he send such idle fellows as thee of his errands? Here I had her alone just now: he won't have such an opportunity again this month, I can tell him that.

Brass. So much the worse for him; 'tis his business. But now, my dear, let thee and I talk a little of our own: I grow most devilishly in love with thee, dost hear that?

Flip. Pho! thou art always timing things wrong; my head is full, at present, of more important things than love.

Brass. Then it's full of important things, indeed; dost want a privy-counsellor?

Flip. I want an assistant.

Brass. To do what?

Flip. Mischief.

Brass. I am thy man—touch!

Flip. But before I venture to let thee into my project, pr'ythee, tell me, whether thou findest a natural disposition to ruin a husband to oblige his wife?

Brass. Is she handsome?

Flip. Yes.

Brass. Why, then, my disposition is at her service.

Flip. She's beholden to thee.

Brass. Not she alone, neither; therefore, don't let her grow vain upon it; for I've three or four affairs of that kind going at this time.

Flip. Well, go carry this epistle from miss to my master; and when thou comest back, I'll tell thee thy business.

Brass. I'll know it before I go, if you please.

Flip. Thy master waits for an answer.

Brass. I'd rather he should wait than I.

Flip. Why, then, in short, Araminta's husband is in love with my lady.

Brass. Very well, child, we have a Rowland for her Oliver; thy lady's husband is in love with Araminta.

Flip. Who told you that, sirrah?

Brass. 'Tis a negociation I'm charged with, pert! Did not I tell thee I did business for half the town? I have managed master Gripe's little affairs for him these ten years, you slut, you!

Flip. Hark thee! Brass, the game's in our hands, if we can but play the cards.

Brass. Pique and repique, you jade you! if the wives will fall into a good intelligence.

Flip. Let them alone; I'll answer for them they don't slip the occasion. See, here they come. They little think what a piece of good news we have for them.

Enter Clarissa, Araminta, *and* Jessamine.

Clar. Jessamine! here, boy, carry up these things into my dressing-room, and break as many of them by the way as you can, be sure.

Jess. Yes, madam.

[*As he is going off, he lets the china fall.*

Clar. Oh! art thou there, Brass? What news?

Brass. Madam, I only called in as I was going by. But some little propositions Mrs. Flippanta has been starting, have kept me here to offer your ladyship my humble service.

Clar. What propositions?

Brass. She'll acquaint you, madam.

Aram. Is there anything new, Flippanta?

Flip. Yes, and pretty, too.

Clar. That follows, of course; but let's have it, quick.

Flip. Why, madam, you have made a conquest.

Clar. Hussy—but of who? quick.

Flip. Of Mr. Moneytrap, that's all.

Aram. My husband!

Flip. Yes, your husband, madam: you thought fit to corrupt ours, so now we are even with you.

Aram. Sure thou art in jest, Flippanta.

Flip. Serious as my devotions.

Brass. And the cross intrigue, ladies, is what our brains have been at work about.

Aram. My dear! (*To Clarissa.*)

Clar. My life!
Aram. My angel! } (*Hugging each other.*)
Clar. My soul!

Aram. The stars have done this.

Clar. The pretty little twinklers.

Flip. And what will you do for them, now?

Clar. What grateful creatures ought; shew them we don't despise their favours.

Aram. But is not this a wager between these two blockheads?

Clar. I would not give a shilling to go the winner's halves.

Aram. Then 'tis the most fortunate thing that ever could have happened.

Clar. All your last night's ideas, Araminta, were trifles to it.

Aram, Brass, my dear, will be useful to us.

Brass. At your service, madam.

Clar. Flippanta will be necessary, my life!

Flip. She waits your commands, madam.

Aram. For my part, then, I recommend my husband to thee, Flippanta, and make it my earnest request thou won't leave him one half crown.

Flip. I'll do all I can to obey you, madam.

Brass. (*To Clarissa.*) If your ladyship would give me the same kind orders for your's.

Clar. Oh! if thou sparest him, Brass, I'm thy enemy till I die.

Brass. 'Tis enough, madam; I'll be sure to give you a reasonable account of him. But how do you intend we shall proceed, ladies? Must we storm the purse at once, or break ground in form, and carry it by little and little?

Clar. Storm, dear Brass, storm! ever whilst you live, storm.

Aram. Oh! by all means; must it not be so, Flippanta?

Flip. In four-and-twenty hours, two hundred pounds a-piece, that's my sentence.

Brass. Very well. But, ladies, you'll give me leave to put you in mind of some little expense in favours, 'twill be necessary you are at, to these honest gentlemen.

Aram. Favours, Brass!

Brass. Um—a—some small matters, madam, I doubt must be.

Clar. Now, that's a vile article, Araminta; for that thing your husband is so like mine—

Flip. Pooh! there's a scruple, indeed. Why, what in the name of Lucifer is it you have to do, that's so terrible?

Brass. A civil look only.

Aram. There's no great harm in that.

Flip. An obliging word.

Clar. That one may afford 'em.

Brass. A little smile, *à-propos.*

Aram. That's but giving one's self an air.

Flip. Receive a little letter, perhaps.

Clar. Women of quality do that from fifty odious fellows.

Brass. Suffer, may be, a squeeze by the hand.

Aram. One's so used to that, one does not feel it.

Flip. Or if a kiss would do't.

Clar. I'd die first.

Brass. Indeed, ladies, I doubt 'twill be necessary to—

Clar. Get their wretched money without paying so dear for it.

Flip. Well, just as you please for that, my ladies: but I suppose you'll play upon the square with your favour, and not pique yourselves upon being one more grateful than another.

Brass. And state a fair account of receipts and disbursements.

Aram. That I think should be, indeed.

Clar. With all my heart, and Brass shall be our book-keeper. So, get thee to work, man, as fast as thou canst; but not a word of this to thy master.

Brass. I'll observe my order, madam. [*Exit.*

Clar. I'll have the pleasure of telling him myself, he'll be violently delighted with it: 'tis the best man in the world, Araminta; he'll bring us rare company to-morrow, all sorts of gamesters; and thou shalt see my husband will be such a brute to be out of humour at it.

Aram. The monster! But hush, here's my dear approaching: pr'ythee, let's leave him to Flippanta.

Flip. Ay, pray do; I'll bring you a good account of him, I'll warrant you.

Clar. Despatch, then, for the faro-table's in haste.

[*Exeunt Clar. and Aram.*

Flip. So, now have at him; here he comes: we'll try if we can pillage the usurer, as he does other folks.

Enter Moneytrap.

Mon. Well, my pretty Flippanta, is thy mistress come home?

Flip. Yes, sir.

Mon. And where is she, pr'ythee?

Flip. Gone abroad, sir.

Mon. How dost mean?

Flip. I mean right, sir; my lady will come home and go abroad ten times in an hour, when she is either in very good humour, or very bad.

Mon. Good lack! But I'll warrant, in general, 'tis her naughty husband that makes her house uneasy to her. But hast thou said a little something to her, chicken, for an expiring lover, eh?

Flip. Said—yes, I have said, much good may it do me.

Mon. Well! and how?

Flip. And how! And how do you think you would have me do it? and you have such a way with you one can refuse you nothing. But I have brought myself into a fine business by it.

Mon. Good lack! But I hope, Flippanta—

Flip. Yes, your hopes will do much, when I am turned out of doors.

Mon. Was she, then, terribly angry?

Flip. Oh! had you seen how she flew, when she saw where I was pointing; for you must know I went round the bush, and round the bush, before I came to the matter.

Mon. Nay, 'tis a ticklish point, that must be owned.

Flip. On my word is it: I mean where a lady's truly virtuous; for that's our case, you must know.

Mon. A very dangerous case, indeed.

Flip. But I can tell you one thing; she has an inclination to you.

Mon. Is it possible!

Flip. Yes, and I told her so at last.

Mon. Well, and what did she answer thee?

Flip. Slap—(*Smacks his face.*)—and bid me bring it to you for a token.

Mon. And you have lost none on't by the way, with a plague t'ye. (*Aside.*)

Flip. Now this, I think, looks the best in the world.

Mon. Yea, but really it feels a little oddly.

Flip. Why, you must know ladies have different ways of expressing their kindness, according to the humour they are in: if she had been in a good one, it had been a kiss; but as long as she sent you something, your affairs go well.

Mon. Why, truly, I am a little ignorant in the mysterious paths of love; so I must be guided by thee. But, pr'ythee, take her in a good humour next token she sends me.

Flip. Ah! good humour!

Mon. What's the matter?

Flip. Poor lady! If I durst tell you all—

Mon. What then?

Flip. You would not expect to see her in one a good while.

Mon. Why, I pray?

Flip. I must own I did take an unseasonable time to talk of love-matters to her.

Mon. Why, what's the matter?

Flip. Nothing.

Mon. Nay, pr'ythee, tell me?

Flip. I dare not.

Mon. You must, indeed.

Flip. Why, when women are in difficulties, how can they think of pleasure?

Mon. Why, what difficulties can she be in?

Flip. Nay, I do but guess, after all; for she has that grandeur of soul, she'd die before she'd tell.

Mon. But what dost thou suspect?

Flip. Why, what should one suspect, where a husband loves nothing but getting of money, and a wife nothing but spending on't?

Mon. So she wants that same then?

Flip. I say no such thing, I know nothing of the matter; pray make no wrong interpretation of what I say; my lady wants nothing that I know of. 'Tis true, she has had ill luck at cards of late; I believe she has not won once this month: but what of that?

Mon. Ha!

Flip. 'Tis true, I know her spirit, that she'd see her husband hanged before she'd ask him for a farthing.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. And then I know him again, he'd see her drowned before he'd give her a farthing; but that's a help to your affair, you know.

Mon. 'Tis so, indeed.

Flip. Ah! well, I'll say nothing; but if she had none of these things to fret her—

Mon. Why really, Flippanta—

Flip. I know what you are going to say now; you are going to offer your service, but 'twont do; you have a mind to play the gallant now, but it must not be; you want to be shewing your liberality, but 'twon't be allowed; you'll be pressing me to offer it, and she'll be in a rage. We shall have the devil to do.

Mon. You mistake me, Flippanta; I was only going to say—(*She puts her hand before his mouth.*)

Flip. Ay, I know what you were going to say, well enough; but I tell you it will never do so. If one could find out some way now—ay, let me see—

Mon. Indeed, I hope—

Flip. Pray be quiet—no—but I'm thinking—hum—she'll smoke that though—let us consider: if one could find a way to—'Tis the nicest point in the world to bring about, she'll never touch it if she knows from whence it comes.

Mon. Ay.

Flip. You shall make her—a restitution—of two hundred pounds.

Mon. Ha! a restitution!

Flip. Yes, yes; 'tis the luckiest thought in the world: madam often plays, you know, and folks who do, meet, now and then, with sharpers. Now you shall be a sharper.

Mon. A sharper!

Flip. Ay, ay, a sharper; and having cheated her of two hundred pounds, shall be troubled in mind, and send it her back again. You comprehend me?

Mon. Yes, I—I comprehend, but a—won't she suspect if it be so much?

Flip. No, no; the more the better.

Mon. Two hundred pounds!

Flip. Yes, two hundred pounds; or, let me see—so even a sum may look a little suspicious—ay, let it be two hundred and thirty; that odd thirty will make it look so natural, the devil won't find it out.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Pounds, too, look I don't know how; guineas, I fancy, were better; ay, guineas, it shall be guineas. You are of that mind, are you not?

Mon. Um! a guinea, you know, Flippanta, is—

Flip. A thousand times genteeler; you are certainly in the right on't; it shall be as you say, two hundred and thirty guineas.

Mon. Oh! well, if it must be guineas—let's see, two hundred guineas!

Flip. And thirty; two hundred and thirty: if you mistake the sum, you spoil all. So, go put them in a purse, while it's fresh in your head, and send them to me with a penitent letter, desiring I'll do you the favour to restore them to her.

Mon. Two hundred and thirty pounds in a bag!

Flip. Guineas, I say, guineas.

Mon. Ay, guineas, that's true. But, Flippanta, if she don't know they come from me, then I give my money for nothing, you know.

Flip. Pooh! leave that to me, I'll manage the stock for you; I'll make it produce something, I'll warrant you.

Mon. Well, Flippanta, 'tis a great sum, indeed; but I'll go try whst I can do for her. You say, two hundred guineas in a purse?

Flip. And thirty, if the man's in his senses.

Mon. And thirty, 'tis true; I always forget that thirty. [*Exit.*

Flip. So, get thee gone, thou art a rare fellow, i'faith. Brass! it's thee, is't not?

Enter BRASS.

Brass. It is, huswife. How go matters? I staid till thy gentleman was gone. Hast done anything towards our common purse?

Flip. I think I have; he's going to make us a restitution of two or three hundred pounds.

Brass. A restitution! good.

Flip. A new way, sirrah, to make a lady take a present without putting her to the blush.

Brass. 'Tis very well, mighty well, indeed. Pr'ythee where's thy master? let me try if I can persuade him to be troubled in mind, too.

Flip. Not so hasty; he's gone into his closet to prepare himself for a quarrel, I have advised him to—with his wife.

Brass. What to do?

Flip. Why, to make her stay at home, now she has resolved to do it beforehand. You must know, sirrah, we intend to make a merit of our faro bank, and get a good pretence for the merry companions we intend to fill his house with.

Brass. Very nicely spun, truly; thy husband will be a happy man.

Flip. Hold your tongue, you fool you. See, here comes your master.

Brass. He's welcome.

Enter DICK.

Dick. My dear Flippanta! how many thanks have I to pay thee?

Flip. Do you like her style?

Dick. The kindest little rogue; there's nothing but she gives me leave to hope. I am the happiest man the world has in it's care.

Flip. Not so happy as you think for neither, perhaps; you have a rival, sir, I can tell you that.

Dick. A rival!

Flip. Yes, and a dangerous one, too.

Dick. Who, in the name of terror?

Flip. A devilish fellow, one Mr. Amlet.

Dick. Amlet! I know no such man.

Flip. You know the man's mother, though; you met her here, and are in her favour, I can tell you. If he worst you in your mistress, you shall e'en marry her, and disinherit him.

Dick. If I have no other rival but Mr. Amlet, I believe I sha'n't be much disturbed in my amour. But can't I see Corinna?

Flip. I don't know; she has always some of her masters with her: but I'll go see if she can spare you a moment, and bring you word. [*Exit.*

Dick. I wish my old hobbling mother ha'n't been blabbing something here she should not do.

Brass. Fear nothing, all's safe on that side, yet. But how speaks young mistress's epistle? soft and tender?

Dick. As pen can write.

Brass. So you think all goes well there?

Dick. As my heart can wish.

Brass. You are sure on't?

Dick. Sure on't.

Brass. Why then, ceremony aside, (*putting on his hat,*) you and I must have a little talk, Mr. Amlet.

Dick. Ah! Brass, what art thou going to do? wouldst ruin me?

Brass. Look you, Dick, few words; you are in a smooth way of making your fortune; I hope all will roll on. But how do you intend matters should pass 'twixt you and me in this business.

Dick. Death and furies! What a time dost take to talk on't?

Brass. Good words, or I betray you; they have already heard of one Mr. Amlet in the house.

Dick. Here's a son of a w—. (*Aside.*)

Brass. In short, look smooth, and be a good prince. I am your valet, 'tis true: your footman, sometimes, which I'm enraged at; but you have always had the ascendant, I confess: when we were school-fellows, you made me carry your books, make your exercise, own your rogueries, and sometimes take a whipping for you. When we were fellow-'prentices, though I was your senior, you made me open the shop, clean my master's shoes, cut last at dinner, and eat all the crust. In our sins, too, I must own you still kept me under; you soared up to the mistress, while I was at humble fornication with the maid. Nay, in our punishments, you still made good your post; for when once upon a time I was sentenced but to be whipped, I cannot deny but you were condemned to be hanged. So, that in all times, I must confess, your inclinations have been greater and nobler than mine; however, I cannot consent that you should at once, fix fortune for life, and I dwell in my humilities for the rest of my days.

Dick. Harkye! Brass, if I do not most nobly by thee, I'm a dog.

Brass. And when?

Dick. As soon as ever I am married.

Brass. Ay, the plague take thee.

Dick. Then you mistrust me?

Brass. I do, by my faith. Look you, sir, some folks we mistrust, because we don't know them: others we mistrust, because we do know them; and for one of these reasons I desire there may be a bargain before-hand: if not, (*raising his voice,*) look ye, Dick Amlet—

Dick. Soft, my dear friend and companion. The dog will ruin me. (*Aside.*) Say, what is't will content thee?

Brass. Oh, ho!

Dick. But how canst thou be such a barbarian?

Brass. I learnt it at Algiers.

Dick. Come, make thy Turkish demand, then.

Brass. You know you gave me a bank-bill this morning to receive for you.

Dick. I did so, of fifty pounds; 'tis thine. So, now thou art satisfied; all is fixed.

Brass. It is not, indeed. There's a diamond necklace you robbed your mother of, even now.

Dick. Ah! you Jew.

Brass. No words.

Dick. My dear Brass!

Brass. I insist.

Dick. My old friend!

Brass. Dick Amlet, (*raising his voice,*) I insist.

Dick. Ah! the cormorant. (*Aside.*) Well, 'tis thine; but thou'lt never thrive with it.

Brass. When I find it begins to do me mischief, I'll give it you again. But I must have a wedding suit.

Dick. Well.

Brass. A stock of linen.

Dick. Well thou shalt have that, too. Now, thou hast everything.

Brass. Heaven forgive me, I forgot a ring of remembrance; I would not forget all these favours for the world: a sparkling diamond will be always playing in my eye, and put me in mind of them.

Dick. This unconscionable rogue! (*Aside.*) Well, I'll bespeak one for thee.

Brass. Brilliant.

Dick. It shall. But if the thing don't succeed after all—

Brass. I am a man of honour, and restore: and so, treaty being finished, I strike my flag of defiance, and fall into my respects again. (*Taking off his hat.*)

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. I have made you wait a little, but I could not help it; her master is but just gone. He has been shewing her prince Eugene's march into Italy; but if you'll slip up those back stairs, you shall try if you can agree upon the journey.

Dick. My dear Flippanta!

Flip. None of your dear acknowledgments, I beseech you, but up stairs as hard as you can drive.

Dick. I'm gone. [*Exit.*

Flip. And do you follow him, jack-a-dandy, and see he is not surprised.

Brass. I thought that was your post, Mrs. Useful; but if you'll come and keep me in humour, I don't care if I share the duty with you.

Flip. No words, sirrah, but follow him; I have something else to do.

Brass. The jade's so absolute there's no contesting with her. [*Exit.*

Flip. An impudent rogue! But let me see, what have I to do now? This restitution will be here quickly, I suppose: in the meantime, I'll go know if my lady's ready for the quarrel yet. Master, yonder, is so full on't, he's ready to burst; but we'll give him vent, by-and-by, with a witness. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Gripe's House.*

Enter DICK *and* CORINNA.

Dick. Come, you must consent, you shall consent. How can you leave me thus upon the rack? A man who loves you to that excess that I do.

Cor. Nay, that you love me, sir, that I am satisfied in, for you have sworn you do: and I'm so pleased with it, I'd fain have you do so as long as I live, so we must never marry.

Dick. Not marry, my dear! Why, what's our love good for, if we don't marry?

Cor. Ah! I'm afraid 'twill be good for little, if we do.

Dick. Why do you think so?

Cor. Because I hear my father and mother, and my uncle and aunt, and Araminta and her husband, and twenty other married folks say so from morning to night.

Dick. Oh! that's because they are bad husbands and bad wives; but in our case there will be a good husband and a good wife, and so we shall love for ever.

Cor. Why, there may be something in that, truly; and I'm always willing to hear reason, as a reasonable young woman ought to do. But are you sure, sir, though we are very good now, we shall be so when we come to be better acquainted.

Dick. I can answer for myself, at least.

Cor. I wish you could answer for me, too. You see I am a plain dealer, sir; I hope you don't like me the worse for it.

Dick. Oh! by no means, 'tis a sign of admirable morals; and I hope, since you practice it yourself, you'll approve of it in your lover. In one word, therefore, (for 'tis in vain to mince the matter,) my resolution's fixed, and the world can't stagger me, I marry or I die.

Cor. That's very fine. Indeed, sir, I have much ado to believe you: the disease of love is seldom so violent.

Dick. Madam, I have two diseases to end my

miseries; if the first don't do it, the latter shall. (*Drawing his sword.*) One's in my heart, t'other's in my scabbard.

Cor. Not for a diadem. (*Catching hold of him.*) Ah! put it up, put it up.

Dick. How absolute is your command! (*Dropping his sword.*) A word, you see, disarms me.

Cor. What a power I have over him! (*Aside.*) The wondrous deeds of love! Pray, sir, let me have no more of these rash doings, though; perhaps I mayn't be always in the saving humour. I'm sure, if I had let him stick himself, I should have been envied by all the great ladies in the town. (*Aside.*)

Dick. Well, madam, have I, then, your promise? You'll make me the happiest of mankind?

Cor. I don't know what to say to you; but I believe I had as good promise, for I find I shall certainly do it.

Dick. Then let us seal the contract thus. (*Kisses her.*)

Cor. Um—He has almost taken away my breath; he kisses purely. (*Aside.*)

Enter Flippanta.

Flip. Come, have you agreed the matter? if not, you must end it another time, for your father's in motion; so pray kiss and part.

Cor. That's sweet and sour. (*They kiss.*) Adieu to ye, sir. [*Exeunt Dick and Cor.*

Enter Clarissa.

Clar. Have you told him I'm at home, Flippanta?

Flip. Yes, madam.

Clar. And that I'll see him?

Flip. Yes, that too: but here's news for you; I have just now received the restitution.

Clar. That's killing pleasure; and how much has he restored me?

Flip. Two hundred and thirty.

Clar. Wretched rogue! but retreat; your master's coming to quarrel. (*Takes a seat.*)

Flip. I'll be within call, if things run high. [*Exit.*

Enter Gripe.

Gripe. Oh, ho! are you there, i'faith? Madam, your humble servant; I'm very glad to see you at home, I thought I should never have had that honour again.

Clar. Good-morrow, my dear, how d'ye do? Flippanta says you are out of humour, and that you have a mind to quarrel with me: is it true? eh! I have a terrible pain in my head, I give you notice on't before-hand.

Gripe. And how the plague should it be otherwise? It's a wonder you are not dead, as I would you were, (*aside*) with the life you lead. Are you not ashamed? and do you not blush to—

Clar. My dear child, you crack my brain; soften the harshness of your voice; say what you would, but let it be in an agreeable tone—

Gripe. Tone, madam! don't tell me of a tone.

Clar. Oh! if you will quarrel, do it with temperance; let it be all in cool blood, even and smooth, as if you were not moved with what you said; and then I'll hear you, as if I were not moved with it neither.

Gripe. Had ever man such need of patience? Madam, madam, I must tell you, madam—

Clar. Another key, or I'll walk off.

Gripe. Don't provoke me.

Clar. Shall you be long, my dear, in your remonstrances?

Gripe. Yes, madam, and very long.

Clar. If you would quarrel, *en abregée*, I should have a world of obligation to you.

Gripe. What I have to say, forsooth, is not to be expressed *en abregée*; my complaints are too numerous.

Clar. Complaints! Of what, my dear? (*Rises.*) What have you in the world to disturb you?

Gripe. What have I to disturb me! I have you; death and the devil!

Clar. Ay, merciful heaven! how he swears! You should never accustom yourself to such words as these; indeed, my dear, you should not: your mouth's always full of them.

Gripe. Blood and thunder! madam—

Clar. Ah! he'll fetch the house down: do you know you make me tremble for you? Flippanta! who's there? Flippanta!

Gripe. Here's a provoking devil for you!

Enter Flippanta.

Flip. What, in the name of Jove, is the matter? you raise the neighbourhood.

Clar. Why, here's your master in a most violent fuss, and no mortal soul can tell for what.

Gripe. Not tell for what!

Clar. No, my life. I have begged him to tell me his griefs, Flippanta; and then he swears, good lord! how he does swear!

Gripe. Ah! you wicked jade, ah! you wicked jade!

Clar. Do you hear him, Flippanta! Do you hear him!

Flip. Pray, sir, let's know a little what puts you in all this fury?

Clar. Pr'ythee stand near me, Flippanta; there's an odd froth about his mouth, looks as if his poor head were going wrong. I'm afraid he'll bite.

Gripe. The wicked woman, Flippanta, the wicked woman!

Clar. Can anybody wonder I shun my own house, when he treats me at this rate in it?

Flip. Come, a little moderation, sir, and try what that will produce.

Gripe. Hang her! 'tis all a pretence to justify her going abroad.

Clar. A pretence! a pretence! Do you hear how black a charge he loads me with? Charges me with a pretence. You know, my dear, I scorn pretences: whenever I go abroad, it is without pretence.

Gripe. Give me patience.

Flip. You have a great deal, sir.

Clar. And yet he's never content, Flippanta.

Gripe. What shall I do?

Clar. What a reasonable man would do; own yourself in the wrong, and be quiet. Here's Flippanta has understanding, and I have moderation; I'm willing to make her judge of our differences.

Flip. You do me a great deal of honour, madam: but I tell you beforehand, I shall be a little on master's side.

Gripe. Right; Flippanta has sense. Come, let her decide. Have I not reason to be in a passion? tell me that.

Clar. You must tell her for what, my life.

Gripe. Why, for the trade you drive, my soul.

Flip. Look you, sir, pray take things right: I know madam does fret you a little now and then, that's true; but in the fund, she is the softest, sweetest, gentlest lady breathing. Let her but live entirely to her own fancy, and she'll never say a word to you from morning to night.

Gripe. Oons! let her but stay at home, and she shall do what she will; in reason, that is.

Flip. D'ye hear that, madam? Nay, now I must be on master's side; you see how he loves you, he desires only your company: pray give him that satisfaction, or I must pronounce against you.

Clar. Well, I agree. Thou know'st I don't love to grieve him: let him be always in a good humour, and I'll be always at home.

Flip. Look you there, sir, what would you have more?

Gripe. Well, let her keep her word, and I'll have done quarrelling.

Clar. I must not, however, so far lose the merit of my consent, as to let you think I am weary of going abroad, my dear: what I do is purely to oblige you; which, that I may be able to perform, without a relapse, I'll invent what ways I can to make my prison supportable to me.

Flip. Her prison! pretty bird! her prison! Don't that word melt you, sir?

Gripe. I must confess I did not expect to find her so reasonable.

Flip. Oh! sir, soon or late, wives come into good humour: husbands must only have a little patience to wait for it.

Clar. The innocent little diversions, dear, that I shall content myself with, will be chiefly play and company.

Gripe. Oh! I'll find you employment, your time sha'n't lie upon your hands; though if you have a mind, now, for such a companion as a—let me see —Araminta, for example; why I sha'n't be against her being with you from morning till night.

Clar. You can't oblige me more, 'tis the best woman in the world.

Gripe. Is not she?

Clar. Then, my dear, to make our home pleasant, we'll have concerts of music sometimes.

Gripe. Music in my house!

Clar. Yes, my child, we must have music, or the house will be so dull, I shall get the spleen, and be going abroad again.

Flip. Nay, she has so much complaisance for you, sir, you can't dispute such things with her.

Gripe. Ay, but if I have music—

Clar. Ay, but, sir, I must have music—

Flip. Not every day, madam don't mean.

Clar. No, bless me, no; but three concerts a-week; three days more we'll play, after dinner, at cards, and so forth; and close the evening with a handsome supper and a ball.

Gripe. A ball!

Flip. What order you see 'tis she purposes to live in! A most wonderful regularity!

Clar. And as this kind of life, so soft, so smooth, so agreeable, must needs invite a vast deal of company to partake of it, 'twill be necessary to have the decency of a porter at our door, you know.

Gripe. A porter—a scrivener have a porter, madam!

Clar. Positively, a porter.

Gripe. Why, no scrivener since Adam, ever had a porter, woman!

Clar. You will therefore be renowned in story, for having the first, my life.

Gripe. Flippanta!

Flip. Hang it, sir, never dispute a trifle; if you vex her, perhaps she'll insist upon a Swiss. (*Aside to Gripe.*)

Gripe. But, madam—

Clar. But, sir, a porter, positively, a porter; without that, the treaty's null, and I go abroad this moment.

Flip. Come, sir; never lose so advantageous a peace for a pitiful porter.

Gripe. Why, I shall be hooted at; the boys will throw stones at my porter. Besides, where shall I have money for all this expense?

Clar. My dear, who asks you for any? Don't be in a fright, chicken.

Gripe. Don't be in a fright, madam! But where, I say—

Flip. Madam plays, sir, think on that: women that play have inexhaustible mines, and wives who receive least money from their husbands, are many times those who spend the most.

Clar. So, my dear, let what Flippanta says content you. Go, my life, trouble yourself with nothing, but let me do just as I please, and all will be well. I'm going to consider of some more things to enable me to give you the pleasure of my company at home. [*Exit.*

Flip. Mirror of goodness! Pattern to all wives! Well, sure, sir, you are happiest of all husbands.

Gripe. Yes, and a miserable dog for all that, too, perhaps.

Flip. Why, what can you ask more than this matchless complaisance?

Gripe. I don't know what I can ask, and yet I'm not satisfied with what I have, neither; the devil mixes in it all, I think; complaisant or perverse, it feels just as it did.

Clar. (*Calls within.*) Flippanta!

Flip. Madam calls. I come, madam. Come, be merry, be merry, sir; you have cause, take my word for't. Poor devil! (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Gripe. I don't know that, I don't know that: but this I do know, that an honest man who has married a jade, whether she's pleased to spend her time at home or abroad, had better have lived a bachelor.

Enter Brass.

Brass. Oh! sir, I am mighty glad I have found you.

Gripe. Why, what's the matter, pr'ythee?

Brass. Can nobody hear us?

Gripe. No, no; speak quickly.

Brass. You ha'n't seen Araminta, since the last letter I carried her from you.

Gripe. Not I, I go prudently; I don't press things like your young firebrand lovers.

Brass. But seriously, sir, are you very much in love with her?

Gripe. As mortal man has been.

Brass. I'm sorry for't.

Gripe. Why so, dear Brass?

Brass. If you were never to see her more now? Suppose such a thing; do you think 'twould break your heart?

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Nay, now I see you love her; would you did not!

Gripe. My dear friend.

Brass. I had rather the devil had—pooh!—flown away with you quick, than to see you so much in love, as I perceive you are, since—

Gripe. Since what?—oh!

Brass. Araminta, sir.

Gripe. Dead?

Brass. No.

Gripe. How then?

Brass. Worse.

Gripe. Out with it.

Brass. Broke.

Gripe. Broke!

Brass. She is, poor lady, in the most unfortunate situation of affairs. But I have said too much.

Gripe. No, no, 'tis very sad; but let's hear it.

Brass. Sir, she charged me, on my life, never to mention it to you, of all men living.

Gripe. Why, who shouldst thou tell it to, but to the best of her friends?

Brass. Ay, why? there it is now, it's going just as I fancied. Now will I be hanged if you are not enough in love to be engaging in this matter. But I must tell you, sir, that as much concern as I have for that most excellent, beautiful, agreeable, distressed, unfortunate lady, I'm too much your friend and servant, ever to let it be said, 'twas the means of your being ruined for a woman, by letting you know, she esteemed you more than any other man upon earth.

Gripe. Ruined! what dost thou mean?

Brass. Mean! Why, I mean that women always ruin those that love 'em, that's the rule.

Gripe. The rule!

Brass. Yes, the rule; why, would you have 'em ruin those that don't? How shall they bring that about?

Gripe. But is there a necessity, then, they should ruin somebody?

Brass. Yes, marry is there: how would you have 'em support their expense else? Why, sir, you can't conceive now, you can't conceive what Araminta's privy purse requires. Only her privy purse, sir! Why, what do you imagine now she gave me for the last letter I carried her from you? 'Tis true, 'twas from a man she liked, else, perhaps, I had my bones broken. But what do you think she gave me?

Gripe. Why, mayhap, a shilling.

Brass. A guinea, sir, a guinea. You see by that how fond she was on't, by-the-by. But, then, sir, her coach-hire, her chair-hire, her pin-money, her play-money, her china, and her charity—would consume peers; a great soul, a very great soul! but what's the end of all this?

Gripe. Ha!

Brass. Why, I'll tell you what the end is—a nunnery.

Gripe. A nunnery!

Brass. A nunnery; in short, she is at last reduced to that extremity, and attacked with such a battalion of duns, that rather than tell her husband, who you know is such a rogue, (he'd let her go if she did,) she has e'en determined to turn Papist, and bid the world adieu for life.

Gripe. Oh, terrible! a Papist?

Brass. Yes; when a handsome woman has brought herself into difficulties, the devil can't help her out of—To a nunnery, that's another rule, sir.

Gripe. But, but, but, pr'ythee, Brass, but—

Brass. But all the buts in the world, sir, won't stop her: she's a woman of a noble resolution. So, sir, your humble servant; I pity her, I pity you. Turtle and mate; but the fates will have it so: all's packed up, and I'm now going to call her a coach, for she resolves to slip off without saying a word: and the next visit she receives from her friends will be through a melancholy grate, with a veil over her face. (*Going.*)

Gripe. It must not be; by the powers it must not; she was made for the world, and the world was made for her. Is there no way to save her?

Brass. Save her! No; how can she be saved? Why, she owes above five hundred pounds.

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Five hundred pounds, sir; she's like to be saved indeed; not but that I know them in this town would give me one of the five, if I would persuade her to accept of the other four; but she had forbid me mentioning it to any soul living: and I have disobeyed her only to you; and so—I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold! dost think, my poor Brass, one might not order it so, as to compound those debts for—for twelve-pence in the pound?

Brass. Sir, d'ye hear? I have already tried 'em with ten shillings, and not a rogue will prick up his ears at it. Though, after all, for three hundred pounds, all in glittering gold, I could set their chops a watering. But where's that to be had with honour? there's the thing, sir—I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold, once more; I have a note in my closet of two hundred, ay—and fifty, I'll go and give it her myself. (*Going.*)

Brass. You will? Very genteel, truly. Go, slap-dash, and offer a woman of her scruples money, bolt in her face! why, you might as well offer a scorpion, and she'd as soon touch it.

Gripe. Shall I carry it to her creditors, then, and treat with them?

Brass. Ay, that's a rare thought.

Gripe. Is not it, Brass?

Brass. Only one little inconvenience by the way.

Gripe. As how?

Brass. That they are your wife's creditors as well as her's; and, perhaps, it might not be altogether so well to see you clearing the debts of your neighbour's wife, and leaving those of your wife unpaid.

Gripe. Why, that's true, now.

Brass. I'm wise, you see, sir.

Gripe. Thou art; and I'm but a young lover: but what shall we do, then?

Brass. Why, I'm thinking that if you give me the note, do you see; and that I promise to give you an account of it—

Gripe. Ay, but look you, Brass—

Brass. But look you! Why, what, d'ye think I'm a pick-pocket? D'ye think I intend to run away with your note? your paltry note!

Gripe. I don't say so; I say only that in case—

Brass. Case, sir! there's no case but the case I have put you; and since you heap cases upon cases, where there is but three hundred rascally pounds in the case—I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Pr'ythee, don't be so testy; come, no more words, follow me to my closet, and I'll give thee the money.

Brass. A terrible effort you make indeed; you—

Gripe. Well, say no more, thou shalt be satisfied. [*Exit.*

Enter Dick.

Dick. Hist! Brass! Hist!

Brass. Well, sir.

Dick. 'Tis not well, sir, 'tis very ill, sir; we shall be all blown up.

Brass. What, with pride and plenty?

Dick. No, sir, with an officious slut that will spoil all. In short, Flippanta has been telling her mistress and Araminta of my passion for the young gentlewoman; and, truly, to oblige me, supposed no ill match by-the by, they are resolved to propose it immediately to her father.

Brass. That's the devil! we shall come to papers and parchments, jointures and settlements; relations meet on both sides; that's the devil.

Dick. I intended this very day to propose to Flippanta the carrying her off: and I'm sure the young housewife would have tucked up her coats, and have marched.

Brass. Ay, with the body and the soul of her.

Dick. Why, then, what d—d luck is this?

Brass. 'Tis your luck, not mine: I have always seen it in your ugly phiz—Plague take ye! he'll be hanged at last. Why don't you try to get her off yet?

Dick. I have no money, you dog: you know you have stripped me of every penny.

Brass. Come, I'll venture one cargo more upon you; but if ever I see one glance of your hempen fortune again, I'm off your partnership for ever. I shall never thrive with him.

Dick. An impudent rogue! but he's in possession of my estate, so I must bear with him. (*Aside.*)

Brass. Well, come, I'll raise a hundred pounds for your use upon my wife's jewels here. (*Pulling out the necklace.*) Her necklace shall pawn for't.

Dick. Remember, though that if things fail, I'm to have the necklace again; you know you agreed to that.

Brass. Yes; and if I make it good, you'll be the better for't; if not, I shall! so you see where the cause will pinch.

Dick. Why, you barbarous dog, you won't offer to—

Brass. No words now; about your business, march. Go stay for me at the next tavern; I'll go to Flippanta, and try what I can do for you.

Dick. Well, I'll go, but don't think to—Oh! plague, sir— [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Gripe's House.*

Enter MONEYTRAP *and* FLIPPANTA.

Mon. Well, my best friend, how go matters? Has the restitution been received, eh? Was she pleased with it?

Flip. Yes, truly? that is, she was pleased to see there was so honest a man in this immoral age.

Mon. Well, but a—does she know that 'twas I that—

Flip. Why, you must know I begun to give her a little sort of a hint, and—and so—why, and so she begun to put on a sort of a severe, haughty, reserved, angry, forgiving air. But soft; here she comes, you'll see how you stand with her presently: but don't be afraid. Courage!

Mon. Hem!

Enter CLARISSA.

'Tis no small piece of good fortune, madam, to find you at home: I have often endeavoured it in vain.

Clar. 'Twas then unknown to me; for if I could often receive the visits of so good a friend at home, I should be more reasonably blamed for being so much abroad.

Mon. Madam, you make me—

Clar. You are the man of the world whose company, I think, is most to be desired. I don't compliment you, when I tell you so, I assure you.

Mon. Alas! madam, your poor humble servant.

Clar. My poor humble servant, however, (with all the esteem I have for him,) stands suspected with me for a vile trick, I doubt he has played me; which if I could prove upon him, I'm afraid I should punish him very severely.

Mon. I hope, madam, you'll believe I am not capable of—

Flip. No fine speeches, you'll spoil all. (*Aside to Mon.*)

Mon. Thou art a most incomparable person. (*Aside to Flip.*)

Flip. Nay, it goes rarely; but get you in, and I'll say a little something to my lady for you while she's warm. (*Aside to Mon.*)

Mon. But, Flippanta, how long dost think she may hold out?

Flip. Pooh! not a twelvemonth.

Mon. Boo!

Flip. Away! I say. [*Pushing him out.*

Clar. Is he gone? What a wretch it is?

Flip. Poor mortal, his money's finely laid out, truly.

Clar. (*Advancing.*) I suppose there may have been much such another scene within, between Araminta and my dear: but I left him so insupportably brisk, 'tis impossible he can have parted with any money: I'm afraid Brass has not succeeded as thou hast done, Flippanta.

Flip. By my faith, but he has, and better too; he presents his humble duty to Araminta, and has sent her—this. (*Shewing the note.*)

Clar. A bill from my love for two hundred and fifty pounds. The monster! he would not part with ten to save his lawful wife from everlasting torment.

Flip. Never complain of his avarice, madam, as long as you have his money. But which way will you go to receive it? for I must not appear with his note.

Clar. That's true; why, send for Mrs. Amlet; that's a mighty useful woman, that Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. Marry is she; we should have been basely puzzled how to dispose of the necklace without her; 'twould have been dangerous offering it for sale.

Clar. It would so, for I know your master has been laying out for't amongst the goldsmiths. But I stay here too long; I must in and coquette it a little more with my lover; Araminta will get ground on me else. [*Exit.*

Flip. And I'll go send for Mrs. Amlet. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment.*

GRIPE, CORINNA, ARAMINTA *and* MONEYTRAP, *discovered.*

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Mon. Mighty well, oh! mighty well, indeed.

Enter CLARISSA.

Clar. Save you, save you, good folks! you are all in rare humour, methinks.

Gripe. Why, what should we be otherwise for, madam?

Clar. Nay, I don't know, not I, my dear; but I haven't had the happiness of seeing you so since our honeymoon was over, I think.

Gripe. Why, to tell you the truth, my dear, 'tis the joy of seeing you at home; (*kisses her, and leads her to a seat*) you see what charms you have, you are pleased to make use of 'em.

Aram. Very gallant, truly.

Clar. Nay, and what's more, you must know he's never to be otherwise, henceforwards; we have come to an agreement about it.

Mon. Why, here's my love and I have been upon just such another treaty too.

Aram. Well, sure there's some very peaceful star rules at present. Pray heaven continue its reign.

Mon. Pray do you continue its reign, you ladies, for 'tis all in your power. (*Leering at Clarissa.*)

Gripe. My neighbour Moneytrap says true, at least I'll confess frankly, (*ogling Araminta,*) 'tis in one lady's power to make me the best-humoured man on earth.

Mon. And I'll answer for another, that has the same over me. (*Ogling Clarissa.*)

Clar. 'Tis mighty fine, gentlemen; mighty civil husbands, indeed.

Gripe. Nay, what I say's true, and so true, that all quarrels being now at an end, I am willing, if you please to dispense with all that fine company we talked of to-day, be content with the friendly conversation of our two good neighbours here, and spend all my toying hours alone with my sweet wife.

Mon. Why, truly, I think now, if these good women pleased, we might make up the prettiest little neighbourly company, between our two families, and set a defiance to all the impertinent people in the world.

Aram. Indeed I doubt you'd soon grow weary, if we grew fond.

Gripe. Never, never; for our wives have wit, neighbour, and that never palls.

Clar. And our husbands have generosity, Araminta, and that seldom palls.

Gripe. So, that's a wipe for me now, because I did not give her a new year's gift last time; but be good, and I'll think of some tea-cups for you next year.

Mon. And, perhaps, I mayn't forget a fan, or as good a thing—um! hussy.

Clar. Well, upon these encouragements, Araminta, we'll try how good we can be.

Gripe. Well, this goes most rarely: poor Moneytrap, he little thinks what makes his wife so easy in his company. (*Aside.*)

Mon. I can but pity poor neighbour Gripe.

Lard, lard! what a fool do his wife and I make of him. (*Aside.*)

Clar. Are not these two wretched rogues, Araminta? (*Aside to Aram.*)

Aram. They are indeed. (*Aside to Clar.*)

Enter Jessamine.

Jess. Sir, here's Mr. Clip, the goldsmith, desires to speak with you. [*Exit.*

Gripe. 'Cod's so, perhaps some news of your necklace, my dear.

Clar. That would be news, indeed.

Gripe. Let him come in. (*Rises.*)

Enter Mr. Clip.

Mr. Clip, your servant, I'm glad to see you: how do you do?

Clip. At your service, sir, very well. Your servant, Madam Gripe.

Clar. Horrid fellow! (*Aside.*)

Gripe. Well, Mr. Clip, no news yet of my wife's necklace?

Clip. If you please to let me speak with you in the next room, I have something to say to you.

Gripe. Ay, with all my heart. Neighbour Moneytrap, be so good as to take the ladies into the next room. [*Exeunt Mon. and Ladies.*] Well, any news?

Clip. Lookye, sir, here's a necklace brought me to sell, at least very like that you described to me.

Gripe. Let's see't—Victoria! the very same. Ah! my dear Mr. Clip. But who brought it you? you should have seized him.

Clip. 'Twas a young fellow that I know: I can't tell whether he may be guilty, though it's like enough. But he has only left it me now, to shew a brother of our trade, and will call upon me again presently.

Gripe. Wheedle him hither, dear Mr. Clip. Here's my neighbour Moneytrap in the house; he's a justice, and will commit him presently.

Clip. 'Tis enough.

Enter Brass.

Gripe. Oh! my friend Brass.

Brass. Hold! sir, I think that is a gentleman I'm looking for. Mr. Clip! what are you acquainted here? I have just been at your shop.

Clip. I only stepped here to shew Mr. Gripe the necklace you left.

Brass. Why, sir, do you understand jewels? (*To Gripe.*) But I smoke the matter, harkye! a word in your ear; you are going to play the gallant again, and make a purchase on't for Araminta, eh, eh?

Gripe. Where had you the necklace?

Brass. Don't you trouble yourself about that; it's in commission with me, and I can help you to a pennyworth on't.

Gripe. A pennyworth on't, villain? (*Strikes at him.*)

Brass. Villain! a-hey, a-hey? Is't you or me, Mr. Clip, he's pleased to compliment?

Clip. What do you think on't, sir?

Brass. Think on't! now the devil fetch me if I know what to think on't.

Gripe. You'll sell a pennyworth, rogue! of a thing you have stolen from me.

Brass. Stolen! Pray, sir, what wine have you drunk to-day? It has a very merry effect upon you.

Gripe. You villain! either give me an account how you stole it, or—

Brass. Oh, ho! sir, if you please, don't carry your jest too far. I don't understand hard words, I give you warning on't: if you haven't a mind to buy the necklace, you may let it alone; I know how to dispose on't. What a plague—

Gripe. Oh! you sha'n't have that trouble, sir. Dear Mr. Clip, you may leave the necklace here. I'll call at your shop and thank you for your care.

Clip. Sir, your humble servant. (*Going.*)

Brass. Oh, ho! Mr. Clip, if you please, sir, this won't do. (*Stopping him.*) I don't understand raillery in such matters.

Clip. I leave it with Mr. Gripe, do you and he dispute it. [*Exit.*

Brass. Ay, but 'tis from you, by your leave, sir, that I expect it. (*Going after him.*)

Gripe. You expect, you rogue, to make your escape, do you? But I have other accounts besides this, to make up with you. To be sure, the dog has cheated me of two hundred and fifty pounds. Come, villain, give me an account of—

Brass. Account of!—Sir, give me an account of my necklace, or I'll make such a noise in your house, I'll raise the devil in it.

Gripe. Well said, courage.

Brass. Blood and thunder! give it me, or—

Gripe. Come, hush, be wise, and I'll make no noise of this affair.

Brass. You'll make no noise; but I'll make a noise, and a d—d noise, too. Oh! don't think to—

Gripe. I tell thee I will not hang thee.

Brass. But I tell you I will hang you, if you don't give me my necklace. I will, rot me!

Gripe. Speak softly; be wise; how came it thine? who gave it thee?

Brass. A gentleman, a friend of mine.

Gripe. What was his name?

Brass. His name! I'm in such a passion, I have forgot it.

Gripe. Ah! brazen rogue, thou hast stolen it from my wife; 'tis the same she lost six weeks ago.

Brass. This has not been in England a month.

Gripe. You are a son of a w——.

Brass. Give me my necklace.

Gripe. Give me my two hundred and fifty pound note. My bill, haog-dog! or I'll strangle thee. (*They struggle.*)

Brass. Murder, murder!

Enter Clarissa, Araminta, Corinna, Flippanta, *and* Moneytrap.

Flip. What's the matter? what's the matter, here?

Gripe. I'll matter him.

Clar. Who makes thee cry out thus, poor Brass?

Brass. Why, your husband, madam; he has cheated me of a diamond necklace.

Cor. Who, papa? Ah! dear me.

Clar. Pr'ythee, what's the meaning of this great emotion, my dear?

Gripe. The meaning is, that—I'm quite out of breath; this son of a w—— has got your necklace, that's all.

Clar. My necklace!

Gripe. That birdlime there—stole it. But, call a constable presently. Neighbour Moneytrap, you'll commit him.

Brass. D'ye hear? d'ye hear? he's touched; see how wild he looks: how his eyes roll in his head: tie him down, or he'll do some mischief or other.

Gripe. Let me come at him.

Clar. Hold! pr'ythee, my dear, reduce things to a little temperance, and let us coolly into the secret of this disagreeable rupture.

Gripe. Well, then, without passion; why, you must know, (but I'll have him hanged,) you must know that he came to Mr. Clip, to Mr. Clip the dog did, with a necklace to sell; so Mr. Clip having notice before that, (can you deny this, sirrah?) that you had lost your's, brings it me. Look at it here, do you know it again? (*Giving the necklace to Clar.*) Ay, you traitor! (*To Brass.*)

Flip. (*Clar. shews the necklace to Flippanta.*) 'Tis

it, faith! here's some mystery in this; we must look about us. (*Aside to Clar.*)

Clar. The safest way is point blank to disown the necklace. (*Aside to Flip.*)

Flip. Right, stick to that. (*Aside to Clar.*)

Gripe. Well, madam, do you know your old acquaintance, eh?

Clar. Why, truly, my dear, though (as you may all imagine) I should be very glad to recover so valuable a thing as my necklace, yet I must be just to all the world: this necklace is not mine.

Flip. No, that's not my lady's necklace.

Brass. Huzza! Mr. Justice, I demand my necklace, and satisfaction of him.

Gripe. I'll die before I part with it; I'll keep it, and have him hanged.

Clar. But be a little calm, my dear; do, my bird, and then thou'lt be able to judge rightly of things.

Gripe. Oh! good lack, oh! good lack.

Clar. No, but don't give way to fury and interest both, either of them are passions strong enough to lead a wise man out of the way. The necklace not being really mine, give it the man again, and come and drink a dish of tea.

Gripe. Oons! if you, with your addle-head, don't know your own jewels, I, with my solid one, do. And, if I part with it, may famine be my portion.

Clar. But don't swear and curse thyself at this fearful rate; don't, my dove; be temperate in your words, and just in all your actions, 'twill bring a blessing upon you and your family.

Gripe. Bring thunder and lightning upon me and my family, if I part with my necklace.

Clar. Why, you'll have the lightning burn your house about your ears, my dear, if you go on in these practices.

Mon. A most excellent woman this. (*Aside.*)

Gripe. I'll keep my necklace.

Brass. Will you so? then here comes one has a title to it, if I haven't; let Dick bring himself off with her as he can.

Enter MRS. AMLET.

Mrs. Amlet, you are come in very good time, you lost a necklace t'other day, and who do you think has it?

Mrs. A. Marry, that I know not, I wish I did.

Brass. Why, then, here's Mr. Gripe has it, and swears 'tis his wife's.

Gripe. And so I do, sirrah; look here, mistress, do you pretend this is your's?

Mrs. A. Not for the round world, I would not say it; I only kept it to do madam a small courtesy, that's all.

Clar. Ah! Flippanta, all will out now. (*Aside to Flippanta.*)

Gripe. Courtesy! what courtesy?

Mrs. A. A little money only, that madam had present need of; please to pay me that, and I demand no more.

Gripe. How, forsooth, is this true. (*To Clar.*)

Clar. You are in a humour at present, love, to believe anything, so I won't take the pains to contradict it.

Gripe. Are you not ashamed of these ways? Do you see how you are exposed before your best friends here? Don't you blush at it?

Clar. I do blush, my dear; but 'tis for you, that here it should appear to the world, you keep me so bare of money, I'm forced to pawn my jewels.

Gripe. Impudent huswife? (*Raising his hand to strike her; Moneytrap interposes.*)

Clar. Softly, chicken; you might have prevented all this, by giving me the two hundred and fifty pounds you sent to Araminta even now.

Brass. You see, sir, I delivered your note: how I have been abused to-day!

Gripe. I'm betrayed; Jades on both sides, I see that. (*Aside.*)

Mon. But madam, madam, is this true that I hear? Have you taken a present of two hundred and fifty pounds? Pray, what were you to return for these pounds, madam, eh?

Aram. Nothing, my dear, I only took 'em to reimburse you of about the same sum you sent to Clarissa.

Mon. Hem!

Gripe. How, gentlewoman, did you receive money from him?

Clar. Oh! my dear, 'twas only in jest; I knew you'd give it again to his wife.

Mrs. A. But amongst all this bustle, I don't hear a word of my hundred pounds. Is it madam will pay me, or master?

Gripe. I pay! the devil shall pay.

Clar. Lookye, my dear, malice apart, pay Mrs. Amlet her money, and I'll forgive you coquetting with Araminta: am I not a good wife now?

Gripe. I burst with rage, and will get rid of this noose, though I tuck myself up in another.

Mon. Nay, pray even tuck me up with you.

[*Exeunt Mon. and Gripe.*

Clar. and Aram. B'ye, dearies.

Enter DICK.

Cor. Look, look, Flippanta, here's the Colonel come at last.

Dick. Ladies, I ask your pardon, I have staid so long, but—

Mrs. A. Ah! rogue's face, have I got thee, old good-for-nought? Sirrah, sirrah! do you think to amuse me with your marriages, and your great fortunes? Thou hast played me a rare prank, by my conscience. Why, you ungracious rascal, what do you think will be the end of all this? Now, heaven forgive me, but I have a great mind to hang thee for't.

Cor. She talks to him very familiarly, Flippanta.

Flip. So methinks, by my faith.

Brass. Now the rogue's star is making an end of him. (*Aside.*)

Dick. What shall I do with her? (*Aside.*)

Mrs. A. Do but look at him, my dames, he has the countenance of a cherubim, but he's a rogue in his heart.

Clar. What is the meaning of all this, Mrs. Amlet?

Mrs. A. The meaning, good lack? Why, this all-to-be-powdered rascal, here, is my son, an't please you, eh, graceless? Now I'll make you own your mother, vermin!

Clar. What, the Colonel your son?

Mrs. A. 'Tis Dick, madam, that rogue Dick, I have so often told you of, with tears trickling down my old cheeks.

Aram. The woman's mad, it can never be.

Mrs. A. Speak, rogue, am I not thy mother, eh? Did I not bring thee forth, say then?

Dick. What will you have me say? You had a mind to ruin me, and you have done it; would you do any more?

Clar. Then, sir, you are son to good Mrs. Amlet?

Aram. And have had the assurance to put upon us all this while.

Flip. And the confidence to think of marrying Corinna.

Brass. And the impudence to hire me for your servant, who am as well born as yourself.

Clar. Indeed, I think he should be corrected.

Aram. Indeed, I think he deserves to be cudgelled.

Flip. Indeed, I think he might be pumped upon.

Brass. Indeed, I think he will be hanged.

Mrs. A. Good lack-a-day! good lack-a-day! there's no need to be so smart upon him neither: if he's not a gentleman, he's a gentleman's fellow. Come hither, Dick, they sha'n't run thee down neither; cock up thy hat, Dick, and tell them, though Mrs. Amlet is thy mother, she can make thee amends, with ten thousand good pounds to buy thee some lands, and build thee a house in the midst on't.

All. How!

Clar. Ten thousand pounds, Mrs. Amlet!

[*Dick drives Brass off.*

Mrs. A. (*To Clar.*) Yes, forsooth; though I should lose the hundred you pawned your necklace for. Tell 'em of that, Dick.

Cor. Lookye, Flippanta, I can hold no longer, and hate to see the young man abused. And so, sir, if you please, I'm your friend and servant, and what's mine is your's; and when our estates are put together, I don't doubt but we shall do as well as the best of them.

Dick. Say'st thou so, my little queen? Why then if my dear mother will give us her blessing, the parson shall give us a tack. We'll get her a score of grand-children, and a merry house we'll make her. (*They kneel to Mrs. A.*)

Mrs. A. Ha, ha, ha! the pretty pair, the pretty pair! rise, my chickens, rise, rise and face the proudest of them. And if madam does not deign to give her consent, a fig for her. Why, how now?

Clar. Pray, Mrs. Amlet, don't be in a passion, the girl is my husband's girl, and if you can have his consent, upon my word, you shall have mine, for anything that belongs to him.

Flip. Then all's peace again, but we have been more lucky than wise.

Aram. And I suppose for us, Clarissa, we are to go on with our dears as we used to.

Clar. Just in the same track; for this late treaty of agreement with them was so unnatural, you see it could not hold. But 'tis just as well with us as if it had. Well, 'tis a strange fate, good folks. But while you live, everything gets well out of a broil, but a husband.

Flip. *From this example, let each wedded pair,*
That would the solid joys of wedlock share,
Avoid the trifling follies of the town,
Where no substantial joys were ever known;
And hold, as the most certain joys of life,
An honest husband, and a virtuous wife.

[*Exeunt.*

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY SIR RICHARD STEELE.



Act V.—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

SIR JOHN BEVIL	MYRTLE	HUMPHREY	INDIANA
SEALAND	CIMBERTON	MRS. SEALAND	LUCINDA
BEVIL	TOM	ISABELLA	PHILLIS

ACT I.—SCENE I.—*Sir John Bevil's House.*

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL *and* HUMPHREY.

Sir J. Have you ordered that I should not be interrupted while I am dressing?

Hum. Yes, sir; I believed you had something of moment to say to me.

Sir J. I'll tell thee, then. In the first place, this wedding of my son's, in all probability—shut the door—will never be at all.

Hum. How, sir! not be at all? For what reason is it carried on in appearance?

Sir J. Honest Humphrey, have patience, and I'll tell thee all in order. I have myself, in some part of my life, lived, indeed, with freedom, but I hope without reproach: now I thought liberty would be as little injurious to my son; therefore, as soon as he grew towards man, I indulged him in living after his own manner. I know not how otherwise to judge of his inclination; for what can be concluded from a behaviour under restraint and fear? But what charms me above all expression is, that my son has never, in the least action, the most distant hint or word, valued himself upon that great estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage settlement, he has had ever since he came to age.

Hum. No, sir; on the contrary, he seems afraid of appearing to enjoy it before you, or any belonging to you. He is as dependent and resigned to your will as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty. You have ever acted like a good and generous father, and he like an obedient and grateful son.

Sir J. To be short, Humphrey, his reputation was so fair in the world, that old Sealand, the great India merchant, has offered his only daughter, and sole heiress to that vast estate of his, as a wife for him. You may be sure I made no difficulties; the match was agreed on, and this very day named for the wedding.

Hum. What hinders the proceeding?

Sir J. Don't interrupt me. You know I was, last Thursday, at the masquerade; my son, you may remember, soon found us out. He knew his grandfather's habit, which I then wore; and though it was in the mode of the last age, yet the maskers, you know, followed us as if we had been the most monstrous figures in that whole assembly.

Hum. I remember, indeed, a young man of quality, in the habit of a clown, that was particularly troublesome.

Sir J. Right; he was too much what he seemed to be. You remember how impertinently he followed and teased us, and would know who we were.

Hum. I know he has a mind to come into that particular. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. Ay, he followed us till the gentleman, who led the lady in the Indian mantle, presented that gay creature to the rustic, and bid him (like Cymon in the fable) grow polite, by falling in love, and let that worthy old gentleman alone, meaning me. The clown was not reformed, but rudely persisted, and offered to force off my mask: with that the gentleman, throwing off his own, appeared to be my son; and, in his concern for me, tore off that of the nobleman. At this they seized each other, the company called the guards, and, in the surprise, the lady swooned away; upon which, my son quitted his adversary, and had now no care but of the lady; when, raising her in his arms, "Art thou gone," cried he, "for ever?—Forbid it heaven!" She revives at his known voice, and with the most familiar, though modest, gesture, hangs in safety over his shoulders, weeping; but wept, as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation. While she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

Hum. I have observed this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

Sir J. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty, the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzzed about she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea officer, who had served in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her—

Hum. Was what, I suppose, alarmed Mr. Sealand, in behalf of his daughter, to break off the match?

Sir J. You are right: he came to me yesterday, and said he thought himself disengaged from the bargain; being credibly informed my son was already married, or worse, to the lady at the masquerade. I palliated matters, and insisted on our agreement; but we parted with little less than a direct breach between us.

Hum. Well, sir, and what notice have you taken of all this to my young master?

Sir J. That's what I wanted to debate with you. But lookye, Humphrey, if there is so much in this amour of his, that he denies upon my summons to marry, I have cause enough to be offended; and, then, by my insisting upon his marrying to-day, I shall know how far he is engaged to this lady in masquerade, and from thence only shall be able to take my measures. In the meantime, I would have you find out how far that rogue, his man, is let into his secret: he, I know, will play tricks as much to cross me as to serve his master.

Hum. Why do you think so of him, sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you at your son's age.

Sir J. I see it in the rascal's looks. But I have dwelt on these things too long: I'll go to my son immediately; and, while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue, Tom, that I'm in earnest. I'll leave him to you. [*Exit.*

Hum. Well, though this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain, is attended with constant, mutual uneasiness. I am sure I have enough to do to be honest, and yet keep well with them both; but they know I love 'em, and that makes the task less painful, however. Oh! here's the prince of poor coxcombs, the representative of all the better fed than taught.—Ho, ho, Tom! whither so gay and so airy this morning?

Enter Tom, *singing.*

Tom. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are another kind of people than you domestic, ordinary drudges, that do business; we are raised above you: the pleasures of board wages, tavern dinners, and many a clear gain—vails, alas! you never heard or dreamt of.

Hum. Thou hast follies and vices enough for a man of ten thousand a year; though it is but as t'other day that I sent for you to town to put you into Mr. Sealand's family, that you might learn a little before I put you to my young master, who is too gentle for training such a rude thing as you were into proper obedience. You then pulled off your hat to every one you met in the street, like a bashful, great, awkward cub as you were. But your great oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became you much better than that dangling stick at your button, now you are a fop; that's fit for nothing, except it hangs there to be ready for your master's hand when you are impertinent.

Tom. Uncle Humphrey, you know my master scorns to strike his servants. You talk as if the world was now just as it was when my old master and you were in your youth; when you went to dinner because it was so much o'clock; when the great blow was given in the hall at the pantry door, and all the family came out of their holes, in such strange dresses and formal faces as you see in the pictures in our long gallery in the country.

Hum. Why, you wild rogue!—

Tom. You could not fall to your dinner till a formal fellow, in a black gown, said something over the meat, as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

Hum. Sirrah, who do you prate after? despising men of sacred characters? I hope you never heard my young master talk so like a profligate?

Tom. Sir, I say you put upon me, when I first came to town, about being orderly, and the doctrine of wearing shams to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my clothes fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

Hum. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons because I supposed, at that time, your master and you might have dined at home every day, and cost you nothing; then you might have made a good family servant; but the gang you have frequented since at chocolate-houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance—

Tom. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen who are well fed and cut a figure, sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows who are kept only to be looked at.

Hum. Very well, sir; I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at an end, since it is arrived at persons of your quality.

Tom. Master Humphrey, ha, ha! you were an unhappy lad to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were. Why now, sir, the lackeys are the men of pleasure of the age; the top gamesters; and many a laced coat about town have had their education in our party-coloured regiment. We are false lovers, have a taste for music, poetry, and billet-doux, dress, politics, rnin damsels; and when we are weary of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our masters' wigs, and marry fortunes.

Hum. Heyday!

Tom. Nay, sir, our order is carried up to the highest dignities and distinctions: step but into the Painted Chamber, and by our titles you'd take us all for men of quality; then again, come down to the Court of Requests, and you shall see us all laying our broken heads together for the good of the nation; and though we never carry a question *nemine contradicente*, yet this I can say with a safe conscience (and I wish every gentleman of our cloth could lay his hand upon his heart and say the same), that I never took so much as a single mug of beer for my vote in all my life.

Hum. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance; I'll hear you prate no longer: I wanted to see you to inquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them. I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day?

Tom. Ay, sir, he knows it, and is dressed as gay as the sun; but between you and I, my dear, he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dressed I retired, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walked thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet: when he came out he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid, you know—

Hum. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

Tom. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, operas, and ridottos, for the winter; the Parks and Bell-size for our summer diversions; and, "Lard!" says she, "you are so wild, but you have a world of humour."

Hum. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs. Lucinda, as he ordered you? [at as you think for.

Tom. Because Mrs. Lucinda is not so easily come

Hum. Not easily come at? Why, sir, are not her father and my old master agreed that she and Mr. Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

Tom. It's no matter for that; her mother, it

seems, Mrs. Sealand, has not agreed to it; and you must know, Mr. Humphrey, that, in that family, the grey mare is the better horse.

Hum. What dost thou mean?

Tom. In one word, Mrs. Sealand pretends to have a will of her own, and has provided a relation of her's, a stiff-starched philosopher, and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffered no message or letter from my master to come near her.

Hum. And where had you this intelligence?

Tom. From a foolish fond soul, that can keep nothing from me; one that will deliver this letter, too, if she is rightly managed.

Hum. What, her pretty handmaid, Mrs. Phillis?

Tom. Even she, sir. This is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to our housekeeper, forsooth; but in reality to have a glance at—

Hum. Your sweet face, I warrant you.

Tom. Nothing else in nature. You must know, I love to fret and play with the little wanton.

Hum. Play with the little wanton! What will this world come to!

Tom. I met her this morning in a new mantua and petticoat, not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing, and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new clothes; then she never fails to steal some glance or gesture from every visitant at their house, and is, indeed, the whole town of coquettes at second-hand. But here she comes; in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

Hum. Then I hope, dear sir! when your own affair is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

Tom. Dear Humphrey! you know my master is my friend; and those are people I never forget.

Hum. Sauciness itself! but I'll leave you to do your best for him. [*Exit.*

Enter PHILLIS.

Phil. Oh! Mr. Thomas, is Mrs. Sugarkey at home? Lard! one is almost ashamed to pass along the streets. The town is quite empty, and nobody of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do stare to see anything dressed like a woman of condition pass by. Alas, alas! it is a sad thing to walk. Oh! fortune, fortune!

Tom. What! a sad thing to walk? Why, Madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

Phil. No, Mr. Thomas; but I wish I were generally carried in a coach or a chair, and of a fortune neither to stand nor go, but to totter or slide, to be short-sighted or stare, to fleer in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook, yet all become me; and if I were rich I could twire and loll as well as the best of them. Oh! Tom, Tom! is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquette, and yet be such poor devils as we are? [for that.

Tom. Mrs. Phillis, I am your humble servant

Phil. Yes, Mr. Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and know what you said to Mrs. Judy, upon seeing her in one of her lady's cast mantuas—that any one would have thought her the lady, and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy (for now only it was becoming); to my lady it was only a covering, to Mrs. Judy it was a habit. This you said after somebody or other. Oh! Tom, Tom! thou art as false and as base as the best gentleman of them all: but you, wretch! talk to me no more on the old odious subject: don't, I say.

Tom. I know not how to resist your commands, madam. (*In a submissive tone, retiring.*)

Phil. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you, of late.

Tom. Oh! I have her; I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon and set a prating. (*Aside.*) Why, truly, to be plain with you, Mrs. Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house?

Phil. Pray, Mr. Thomas, what is it all of a sudden offends your nicety at our house?

Tom. I don't care to speak particulars; but I dislike the whole.

Phil. I thank you, sir; I am a part of that whole.

Tom. Mistake me not, good Phillis. [ever—

Phil. Good Phillis! saucy enough. But, how-

Tom. I say it is that thou art a part which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, madam, to be serious, I am a man at the bottom, of prodigious nice honour. You are too much exposed to company at your house. To be plain, I don't like so many, that would be your mistress's lovers, whispering to you.

Phil. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this because I wrung you to the heart when I touched your guilty conscience about Judy.

Tom. Ah! Phillis, Phillis! if you but knew my

Phil. I know too much on't. [heart!

Tom. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides she is a poor hussy; and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis—

Phil. What would the fop be at now? (*Aside.*) In good time, indeed, you shall be setting up for a fortune.

Tom. Dear Mrs. Phillis! you have such a spirit, that we shall never be dull in marriage, when we come together. But I tell you, you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands. (*He pulls out a purse, she eyes it.*) [hands, Mr. Thomas?

Phil. What pretence have I to what is in your

Tom. As thus: there are hours, you know, when a lady is neither pleased nor displeased, neither sick nor well, when she lolls or loiters, when she is without desires, from having more of everything than she knows what to do with.

Phil. Well, what then?

Tom. When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open to look at her own dear image in the glass. [thy own prating.

Phil. Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of

Tom. There are also prosperous and good-natured moments; as when a knot or a patch is happily fixed, when the complexion particularly flourishes.

Phil. Well, what then? I have not patience!

Tom. Why, then, or on the like occasions, we servants who have skill to know how to time business, see when such a pretty folded thing as this (*shews a letter*) may be presented, laid, or dropped, as best suits the present humour. And, madam, because it is a long wearisome journey to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this to bear your charges on the road. (*Gives her the purse.*)

Phil. Now you think me a corrupt hussy.

Tom. O fie! I only think you'll take the letter.

Phil. Nay, I know you do; but I know my own innocence: I take it for my mistress's sake.

Tom. I know it, my pretty one! I know it.

Phil. Yes, I say I do it because I would not have my mistress deluded by one who gives no proof of his passion: but I'll talk more of this as you see me on my way home. No, Tom; I assure thee, I take this trash of thy master's, not for the value of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose:

They may be false who languish and complain,
But they who part with money never feign. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Bevil's Lodgings.*

BEVIL *discovered, reading.*

Bevil. These moral writers practise virtue after death. This charming vision of Mirza! snob an author, consulted in a morning, sets the spirits for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass

does a man's person. But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart! If this lady my father urges me to marry should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? is not she in equal distress with me? has not the letter I have sent her this morning, confessed my inclination to another? nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements, too, to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible but she must give in to it; for, sure, to be denied is a favour any man may pretend to. It must be so. Well, then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father, I am ready to marry her: then let me resolve upon (what I am not very good at) an honest dissimulation. *Enter* Tom.

Tom. Sir John Bevil, sir, is in the next room.

Bevil. Dunce! why did you not bring him in?

Tom. I told him, sir, you were in your closet.

Bevil. I thought you had known, sir, it was my duty to see my father anywhere. (*Going himself to the door.*)

Tom. The devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have. (*Aside.*)

Enter Sir John Bevil, *introduced by Bevil.*

Bevil. Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant of all parents. Sure, 'tis not a compliment to say these lodgings are your's. Why would you not walk in, sir?

Sir J. I was loath to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

Bevil. One to whom I am beholden for my birthday might have used less ceremony.

Sir J. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ to your mistress this morning. It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter, for courtship must then be over.

Bevil. I assure you, sir, there was no insolence in it, upon the prospect of such a vast fortune being added to our family; but much acknowledgment of the lady's great desert.

Sir J. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? and will you really marry her?

Bevil. Did I ever disobey any command of your's, sir? nay, any inclination that I saw you bent upon? If the lady is dressed and ready, you see I am. I suppose the lawyers are ready, too.

Enter Humphrey.

Hum. Sir, Mr. Sealand is at the coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

Sir J. Oh! that's well; then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way, you say?

Bevil. If you please, sir, I'll take a chair and go to Mr. Sealand's; where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

Sir J. By no means; the old fellow will be so vain, if he sees— [so indifferent—

Bevil. Ay; but the young lady, sir, will think me

Hum. Ay, there you are right. Press your readiness to go to the bride; he won't let you. (*Apart to Bevil.*)

Bevil. Are you sure of that? (*Apart to Hum.*)

Hum. How he likes being prevented. (*Aside.*)

Sir J. No, no; you are an hour or two too early; (*looking on his watch*) besides, this Sealand is a moody old fellow. There's no dealing with some people, but by managing with indifference. We must leave to him the conduct of this day; it is the last of his commanding his daughter.

Bevil. Sir, he can't take it ill that I am impatient to be her's.

Sir J. Well, son, I'll go myself and take orders in your affair. You'll be in the way I suppose, if I send to you? I leave your old friend with you. Humphrey, don't let him stir, d'ye hear? Your servant, your servant. [*Exit.*

Hum. I have a sad time on't, sir, between you and my master; I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match; I must betray neither, and yet deceive you both, for your common good. Heaven grant a good end of this matter: but there is a lady, sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow. You'll pardon me.

Bevil. Humphrey, I know thou art a friend to both, and in that confidence I dare tell thee. That lady—is a woman of honour and virtue. You may assure yourself I never will marry without my father's consent; but give me leave to say, too, this declaration does not come up to a promise that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

Hum. My dear master! were I but worthy to know this secret that so nearly concerns you, my life, my all, should be engaged to serve you. This, sir, I dare promise, that I am sure I will and can be secret: your trust, at worst, but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain, and tell you so.

Bevil. That's all I ask. Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee. Be patient, then, and hear the story of my heart.

Hum. I am all attention, sir.

Bevil. You may remember, Humphrey, that in my last travels my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

Hum. I remember it; he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

Bevil. His fears were just; for there I first saw this lady: she is of English birth; her father's name was Danvers, a younger brother of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol, who, upon repeated misfortunes, was reduced to go privately to the Indies. In this retreat, Providence again grew favourable to his industry, and in six years' time restored him to his former fortunes. On this, he sent directions over, that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convoy, but took the first occasion of a single ship; and with her husband's sister only, and his daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage; for here, poor creature! she lost her liberty and life: she and her family, with all they had, were unfortunately taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though, as such, not ill-treated, yet the fright, the shock, and the cruel disappointment, seized with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, that she sickened, pined, and died at sea.

Hum. Poor soul! Oh! the helpless infant.

Bevil. Her sister yet survived, and had the care of her: the captain, too, proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having married himself an English woman, and being childless, he brought home into Toulon, this her little countrywoman, this orphan I may call her, presenting her with all her dead mother's moveables of value to his wife, to be educated as his own daughter.

Hum. Fortune here seemed again to smile on her.

Bevil. Only to make her frowns more terrible; for in his height of fortune, this captain, too, her benefactor, unfortunately was killed at sea; and, dying intestate, his estate fell wholly to an advocate, his brother; who coming soon to take possession, there found, among his other riches, this blooming virgin at his mercy.

Hum. He durst not, sure, abuse his power?

Bevil. No wonder if his pampered blood was fired at the sight of her. In short, he loved; but when all arts and gentle means had failed to move, he offered, too, his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty, demanding her to account for all her maintenance from her childhood, seized on her little fortune as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to prison, when Providence at the instant interposed, and sent me, by miracle, to relieve her.

Hum. 'Twas Providence, indeed! But pray, sir, after all this trouble, how came this lady at last to England?

Bevil. The disappointed advocate, finding she had so unexpected a support, on cooler thoughts, descended to a composition, which I, without her knowledge, secretly discharged.

Hum. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

Bevil. Having thus obtained her liberty, I prevailed, not without some difficulty, to see her safe to England; where we no sooner arrived, but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, immediately proposed this other fatal match that hangs upon my quiet. [upon this lady.

Hum. I find, sir, you are irrecoverably fixed

Bevil. As my vital life dwells in my heart; and yet yet you see what I do to please my father; walk in this pageantry of dress, this splendid covering of sorrow. But, Humphrey, you have your lesson.

Hum. Now, sir, I have but one material question.

Bevil. Ask it freely.

Hum. Is it then your own passion for this secret lady, or her's for you, that gives you this aversion to the match your father has proposed you?

Bevil. I shall appear, Humphrey, more romantic in my answer than in all the rest of my story; for though I dote on her to death, and have no little reason to believe she has the same thoughts for me, yet in all my acquaintance and utmost privacies with her, I never once directly told her that I loved.

Hum. How was it possible to avoid it?

Bevil. My tender obligations to my father, have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct, that till I have his consent to speak, I am determined on that subject to be dumb for ever. An honourable retreat shall always be at least within my power, however fortune may dispose of me; the lady may repine, perhaps, but never shall reproach me.

Hum. Well, sir, to your praise be it spoken, you are, certainly, the most unfashionable lover in Great Britain. [*Re-enter* TOM.]

Tom. Sir, Mr. Myrtle's at the next door, and if you are at leisure, would be glad to wait on you.

Bevil. Whenever he pleases. Hold, Tom; did you receive no answer to my letter?

Tom. Sir, I was desired to call again; for I was told her mother would not let her be out of sight; but about an hour hence, Mrs. Phillis said I should [have one.

Bevil. Very well.

Hum. Sir, I will take another opportunity; in the meantime, I only think it proper to tell you, that from a secret I know, you may appear to your father as forward as you please to marry Lucinda, without the least hazard of its coming to a conclusion.—Sir, your most obedient servant.

Bevil. Honest Humphrey, continue but my friend in this exigence, and you shall always find me your's. [*Exit Humphrey.*] I long to hear how my letter has succeeded with Lucinda.—Poor Myrtle! what terrors must he be in all this while. Since he knows she is offered to me, and refused to him, there is no conversing or taking any measures with his own service; but I ought to bear with my friend, and use him as one in adversity.

All his disquietudes, by my own I prove,
For none exceeds perplexity in love. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.—SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter BEVIL *and* TOM.

Tom. Sir, Mr. Myrtle.

Bevil. Very well. Do you step again, and wait for an answer to my letter. [*Exit Tom.*

Enter MYRTLE.

Well, Charles, why so much care in thy countenance? is there anything in this world deserves it? You who used to be so gay, so vacant!

Myr. I think we have, of late, changed complexions: you, who used to be much the graver man, are now all air in your behaviour. But the cause of my concern may, for aught I know, be the same object that gives you all this satisfaction. In a word, I am told that you are, this very day (and your dress confirms me in it) to be married to Lucinda.

Bevil. You are not misinformed.—Nay, put not on the terrors of a rival, till you hear me out. I shall disoblige the best of fathers if I don't seem ready to marry Lucinda; and you know I have ever told you, you might make use of my secret resolution never to marry her, for your own service, as you please; but I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refusing or complying, unless you help me to escape the match.

Myr. Escape, sir! neither her merit nor her fortune are below your acceptance. Escaping, do you call it? [the match?

Bevil. Dear sir! do you wish I should desire

Myr. No; but such is my humorous and sickly state of mind, since it has been able to relish nothing but Lucinda, that, though I must owe my happiness to your aversion to this marriage, I can't bear to hear her spoken of with levity or unconcern.

Bevil. Pardon me, sir, I shall transgress that way no more. She has understanding, beauty, shape, complexion, wit—

Myr. Nay, dear Bevil, don't speak of her as if you loved her, neither.

Bevil. Why, then, to give you ease at once, though I allow Lucinda to have good sense, wit, beauty, and virtue, I know another in whom these qualities appear to me more amiable than in her.

Myr. There you spoke like a reasonable and good-natured friend. When you acknowledge her merit, and own your prepossession for another, at once you gratify my fondness, and cure my jealousy.

Bevil. But all this while you take no notice, you have no apprehension of another man that has twice the fortune of either of us.

Myr. Cimberton? Hang him, a formal, philosophical, pedantic coxcomb!—for the sot, with all these crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity, and very little judgment, shews his strongest bias is avarice; which is so predominant in him, that he will examine the limbs of his mistress with the caution of a jockey, and pays no more compliment to her personal charms than if she were a mere breeding animal.

Bevil. Are you sure that is not affected? I have known some women sooner set on fire by that sort of negligence, than by all the blaze and ceremony of a court.

Myr. No, no; hang him! the rogue has no art; it is pure simple insolence and stupidity.

Bevil. Yet, with all this, I don't take him for a fool.

Myr. I own the man is not a natural; he has a very quick sense, though a very slow understanding; he says, indeed, many things that want only the circumstances of time and place to be very just and agreeable.

Bevil. Well, you may be sure of me if you can disappoint him; but my intelligence says, the mother has actually sent for the conveyancer to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda, though those for mine with her are, by her father's order, ready for signing; but it seems she has not thought fit to consult either him or his daughter in the matter.

Myr. Psha! a poor troublesome woman! Neither Lucinda nor her father will ever be brought to comply with it; besides, I am sure Cimberton can make no settlement upon her without the concurrence of his great uncle, Sir Geoffry, in the west.

Bevil. Well, sir, and I can tell you that's the very point that is now laid before her counsel, to know whether a firm settlement can be made without this uncle's actually joining in it.—Now, pray, consider, sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes, as it soon must, to an open rupture, how are you sure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father too, to hear his proposals?

Myr. There you are right indeed; that must be provided against. Do you know who are her counsel?

Bevil. Yes, for your service, I have found out that too; they are Sergeant Bramble and old Target:—by the way, they are neither of 'em known in the family; now I was thinking why you might not put a couple of false counsel upon her, to delay and confound matters a little; besides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole design against you.

Myr. As how, pray?

Bevil. Why, can't you slip on a black wig and a gown, and be old Bramble yourself?

Myr. Ha! I don't dislike it. But what shall I do for a brother in the case?

Bevil. What think you of my fellow, Tom? The rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimic; all his part will be but to stutter heartily, for that's old Target's case. Nay, it would be an immoral thing to mock him, were it not that his impatience is the occasion of its breaking out to that degree. The conduct of the scene will chiefly lie upon you.

Myr. I like it of all things; if you'll send Tom to my chambers, I will give him full instructions. This will certainly give me occasion to raise difficulties, to puzzle or confound her project for awhile, at least.

Bevil. I warrant you success; so far we are right, then. And now, Charles, your apprehension of my marrying her is all you have to get over.

Myr. Dear Bevil! though I know you are my friend, yet, when I abstract myself from my own interest in the thing, I know no objection she can make to you, or you to her, and therefore hope—

Bevil. Dear Myrtle! I am as much obliged to you for the cause of your suspicion, as I am offended at the effect; but be assured I am taking measures for your certain security, and that all things with regard to me will end in your entire satisfaction.

Myr. Well, I'll promise you to be as easy and as confident as I can; though I cannot but remember that I have more than life at stake on your fidelity. (*Going.*) [against you.

Bevil. Then depend upon it you have no chance

Myr. Nay, no ceremony; you know I must be going. [*Exit.*

Bevil. Well, this is another instance of the perplexities which arise, too, in faithful friendship. But all this while poor Indiana is tortured with the doubt of me. I'll take this opportunity to visit her; for though the religious vow I have made to my father restrains me from ever marrying without his approbation, yet that confines me not from seeing a virtuous woman, that is the pure delight of my eyes, and the guiltless joy of my heart. But the best condition of human life is but a gentler misery.

To hope for perfect happiness is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Indiana's Lodgings.*

Enter ISABELLA *and* INDIANA.

Isa. Yes, I say 'tis artifice, dear child; I say to thee, again and again, 'tis all skill and management.

Ind. Will you persuade me there can be an ill design in supporting me in the condition of a woman of quality; attended, dressed, and lodged like one in my appearance abroad, and my furniture at home every way in the most sumptuous manner; and he that does it has an artifice, a design in it?

Isa. Yes, yes.

Ind. And all this without so much as explaining to me that all about me comes from him.

Isa. Ay, ay; the more for that; that keeps the title to all you have the more in him.

Ind. The more in him!—he scorns the thought.

Isa. Then he—he—he—

Ind. Well, be not so eager. If he is an ill man, let's look into his stratagems: here is another of them. (*Shews a letter.*) Here are two hundred and fifty pounds in bank notes. Why, dear aunt, now here's another piece of skill for you, which I own I cannot comprehend; and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you say anything to the disadvantage of Mr. Bevil. When he is present, I look upon him as one to whom I owe my life, and the support of it; then, again, as the man who loves me with sincerity and honour. When his eyes are cast another way, and I dare survey him, my heart is painfully divided between shame and love. I say thus it is with me while I see him; and in his absence, I am entertained with nothing but your endeavours to tear this amiable image from my heart, and in its stead to place a base dissembler, an artful invader of my happiness, my innocence, my honour.

Isa. Ah! poor soul, has not this plot taken? Don't you die for him? has not the way he has taken been the most proper with you? Oh, ho! he has sense, and has judged the thing right.

Ind. Go on, then, since nothing can answer you; say what you will of him.—Heigho!

Isa. Heigho! indeed. It is better to say so as you are now, than as many others are. There are, among the destroyers of women, the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble; who all, soon after their success in their designs, turn to the contrary of those characters. They embrace without love, they make vows without conscience of obligation; they are partners, nay, seducers, to the crime, wherein they pretend to be less guilty. [all this to Bevil?

Ind. That's truly observed. (*Aside.*) But what's

Isa. This is to Bevil and all mankind. Won't you be on your guard against those who would betray you? Won't you doubt those who would contemn you for believing 'em? Such is the world, and such (since the behaviour of one man to myself) have I believed all the rest of the sex. (*Aside.*)

Ind. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil, I will not doubt it; he has not spoken it by an organ that is given to lying: his eyes are all that have ever told me that he was mine. I know his virtue, I know his filial piety, and ought to trust his management with a father to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concerned for? My lesson is very short. If he takes me for ever, my purpose of life is only to please him; if he leaves me, (which heaven avert!) I know he'll do it nobly; and I shall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worse than death has happened to me.

Isa. Ay, do persist in your credulity! flatter yourself that a man of his figure and fortune will make himself the jest of the town, and marry a handsome beggar for love.

Ind. The town! I must tell you, madam, the fools that laugh at Mr. Bevil will but make themselves more ridiculous; his actions are the result of thinking, and he has sense enough to make even virtue fashionable.

Isa. Come, come, if he were the honest fool you take him for, why has he kept you here these three weeks, without sending you to Bristol in search of your father, your family, and your relations?

Ind. I am convinced he still designs it; besides, has he not written to Bristol? and has not he advice that my father has not been heard of there almost these twenty years?

Isa. All sham, mere evasion; he is afraid, if he should carry you thither, your honest relations may take you out of his hands, and so blow up all his wicked hopes at once. [such?

Ind. Wicked hopes! Did I ever give him any

Isa. Has he ever given you any honest ones? Can you say in your conscience he has ever once offered to marry you?

Ind. No; but by his behaviour I am convinced

he will offer it the moment 'tis in his power, or consistent with his honour, to make such a promise

Isa. His honour! [good to me.

Ind. I will rely upon it; therefore desire you will not make my life uneasy by these ungrateful jealousies of one to whom I am and wish to be obliged; for from his integrity alone, I have resolved to hope for happiness.

Isa. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't see, at your peril be it.

Ind. Let it be. This is his hour of visiting me. (*Aside.*) All the rest of my life is but waiting till he comes: I live only when I'm with him. [*Exit.*

Isa. Well, go thy way, thou wilful innocent! I once had almost as much love for a man who poorly left me to marry an estate; and I am now, against my will, what they call an old maid; but I will not let the peevishness of that condition grow upon me; only keep up the suspicion of it to prevent this creature's being any other than a virgin, except upon proper terms. [*Exit.*

Re-enter INDIANA, *speaking to a Servant.*

Ind. Desire Mr. Bevil to walk in. Design! impossible! a base, designing mind could never think of what he hourly puts in practice; and yet, since the late rumour of his marriage, he seems more reserved than formerly; he sends in, too, before he sees me, to know if I'm at leisure. Such new respect may cover coldness in the heart. It certainly makes me thoughtful. I'll know the worst at once. I'll lay such fair occasions in his way, that it shall be impossible to avoid an explanation; for these doubts are insupportable. But see, he comes and clears them all. [*Enter* BEVIL.]

Bevil. Madam, your most obedient. I am afraid I broke in upon your rest last night; 'twas very late before we parted; but 'twas your own fault; I never saw you in such agreeable humour.

Ind. I am extremely glad we were both pleased; for I thought I never saw you better company.

Bevil. Me, madam? you rally; I said very little.

Ind. But I am afraid you heard me say a great deal; and when a woman is in the talking vein, the most agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

Bevil. Then it's a pity, madam, you should ever be silent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

Ind. If I had your talent or power to make my actions speak for me, I might, indeed, be silent, and yet pretend to something more than the agreeable.

Bevil. If I might be vain of anything in my power, madam, it is that my understanding from all your sex has marked you out as the most deserving object of my esteem.

Ind. Should I think I deserve this, it were enough to make my vanity forfeit the very esteem you offer me.

Bevil. How so, madam?

Ind. Because esteem is the result of reason; and to deserve it from good sense, the height of human glory. Nay, I had rather a man of honour should pay me that, than all the homage of a sincere and humble love.

Bevil. You certainly distinguish right, madam; love often kindles from external merit only.

Ind. But esteem arises from a higher source, the merit of the soul.

Bevil. True; and great souls only can deserve it.

Ind. Now, I think they are greater still, that can so charitably part with it.

Bevil. Now, madam, you make me vain, since the utmost pride and pleasure of my life is, that I esteem you—as I ought.

Ind. As he ought! Still more perplexing! he neither saves nor kills my hope. (*Aside.*)

Bevil. But, madam, we grow grave, methinks. Let's find some other subject.—Pray, how did you like the opera last night?

Ind. First give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

Bevil. Oh! your servant, madam.

Ind. Now, once more, to try him. (*Aside.*) I was saying just now, I believe, you would never let me dispute with you, and I dare say it will always be so: however, I must have your opinion upon a subject which created a debate betwixt my aunt and me, just before you came hither. She would needs have it that no man ever does any extraordinary kindness or service for a woman, but for his own sake.

Bevil. Well, madam, indeed I can't but be of her mind.

Ind. What, though he would maintain and support her, without demanding anything of her on her part?

Bevil. Why, madam, is making an expense in the service of a valuable woman, (for such I must suppose her,) though she should never do him any favour, nay, though she should never know who did her such service, such a mighty heroic business?

Ind. Certainly! I should think he must be a man of an uncommon mould.

Bevil. Dear madam, why so? 'tis but, at best, a better taste in expense. To bestow upon whom he may think one of the ornaments of the whole creation; to be conscious that from his superfluity an innocent, a virtuous spirit is supported above the temptations, the sorrows of life; that he sees satisfaction, health, and gladness in her countenance, while he enjoys the happiness of seeing her; (as that I will suppose, too, or he must be too abstracted, too insensible;) I say, if he is allowed to delight in that prospect, alas! what mighty matter is there in all this?

Ind. No mighty matter in so disinterested a friendship.

Bevil. Disinterested! I can't think him so. Your hero, madam, is no more than what every gentleman ought to be, and I believe very many are: he is only one who takes more delight in reflections than in sensations; he is more pleased with thinking than eating; that's the utmost you can say of him. Why, madam, a greater expense than all this men lay out upon an unnecessary stable of horses.

Ind. Can you be sincere in what you say?

Bevil. You may depend upon it, if you know any such man, he does not love dogs inordinately.

Ind. No, that he does not.

Bev. Nor cards nor dice.

Ind. No.

Bevil. Nor bottle companions.

Ind. No.

Bevil. Nor loose women.

Ind. No, I'm sure he does not.

Bevil. Take my word, then, if your admired hero is not liable to any of these kind of demands, there's no such pre-eminence in this as you imagine; nay, this way of expense you speak of, is what exalts and raises him that has a taste for it; and, at the same time, his delight is incapable of satiety, disgust, or penitence.

Ind. But still I insist his having no private interest in the action makes it prodigious, almost incredible.

Bevil. Dear madam, I never knew you more mistaken. Why, who can be more an usurer than he who lays out his money in such valuable purchases? If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him, who has a true taste of life, to ease an aching heart, to see the human countenance lighted up into smiles of joy on the receipt of a bit of ore which is superfluous, and otherwise useless in a man's own pocket! What could a man do better with his cash? This is the effect of a humane disposition, where there is only a general tie of nature and common necessity; what, then

must it be when we serve an object of merit, of admiration?

Ind. Well, the more you argue against it, the more I shall admire the generosity.

Bevil. Nay, then, madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration that my opinion strengthens my adversary's argument. I had best hasten to my appointment with Mr. Myrtle, and be gone while we are friends, and—before things are brought to an extremity. [*Exit carelessly.*

Re-enter Isabella.

Isa. Well, madam, what think you of him now, pray?

Ind. I protest I begin to fear he is wholly disinterested in what he does for me. On my heart, he has no other view but the pleasure of doing it, and has neither good nor bad designs upon me.

Isa. Ah! dear niece, don't be in fear of both; I'll warrant you, you will know time enough that he is not indifferent.

Ind. You please me when you tell me so; for if he has any wishes towards me, I know he will not pursue them but with honour.

Isa. I wish I were as confident of one as t'other. I saw the respectful downcast of his eye when you catched him gazing at you during the music. Oh! the undissembled, guilty look.

Ind. But did you observe anything, really? I thought he looked most charmingly graceful. How engaging is modesty in a man, when one knows there is a great mind within.

Isa. Ah! niece, some men's modesty serves their wickedness, as hypocrisy gains the respect due to piety. But I will own to you there is one hopeful symptom, if there could be such a thing as a disinterested lover; but till—till—till—

Ind. Till what?

Isa. Till I know whether Mr. Myrtle and Mr. Bevil are really friends or foes: and that I will be convinced of before I sleep; for you shall not be deceived. [*Exit.*

Ind. I'm sure I never shall, if your fears can guard me. In the meantime, I'll wrap myself up in the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his.

As conscious honour all his actions steers,
So conscious innocence dispels my fears. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Sealand's House.*

Enter Tom, *meeting* Phillis.

Tom. Well, Phillis! What! with a face as if you had never seen me before? What a work have I to do now! She has seen some new visitant at their house, whose airs she has catched, and is resolved to practise them upon me. Numberless are the changes she'll dance through before she'll answer this plain question, *videlicet*, Have you delivered my master's letter to your lady? Nay, I know her too well to ask an account of it in an ordinary way: I'll be in my airs as well as she. (*Aside.*) Well, madam, as unhappy as you are at present pleased to make me, I would not in the general be any other than what I am; I would not be a bit wiser, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter, than I am at this instant. (*Looks stedfastly at her.*)

Phil. Did ever anybody doubt, Master Thomas, but that you were extremely satisfied with your sweet self?

Tom. I am indeed. The thing I have least reason to be satisfied with, is my fortune, and I am glad of my poverty; perhaps, if I were rich, I should overlook the finest woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought so.

Phil. How prettily was that said! But I'll have a great deal more before I'll say one word. (*Aside.*)

Tom. I should, perhaps, have been stupidly above her, had I not been her equal; and by not being her equal, never had an opportunity of being her slave. I am my master's servant for hire, I am my mistress's from choice; would she but approve my passion!

Phil. I think it is the first time I ever heard you speak of it with any sense of anguish, if you really do suffer any. [have seen?

Tom. Ah! Phillis, can you doubt after what you

Phil. I know not what I have seen, nor what I have heard; but since I am at leisure, you may tell me when you fell in love with me, how you fell in love with me, and what you have suffered, or are ready to suffer, for me.

Tom. Oh! the unmerciful jade, when I'm in haste about my master's letter; but I must go through it. (*Aside.*) Ah! too well I remember when, and how, and on what occasion, I was first surprised. It was on the first of April, one thousand seven hundred and fifteen, I came into Mr. Sealand's service. I was then a hobble-de-hoy, and you a pretty, little, tight girl, a favourite handmaid of the housekeeper. At that time we neither of us knew what was in us. I remember I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean; the person employed on the inner side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

Phil. I think I remember the silly accident. What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you; you could not guess what surprised me; you took no delight when you immediately grew wanton in your conquest, and put your lips close and breathed upon the glass; and when my lips approached, you rubbed a dirty cloth against my face, and hid your beauteous form; when I again drew near, you spit and rubbed, and smiled at my undoing.

Phil. What silly thoughts you men have!

Tom. We were Pyramus and Thisbe; but ten times harder was my fate: Pyramus could peep only through a wall; I saw her, saw my Thisbe, in all her beauty; but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls were between; for there was more, there was her will against me. Would she but relent!—Oh, Phillis, Phillis! shorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

Phil. I believe it's very sufferable; the pain is not so exquisite but that you may bear it a little longer.

Tom. Oh! my charming Phillis! if all depended on my fair one's will, I could with glory suffer; but, dearest creature, consider our miserable state.

Phil. How! miserable?

Tom. We are miserable to be in love, and under the command of others than those we love. With that generous passion in the heart to be sent to and fro on errands, called, checked, and rated, for the meanest trifles. Oh! Phillis, you don't know how many china cups and glasses my passion for you has made me break: you have broken my fortune as well as my heart.

Phil. Well, Mr. Thomas, I cannot but own to you that I believe your master writes, and you speak the best of any men in the world. Never was a woman so well pleased with a letter as my young lady was with his, and this is an answer to it. (*Gives him a letter.*)

Tom. This was well done, my dearest. Consider, we must strike out some pretty livelihood for ourselves by closing their affairs: it will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, some small tenement, out of their large possessions. Whatever they give us, it will be more than what they keep for themselves: one acre with Phillis would be worth a whole county without her.

Phil. Oh! could I but believe you.

Tom. If not the utterance, believe the touch, of my lips. (*Kisses her.*)

Phil. There's no contradicting you. How closely you argue, Tom.

Tom. And will closer in due time; but I must hasten with this letter, to hasten towards the possession of you—then, Phillis, consider how I must be revenged (look to it) of all your skittishness, shy looks, and, at best, but coy compliances.

Phil. Oh! Tom, you grow wanton and sensual, as my lady calls it: I must not endure it. Oh, foh! you are a man, an odious, filthy, male creature; you should behave, if you had a right sense, or were a man of sense, like Mr. Cimberton, with distance and indifference; and not rush on one as if you were seizing a prey. But, hush! the ladies are coming. Good Tom, don't kiss me above once, and be gone. Lard! we have been fooling and toying, and not considered the main business of our masters and mistresses.

Tom. Why their business is to be fooling and toying as soon as the parchments are ready.

Phil. Well remembered—Parchments. My lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb cousin, Cimberton, and my mistress; though my master has an eye to the parchments already prepared between your master, Mr. Bevil, and my mistress; and I believe my mistress herself has signed and sealed, in her heart, to Mr. Myrtle. Did I not bid you kiss me but once and begone? but I know you won't be satisfied.

Tom. No, you smooth creature! how should I? (*Kisses her hand.*)

Phil. Well, since you are so humble, or so cool, as to ravish my hand only, I'll take my leave of you like a great lady, and you a man of quality. (*They salute formally.*)

Tom. Plague of all this state. (*Offers to kiss her more closely.*)

Phil. No, pr'ythee, Tom, mind your business. Oh! here is my young mistress. (*Tom taps her neck behind, and kisses his fingers.*) Go, ye liquorish fool. [*Exit Tom.*

Enter LUCINDA.

Luc. Who was that you were hurrying away?

Phil. One that I had no mind to part with.

Luc. Why did you turn him away, then?

Phil. For your ladyship's service, to carry your ladyship's letter to his master. I could hardly get the rogue away.

Luc. Why, has he so little love for his master?

Phil. No, but he has so much love for his mistress. [do you suffer that?

Luc. But I thought I heard him kiss you: why

Phil. Why, madam, we vulgar take it to be a sign of love. We servants, we poor people, that have nothing but our persons to bestow or treat for, squeeze with our hands, and seal with our lips, to ratify vows and promises. [such earnest down?

Luc. But can't you trust one another without

Phil. We don't think it safe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

Luc. Thou art a pert merry hussy.

Phil. I wish, madam, your lover and you were as merry as Tom and your servant are.

Luc. You grow impertinent.

Phil. I have done, madam; and I won't ask you what you intend to do with Mr. Myrtle; what your father will do with Mr. Bevil; nor what you all, especially my lady, mean by admitting Mr. Cimberton as particularly here as if he were married to you already; nay, you are married actually as far

Luc. How's that? [as people of quality are.

Phil. You have different beds in the same house.

Luc. Psha! I have a very great value for Mr. Bevil, but have absolutely put an end to his pretensions in the letter I gave you for him.

Phil. Then Mr. Myrtle—

Luc. He had my parents' leave to apply to me, and by that he has won me and my affections; who is to have this body of mine without them, it seems, is nothing to me: my mother says 'tis indecent for me to let my thoughts stray about the person of my husband; nay, she says, a maid rigidly virtuous, though she may have been where her lover was a thousand times, should not have made observations enough to know him from another man when she sees him in a third place.

Phil. That's more than the severity of a nun; for not to see when one may is hardly possible; not to see when one can't is very easy; at this rate, madam, there are a great many whom you have not seen, who—

Luc. Mamma says, the first time you see your husband should be at that instant he is made so. When your father, with the help of the minister, gives you to him, then you are to see him, then you are to observe and take notice of him, because then you are to obey him.

Phil. But does not my lady remember you are to love as well as to obey?

Luc. To love is a passion, 'tis a desire; and we must have no desires. Oh! I cannot endure the reflection. With what insensibility on my part, with what more than patience, have I been exposed and offered to some awkward booby or other in every county of Great Britain!

Phil. Indeed, madam, I wonder I never heard you speak of it before with this indignation.

Luc. Every corner of the land has presented me with a wealthy coxcomb: as fast as one treaty has gone off, another has come on, till my name and person have been the tittle-tattle of the whole town.

Phil. But, madam, all these vexations will end very soon in one for all: Mr. Cimberton is your mother's kinsman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reason, with that of his prodigious large estate, she is resolved on him, and has sent to consult the lawyers accordingly; nay, has, whether you know it or no, been in treaty with Sir Geoffry; who, to join in the settlement, has accepted of a sum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpose.

Luc. How do you get all this intelligence?

Phil. By an art I have, I thank my stars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great Britain; the art of listening, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Luc. I shall soon know as much as you do. Leave me, leave me, Phillis; begone; here, here, I'll turn you out. My mother says I must not converse with my servants, though I must converse with no one else. [*Exit Phil.*] Here he comes with my mother; it's much if he looks at me; or, if he does, takes no more notice of me than of any other moveables in the room.

Enter MRS. SEALAND *and* CIMBERTON.

Mrs. S. How do I admire this noble, this learned taste of your's, and the worthy regard you have to our own ancient and honourable house, in consulting a means to keep the blood as pure and as regularly descended as may be.

Cim. Why, really, madam, the young women of this age are treated with discourses of such a tendency, and their imaginations so bewildered in flesh and blood, that a man of reason can't talk to be understood: they have no ideas of happiness but what are more gross than the gratification of hunger and thirst.

Luc. With how much reflection he is a coxcomb! (*Aside.*)

Cim. And in truth, madam, I have considered it as a most brutal custom, that persons of the first character in the world should go as ordinarily, and with as little shame to bed, as to dinner with one another. They proceed to the propagation of the species as openly as to the preservation of the individual. [have no shame, I'm sure. (*Aside.*)

Luc. She that willingly goes to bed to thee must

Mrs. S. Oh, cousin Cimberton! cousin Cimberton! how abstracted, how refined is your sense of things! but, indeed, it is too true; there is nothing so ordinary as to say, in the best governed families, my master and lady are gone to bed; one does not know but it might have been said of one's self.

Cim. Lycurgus, madam, instituted otherwise:

among the Lacedemonians the whole female world was pregnant, but none but the mothers themselves knew by whom; their meetings were secret, and the amorous congress always by stealth; and no such professed doings between the sexes as are tolerated among us, under the audacious word, marriage.

Mrs. S. Oh! had I lived in those days, and been a matron of Sparta, one might, with less indecency, have had ten children, according to that modest institution, than one under the confusion of our modern barefaced manner.

Luc. And yet, poor woman, she has gone through the whole ceremony, and here I stand a melancholy proof of it. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. S. We will talk then of business. That girl, walking about the room there, is to be your wife; she has, I confess, no ideas, no sentiments, that speak her born of a thinking mother.

Cim. I have observed her; her lively look, free air, and disengaged countenance, speak her very—

Luc. Very what? [way.

Cim. If you please, madam, to set her a little that

Mrs. S. Lucinda, say nothing to him, you are not a match for him; when you are married you may speak to such a husband when you're spoken to; but I am disposing of you above yourself every way.

Cim. Madam, you cannot but observe the inconveniences I expose myself to, in hopes that your ladyship will be the consort of my better part. As for the young woman, she is rather an impediment than a help to a man of letters and speculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philosophy, can at all times subdue the sensitive life, but the animal shall sometimes carry away the man. Ha! ay, the vermilion of her lips.

Luc. Pray don't talk of me thus.

Cim. The pretty enough pant of her bosom.

Luc. Sir! Madam, don't you hear him?

Cim. Her forward chest.

Luc. Intolerable!

Cim. High health.

Luc. The grave, easy impudence of him!

Cim. Proud heart.

Luc. Stupid coxcomb!

Cim. I say, madam, her impatience, while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions: her arms, her neck—what a spring in her step!

Luc. Don't you run me over thus, you strange, unaccountable—

Cim. What an elasticity in her veins and arteries.

Luc. I have no veins, no arteries.

Mrs. S. Oh, child! hear him; he talks finely; he's a scholar; he knows what you have.

Cim. The speaking invitation of her shape, the gathering of herself up, and the indignation you see in the pretty little thing! Now I am considering her, on this occasion, but as one that is to be pregnant; and pregnant undoubtedly she will be yearly: I fear I sha'n't for many years have discretion enough to give her one fallow season.

Luc. Monster! there's no bearing it. The hideous sot! There's no enduring it; to be thus surveyed like a steed at sale!

Cim. At sale! she's very illiterate; but she's very well limbed, too. Turn her in, I see what she is.

Mrs. S. Go, you creature, I am ashamed of you. [*Exit Lucinda, in a rage.*

Cim. No harm done. You know, madam, the better sort of people, as I observed to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings; (*adjusts himself at the glass*) and the woman in the bargain, like the mansion-house in the sale of the estate, is thrown in; and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all considered.

Mrs. S. I grant it; and, therefore, make no demand for her youth and beauty, and every other accomplishment, as the common world think them, because she is not polite.

Cim. Madam, I marry to have an heir to my estate, and not to beget a colony or a plantation. This young woman's beauty and constitution will demand provision for a tenth child at least.

Mrs. S. But I have given directions for the marriage settlements, and Sir Geoffry Cimberton's counsel is to meet our's here at this hour concerning his joining in the deed; which, when executed, makes you capable of settling what is due to Lucinda's fortune. Herself, as I told you, I say nothing of.

Cim. No, no, no; indeed, madam, it is not usual; and I must depend upon my own reflection and philosophy not to overstock my family.

Mrs. S. I cannot help her, cousin Cimberton; but she is, for aught I see, as well as the daughter of any-[body else.

Cim. That is very true, madam.

Enter a Servant, who whispers Mrs. Sealand.

Mrs. S. The lawyers are come, and now we are to hear what they have resolved as to the point whether it is necessary that Sir Geoffry should join in the settlement, as being what they call in the remainder. But, good cousin, you must have patience with them. These lawyers, I am told, are of a different kind; one is what they call a chamber-counsel, the other a pleader: the conveyancer is slow, from an imperfection in his speech, and, therefore, shunned the bar, but extremely passionate, and impatient of contradiction: the other is as warm as he, but has a tongue so voluble, and a heat so conceited, he will suffer nobody to speak but himself.

Cim. You mean old Sergeant Target and Counsellor Bramble: I have heard of them.

Mrs. S. The same. Shew in the gentlemen. [*Exit Servant.*

Re-enter a Servant, introducing Myrtle *and* Tom, *disguised as Bramble and Target.*

Gentlemen, this is the party concerned, Mr. Cimberton; and I hope you have considered of the matter.

Tom. Yes, madam, we have agreed that it must be by indent—dent—dent—dent—

Myr. Yes, madam, Mr. Sergeant and myself have agreed, as he is pleased to inform you, that it must be an indenture tripartite, and tripartite let it be; for Sir Geoffry must needs be a party. Old Cimberton, in the year one thousand six hundred and nineteen, says, in that ancient roll in Mr. Sergeant's hands, as recourse thereto being had, will more at large appear. [pears that—

Tom. Yes, and by the deeds in your hands it ap-

Myr. Mr. Sergeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our custody, but speak to the titles in your own deeds. I shall not shew that deed till my client is in town.

Cim. You know best your own methods.

Mrs. S. The single question is, whether the entail is such, that Sir Geoffry is necessary in this affair?

Myr. Yes, as to the lordship of the Tretriplet, but not as to the messuage of Grimgribber.

Tom. I say that Gr—gr—, that Gr—gr, Grimgribber, Grimgribber is in us; that is to say, the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—Tr—triplet.

Myr. You go upon the deed of Sir Ralph, made in the middle of the last century, precedent to that in which old Cimberton made over the remainder, and made it pass to the heirs general, by which your client comes in; and I question whether the remainder even of Tretriplet is in him; but we are willing to wave that, and give him a valuable consideration. But we shall not purchase what is in us for ever, as Grimgribber is, at the rate as we guard against the contingent of Mr. Cimberton having no son. Then we know Sir Geoffry is the first of the collateral male line in this family, yet—

Tom. Sir, Gr—gr—ber is—

Myr. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclined to hear that in all its parts; but, sir, I see very plainly what you are going into; I tell you, it is as probable a contingent that Sir Geoffry may die before Mr. Cimberton, as that he may outlive him.

Tom. Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I must say—

Myr. Sir, I allow you the whole extent of that argument; but that will go no further than as to the claimants under old Cimberton. I am of opinion, that, according to the instructions of Sir Ralph, he could not dock the entail, and then create a new estate for the heirs in general. [Gr—gr—ber—

Tom. Sir, I have no patience to be told that, when

Myr. I will allow it you, Mr. Sergeant; but there must be the words, heirs for ever, to make such an estate as you pretend.

Cim. I must be impartial, though you are counsel for my side of the question. Were it not that you are so good as to allow him what he has not said, I should think it very hard you should answer him without hearing him. But, gentlemen, I believe you have both considered this matter, and are firm in your different opinions: 'twere better, therefore, you proceed according to the particular sense of each of you, and give your thoughts distinctly in writing. And, do you see, sirs? pray let me have a copy of what you say in English.

Myr. Why, what is all we have been saying? In English! Oh! but I forgot myself; you're a wit. But, however, to please you, sir, you shall have it in as plain terms as the law will admit of.

Cim. But I would have it, sir, without delay.

Myr. That sir, the law will not admit of. The courts are sitting at Westminster, and I am this moment obliged to be at every one of them, and 'twould be wrong if I should not be in the Hall to attend one of them at least; the rest would take it ill else; therefore, I must leave what I have said to Mr. Sergeant's consideration, and I will digest his arguments on my part, and you shall hear from me again, sir. [*Exit.*

Tom. Agreed, agreed. [little abruptly.

Cim. Mr. Bramble is very quick. He parted a

Tom. He could not bear my argument; I pinched him to the quick about that Gr—gr—ber.

Mrs. S. I saw that, for he durst not so much as hear you. I shall send to you, Mr. Sergeant, as soon as Sir Geoffry comes to town, and then, I hope, all may be adjusted.

Tom. I shall be at my chambers, at my usual hours. [*Exit.*

Cim. Madam, if you please, I'll now attend you to the tea-table, where I shall hear from your ladyship reason and good sense after all this law and gibberish.

Mrs. S. 'Tis a wonderful thing, sir, that men of their profession do not study to talk the substance of what they have to say in the language of the rest of the world; sure, they'd find their account in it.

Cim. They might, perhaps, madam, with people of your good sense; but with the generality 'twould never do: the vulgar would have no respect for truth and knowledge if they were exposed to naked view.

Truth is too simple, of all art bereav'd;
Since the world will, why let it be deceiv'd.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—*Bevil's Lodgings.*

Enter BEVIL, *with a letter in his hand, followed by* TOM.

Tom. Upon my life, sir, I know nothing of the matter; I never opened my lips to Mr. Myrtle about anything of your honour's letter to madam Lucinda.

Bevil. What's the fool in such a fright for? I don't suppose you did. What I would know is, whether Mr. Myrtle shewed any suspicion, or asked you any questions, to lead you to say casually that you had carried any such letter for me this morning?

Tom. Why, sir, if he did ask me any questions, how could I help it?

Bevil. I don't say you could, oaf! I am not questioning you, but him. What did he say to you?

Tom. Why, sir, when I came to his chambers, to be dressed for the lawyer's part your honour was pleased to put me upon, he asked me if I had been to Mr. Sealand's this morning? So I told him, sir, I often went thither; because, sir, if I had not said that, he might have thought there was something more in my going now than at another time.

Bevil. Very well. The fellow's caution, I find, has given him this jealousy. (*Aside.*) Did he ask you no other questions?

Tom. Yes, sir; now I remember, as we came away in the hackney-coach from Mr. Sealand's; "Tom," says he, "as I came in to your master this morning, he bade you go for an answer to a letter he had sent; pray, did you bring him any?" says he. "Ah!" says I, "sir, your honour is pleased to joke with me; you have a mind to know whether I can keep a secret or no." [told him you had one.

Bevil. And so, by shewing him you could, you

Tom. Sir—(*Confused.*)

Bevil. What mean actions does jealousy make a man stoop to! how poorly has he used art with a servant to make him betray his master! (*Aside.*) Well, and when did he give you this letter for me?

Tom. Sir, he writ it before he pulled off his lawyer's gown, at his own chambers.

Bevil. Very well; and what did he say when you brought him my answer to it?

Tom. He looked a little out of humour, sir, and said it was very well. [Wait without.

Bevil. I knew he would be grave upon't. (*Aside.*)

Tom. Hum! 'gad, I don't like this: I am afraid we are in the wrong box here. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Bevil. I put on a serenity while my fellow was present, but I have never been more thoroughly disturbed. This hot man, to write me a challenge on supposed artificial dealing, when I professed myself his friend! I can live contented without glory, but I cannot suffer shame. What's to be done? But, first, let me consider Lucinda's letter again. (*Reads.*) "*Sir,—I hope it is consistent with the laws a woman ought to impose upon herself, to acknowledge that your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in our family, and desiring the refusal may come from me, has something more engaging in it than the courtship of him who I fear will fall to my lot, except your friend exerts himself for our common safety and happiness. I have reasons for desiring Mr. Myrtle may not know of this letter till hereafter; and am your most obliged humble servant,* LUCINDA SEALAND." Well, but the postscript: "*I won't, upon second thoughts, hide anything from you: but my reason for concealing this is, that Mr. Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper, which gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him inclines me to hope that only an ill effect which sometimes accompanies a tender love, and what may be cured by a careful and unblameable conduct.*" Thus has this lady made me her friend and confidant, and put herself in a kind under my protection. I cannot tell him immediately the purport of her letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy, and to serve him and her, by disobeying her in the article of secrecy, more than I should by complying with her directions. But, then, this duelling, which custom has imposed upon every man who would live with reputation and honour in the world, how must I preserve myself from imputations there? he'll, forsooth, call it, or think it, fear, if I explain without fighting. But his letter; I'll read it again. (*Reads.*) "*Sir,—You have used me basely, in corresponding and carrying on a treaty where you told me you were indifferent. I have changed my sword since I saw you; which advertisement I thought proper to send you against the next meeting between you and the injured* CHARLES MYRTLE."

Re-enter TOM.

Tom. Mr. Myrtle, sir: would your honour please to see him?

Bevil. Why, you stupid creature, let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings! Shew him up. [*Exit Tom.*] Well, I am resolved upon my carriage to him; he is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little distrustful, which I must allow for. But here he is. [*Re-enter* TOM, *with* MYRTLE.] Sir, I am extreme-

ly obliged to you for this honour. But, sir, you, with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit Tom.*] Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myr. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without further ceremony or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have further notice taken of my message than these half lines. I have your's. I shall be at home.

Bevil. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you in a very unusual style; but, as I design everything in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleased to confirm face to face; and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

Myr. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness, and, I see, your moderation tends to your own advantage and not mine; to your own safety, not consideration of your friend.

Bevil. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle?

Myr. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

Bevil. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that I understand what you would be at: but, sir, you know I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced to the breach of all laws, both divine and human.

Myr. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil! it would be a good first principle, in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of

Bevil. As what? [doing injuries as—

Myr. As fear of answering for them.

Bevil. As fear of answering for them? But that apprehension is just or blameable according to the object of that fear. I have often told you in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into his presence. I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against him, and immediately to urge on to his tribunal.

Myr. Mr. Bevil, I must tell you this coolness, this gravity, this shew of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have, indeed, the best excuse for life, the hopes of possessing Lucinda; but, consider, sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it, if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her shall be to let her see the dauntless man who is to be her guardian and protector.

Bevil. Sir, shew me but the least glimpse of argument that I am authorized, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will shew thee to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage. Slight, inconsiderate man! There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger; and you shall, you know not why, be cool, as you have, you know not why, been warm.

Myr. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You, perhaps, who know not what it is to love, who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign trinket, for your loose hours, and, from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honour, you know nothing of what it is to be alarmed, to be distracted with anxiety and terror of losing more than life. Your marriage, happy man! goes on like common business; and, in the interim, you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess; for your soft moments of dalliance, your convenient, your ready Indiana.

Bevil. You have touched me beyond the patience of a man, and I'm excusable in the guard of innocence, or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more, to accept your invitation and observe your letter. Sir, I'll attend you.

Re-enter Tom.

Tom. Did you call, sir? I thought you did; I heard you speak aloud.

Bevil. Yes; go call a coach.

Tom. Sir—master—Mr. Myrtle—friends—gentlemen, what d'ye mean? I am but a servant, or—

Bevil. Call a coach. [*Exit Tom. A long pause; they walk sullenly by each other.*] Shall I, though provoked to the uttermost, recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin, too, whose life depends on mine? (*Aside. Shuts the door.*) I have, thank heaven! had time to recollect myself; and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the false appearances under which your infirmity of temper makes you suffer, when, perhaps, too much regard to a false point of honour makes me prolong that suffering.

Myr. I am sure Mr. Bevil cannot doubt but I had rather have satisfaction from his innocence than his sword.

Bevil. Why, then, would you ask it first that way?

Myr. Consider, you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you loved.

Bevil. True. But let me tell you, I have saved you from the most exquisite distress, even though you had succeeded in the dispute. I know you so well, that, I am sure, to have found this letter about a man you had killed would have been worse than death to yourself. Read it. When he is thoroughly mortified, and shame has got the better of jealousy, he will deserve to be assisted towards obtaining Lucinda. (*Aside.*)

Myr. With what a superiority has he turned the injury on me as the aggressor! I begin to fear I have been too far transported. Is not that saying too much? I shall relapse. But I find, (on the postscript)—With what face can I see my benefactor, my advocate, whom I have treated like a betrayer? (*Aside.*) Oh! Bevil, with what words shall I—

Bevil. There needs none; to convince is much

Myr. But can you— [more than to conquer.

Bevil. You have overpaid the inquietude you gave me in the change I see in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! thy face is altered to that of another man, to that of my companion, my friend.

Myr. That I could be such a precipitate wretch!

Bevil. Pray, no more.

Myr. Let me reflect how many friends have died by the hands of friends for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say, again and again, how much I am beholden to that superior spirit you have subdued me with. What had become of one of us, or, perhaps, both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reason?

Bevil. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myr. Dear Bevil! your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly but what is conducted by reason, and agreeably to the practise of virtue and justice; and yet, how many have been sacrificed to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of men! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it, that they often use their swords against each other with dissembled anger and real fear.

Betray'd by honour, and compell'd by shame,
They hazard being to preserve a name;
Nor dare inquire into the dread mistake,
Till plung'd in sad eternity they wake. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*St. James's Park.*

Enter Sir John Bevil *and* Sealand.

Sir J. Give me leave, however, Mr. Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the business of an ancient house. Genealogy and descent are to be of some consideration in an affair of this sort.

Seal. Genealogy and descent! Sir John, value yourself as you please upon your ancient house, I am to talk freely of everything you are pleased to

put into your bill of rates on this occasion. Yet, sir, I have made no objections to your son's family; it is his morals that I doubt.

Sir J. Sir, I can't help saying, that what might injure a citizen's credit, may be no stain to a gentleman's honour.

Seal. Sir John, the honour of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit of a trader: we are talking of a marriage; and, in such a case, the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honour or credit of her lover, that he is a keeper—

Sir J. Mr. Sealand, don't take upon you to spoil my son's marriage with any woman else.

Seal. Sir John, let him apply to any woman else, and have as many mistresses as he pleases. [man.

Sir J. My son, sir, is a discreet and sober gentle-

Seal. Sir, I never saw a man that wenched soberly and discreetly that ever left it off; the decency observed in the practice hides, even from the sinner, the iniquity of it. [a gentleman of merit.

Sir J. But my son, sir, is, in the eye of the world,

Seal. I own to you I think him so. But, Sir John, I am a man exercised and experienced in chances and disasters; I lost, in my early years, a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant: this makes me, perhaps, over cautious to preserve the second bounty of Providence to me, and be as careful as I can of this child. You'll pardon me; my poor girl, sir, is as valuable to me as your boasted son to you.

Sir J. Why, that's one very good reason, Mr. Sealand, why I wish my son had her.

Seal. There is nothing but this strange lady here, this incognita, that can be objected to him. Here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life to that one passion.

Sir J. A man of my son's understanding cannot be supposed to be one of them.

Seal. Very wise men have been so enslaved; and when a man marries with one of them upon his hands, whether moved from the demand of the world, or slighter reasons, such a husband soils with his wife for a month, perhaps; then, good b'ye, madam; the shew's over. Ah! John Dryden points out such a husband to a hair, where he says,

"And while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is."

Now, in plain terms, sir, I shall not care to have my poor girl turned a grazing; and that must be the case when—

Sir J. But, pray, consider, sir, my son—

Seal. Look you, sir, I'll make the matter short. This unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him; but, one way or other, he is or has been certainly engaged to her. I am, therefore, resolved this very afternoon to visit her. Now, from her behaviour or appearance, I shall soon be let into what I may fear or hope for.

Sir J. Sir, I am very confident there can be nothing inquired into relating to my son, that will not, upon being understood, turn to his advantage.

Seal. I hope that as sincerely as you believe it. Sir John Bevil, when I am satisfied in this great point, if your son's conduct answers the character you give him, I shall wish your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great Britain; and so your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir J. He is gone in a way but barely civil; but his great wealth, and the merit of his only child, the heiress of it, are not to be lost for a little peevishness. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Bevil's Lodgings.*

Enter TOM *and* PHILLIS.

Tom. Well, madam, if you must speak with Mr. Myrtle, you shall: he is now with my master in the library.

Phil. But you must leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a present, nor I so handsomely take anything from him before you; it would not be decent.

Tom. It will be very decent, indeed, for me to retire, and leave my mistress with another man.

Phil. He is a gentleman, and will treat one properly.

Tom. I believe so; but, however, I won't be far off; and, therefore, will venture, to trust you. I'll call him to you. [*Exit.*

Phil. What a deal of pother and sputter here is between my mistress and Mr. Myrtle from mere punctilio! I could, any hour of the day, get her to her lover, and would do it; but she, forsooth, will allow no plot to get him; but if he can come to her, I know she would be glad of it. I must, therefore, do her an acceptable violence, and surprise her into his arms. I am sure, I go by the best rule imaginable: if she were my maid, I should think her the best servant in the world for doing so by me.

Re-enter TOM, *with* MYRTLE.

Oh, sir! you and Mr. Bevil are fine gentlemen, to let a lady remain under such difficulties as my poor mistress, and not attempt to set her at liberty, or release her from the danger of being instantly married to Cimberton. [done?

Myr. Tom has been telling—but what is to be

Phil. What is to be done? When a man can't come at his mistress, why can't you fire our house, or the next house to us, to make us run out, and you take us?

Myr. How, Mrs. Phillis?

Phil. Ay, let me see that rogue deny to fire a house, make a riot, or any other little thing, when there were no other way to come at me.

Tom. I am obliged to you, madam.

Phil. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themselves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hanged for love? Oh! were I a man—

Myr. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyship's notion of a man?

Phil. Only be at once what one time or other you may be, and wish to be, and must be.

Myr. Dear girl, talk plainly to me, and consider I, in my condition, can't be in very good humour. You say, to be at once what I must be.

Phil. Ay, ay; I mean no more than to be an old man. In a word, old Sir Geoffry Cimberton is every hour expected in town to join in the deeds and settlements for marrying Mr. Cimberton. He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb; though, as to his passions and desires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

Tom. Come, to the business; and don't keep the gentleman in suspense for the pleasure of being courted, as you serve me.

Phil. I saw you at the masquerade act such an one to perfection. Go and put on that very habit, and come to our house as Sir Geoffry. There is not one there but myself knows his person. I was born in the parish where he is lord of the manor; I have seen him often and often at church in the country. Do not hesitate, but come thither. They will think you bring a certain security against Mr. Myrtle, and you bring Mr. Myrtle. Leave the rest to me. I leave this with you, and expect—they don't, I told you, know you; they think you out of town; which you had as good be for ever, if you lose this opportunity. I must be gone; I know I am wanted at home.

Myr. My dear Phillis! (*Catches and kisses her, and gives her money.*)

Phil. Oh, fie! my kisses are not my own; you have committed violence; but I'll carry them to the right owner. (*Tom kisses her.*) Come, see me down stairs, (*to Tom*) and leave the lover to think of his last game for the prize. [*Exeunt Tom and Phil.*

Myr. I think I will instantly attempt this wild expedient. But I am so mortified at this conduct of mine towards poor Bevil: he must think meanly of me. I know not how to reassume myself, and be in spirit enough for such an adventure as this;

yet I must attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda under her present perplexities; and sure—

The next delight to transport with the fair,
Is to relieve her in her hours of care. [*Exit.*

ACT V.—Scene I.—*Sealand's House.*

Enter Phillis, *with lights, before* Myrtle, *disguised like Sir Geoffry Cimberton; supported by* Mrs. Sealand, Lucinda, *and* Cimberton.

Mrs. S. Now I have seen you thus far, Sir Geoffry, will you excuse me a moment while I give my necessary orders for your accommodation? [*Exit.*

Myr. I have not seen you, cousin Cimberton, since you were ten years old; and as it is incumbent on you to keep up your name and family, I shall, upon very reasonable terms join with you in a settlement to that purpose, though I must tell you, cousin, this is the first merchant that has married into our house.

Luc. Deuce on 'em! am I a merchant because my father is? (*Aside.*)

Myr. But is he directly a trader at this time?

Cim. There's no hiding the disgrace, sir? he trades to all parts of the world.

Myr. We never had one of our family before who descended from persons that did anything.

Cim. Sir, since it is a girl that they have, I am, for the honour of my family, willing to take it in again, and to sink her into our name, and no harm done. [this the young thing?

Myr. 'Tis prudently and generously resolved. Is

Cim. Yes, sir.

Phil. Good madam! don't be out of humour, but let them run to the utmost of their extravagance: hear them out. (*Apart to Lucinda.*) [weak.

Myr. Can't I see her nearer? my eyes are but

Phil. Beside, I am sure the uncle has something worth your notice. I'll take care to get off the young one, and leave you to observe what may be wrought out of the old one for your good. [*Apart, and exit.*

Cim. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, desires to be introduced to you, and to see you nearer. Approach, sir.

Myr. By your leave, young lady. (*Puts on his spectacles.*) Cousin Cimberton, she has exactly that sort of neck and bosom for which my sister Gertrude was so much admired in the year sixty-one, before the French dresses first discovered anything in women below the chin.

Luc. Chin, quotha! I don't believe my passionate lover there knows whether I have one or not. Ha, ha! *Re-enter* Phillis.

Phil. Sir, my lady desires to shew the apartment to you that she intends for Sir Geoffry. (*To Cimberton.*)

Cim. Well, sir, by the time you have sufficiently gazed and sunned yourself in the beauties of my spouse there, I will wait on you again.

[*Exeunt Cimberton and Phillis.*

Myr. Were it not, madam, that I might be troublesome, there is something of importance, though we are alone, which I would say more safe from being heard.

Luc. There is something in this old fellow, methinks, that raises my curiosity. (*Aside.*)

Myr. To be free, madam, I as heartily contemn this kinsman of mine as you do, and am sorry to see so much beauty and merit devoted by your parents to so insensible a possessor.

Luc. Surprising! I hope then, sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are so generous to pity, whatever may be the interest of your family.

Myr. This hand of mine shall never be employed to sign anything against your good and happiness.

Luc. I am sorry, sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments; but there is a gentleman in the world, whose gratitude will, I am sure, be worthy of the favour. [power to give.

Myr. All the thanks I desire, madam, are in your

Luc. Name them, and command them.

Myr. Only, madam, that the first time you are alone with your lover, you will, with open arms, receive him.

Luc. As willingly as heart could wish it. [cinda!

Myr. Thus then he claims your promise. Oh, Lu-

Luc. Oh! a cheat, a cheat, a cheat! [self, madam.

Myr. Hush! 'tis I, 'tis I, your lover; Myrtle him-

Luc. Oh, bless me! what rashness and folly to surprise me so! But, hush! my mother—

Re-enter Mrs. Sealand, Cimberton *and* Phillis.

Mrs. S. How now, what's the matter?

Luc. Oh! madam, as soon as you left the room, my uncle fell into a sudden fit, and—and—so I cried out for help to support him, and conduct him to his chamber. [you find yourself?

Mrs. S. That was kindly done. Alas! sir, how do

Myr. Never was taken in so odd a way in my life. Pray, lead me—Oh! I was talking here—pray, carry me—to my cousin Cimberton's young lady—(*Cimberton and Lucinda lead him as one in pain.*)

Cim. Plague, uncle, you will pull my ear off.

Luc. Pray, uncle, you will squeeze me to death.

Mrs. S. No matter, no matter; he knows not what he does. Come, sir, shall I help you out?

Myr. By no means; I'll trouble nobody but my young cousins here. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Charing Cross.*

Enter Sealand *and* Humphrey.

Seal. I am very glad, Mr. Humphrey, that you agree with me, that it is for our common good I should look thoroughly into this matter.

Hum. I am, indeed, of that opinion; for there is no artifice, nothing concealed in our family, which ought in justice to be known. I need not desire you, sir, to treat the lady with care and respect.

Seal. Master Humphrey, I shall not be rude, tho' I design to be a little abrupt, and come into the matter at once, to see how she will bear upon a surprise.

Hum. That's the door: sir, I wish you success. [*Exit.*

Seal. (*Knocks.*) I'll carry this matter with an air of authority, to inquire, though I make an errand to begin discourse. (*Knocks again.*)

Enter a Footboy.

So, young man, is your lady within?

Boy. Alack! sir, I am but a country boy; I don't know whether she is or noa; but, an' you'll stay a bit, I'll go and ask the gentlewoman that's with her.

Seal. Why, sirrah, though you are a country boy, you can see, can't you? you know whether she is at home when you see her, don't you?

Boy. Nay, nay; I'm not such a country lad, neither, master, to think she is at home because I see her; I have been in town but a month, and I lost one place already for believing my own eyes.

Seal. Why, sirrah, have you learned to lie already?

Boy. Ah! master, things that are lies in the country are not lies at London; I begin to know my business a little better than so; but, an' you please to walk in, I'll call a gentlewoman to you that can tell you for certain; she can make bold to ask my lady herself. [dare not say so.

Seal. Oh! then, she is within, I find, though you

Boy. Nay, nay; that's neither here nor there; what's matter whether she is within or no, if she has not a mind to see anybody?

Seal. I can't tell, sirrah, whether you are arch or simple; but, however, get me a direct answer, and here's a shilling for you. [can do for you.

Boy. Will you please to walk in? I'll see what I

Seal. I see you will be fit for your business in time, child; but I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinaries in such a house. [Pray, walk in.

Boy. Such a house, sir! you ha'n't seen it yet.

Seal. Sir, I'll wait upon you. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*Indiana's House.*

Enter Isabella *and Footboy.*

Isa. So, Daniel, what news with you?

Boy. Madam, there's a gentleman below would speak with my lady.

Isa. Sirrah, don't you know Mr. Bevil yet?

Boy. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman who comes every day and asks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

Isa. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before. Well, be who it will, let him come up to me. [*Exit Footboy.*

Re-enter Footboy, with SEALAND. *Isabella looks amazed.*

Seal. Madam, I can't blame your being a little surprised to see a perfect stranger make a visit, and—

Isa. I am, indeed, surprised. I see he does not know me. (*Aside.*)

Seal. You are very prettily lodged here, madam; in troth, you seem to have everything in plenty. A thousand a year, I warrant you, upon this pretty nest of rooms, and the dainty one within them. (*A side, and looks about.*)

Isa. Twenty years, it seems, have less effect in the alteration of a man of thirty, than of a girl of fourteen: he's almost still the same. How shall I contain my surprise and satisfaction? He must not know me yet. (*Aside.*)

Seal. Madam, I hope I don't give you any disturbance? but there is a young lady here with whom I have a particular business to discourse; and I hope she will admit me to that favour.

Isa. Why, sir, have you had any notice concerning her? I wonder who could give it you.

Seal. That, madam, is fit only to be communicated to herself.

Isa. Well, sir, you shall see her; you shall see her presently, sir; for now I am as a mother, and will trust her with you. [*Exit.*

Seal. As a mother! right: that's the old phrase for one of those commode ladies, who lend out beauty for hire to young gentlemen that have pressing occasions. But here comes the precious lady herself: in troth, a very sightly woman!

Enter INDIANA.

Ind. I am told, sir, you have some affair that requires your speaking with me.

Seal. Yes, madam. There came to my hands a bill drawn by Mr. Bevil, which is payable to-morrow; and he, in the intercourse of business, sent it to me, who have cash of his, and desired me to send a servant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myself.

Ind. Sir, was that necessary?

Seal. No, madam; but, to be free with you, the fame of your beauty, and the regard which Mr. Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curiosity.

Ind. Too well known to have for me! Your sober appearance, sir, which my friend described, made me expect no rudeness, or absurdity at least. Who's there? Sir, if you pay the money to a servant, 'twill be as well.

Seal. Pray, madam, be not offended; I came hither on an innocent, nay, a virtuous, design; and if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as useful to you, as you are in friendship with Mr. Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day disposing of.

Ind. You make me hope, sir, I have mistaken you: I am composed again. Be free; say on—what I am afraid to hear. (*Aside.*)

Seal. I feared, indeed, an unwarranted passion here; but I did not think it was in abuse of so worthy an object, so accomplished a lady, as your sense and mien bespeak: but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to shame, so they gratify—

Ind. Sir, you are going into very great errors; but as you are pleased to say you see something in me that has changed, at least, the colour of your suspicions, so has your appearance altered mine, and made me earnestly attentive to what has any way concerned you to inquire into my affairs and character.

Seal, How sensibly, with what an air, she talks! (*Aside.*)

Ind. Good sir, be seated, and tell me tenderly—keep all your suspicions concerning me alive, that you may, in a proper and prepared way, acquaint me why the care of your daughter obliges a person of your seeming worth and fortune to be thus inquisitive about a wretched, helpless, friendless—(*weeps*)—But I beg your pardon; though I am an orphan, your child is not; and your concern for her, it seems, has brought you hither. I'll be composed: pray, go on, sir.

Seal. How could Mr. Bevil be such a monster to injure such a woman?

Ind. No, sir, you wrong him; he has not injured me: my support is from his bounty.

Seal. Bounty! when gluttons give high prices for delicates, they are prodigious bountiful.

Ind. Still, still you will persist in that error; but my own fears tell me all. You are the gentleman, I suppose, for whose happy daughter he is designed a husband by his good father? and he has, perhaps, consented to the overture; and he is to be, perhaps, this night, a bridegroom.

Seal. I own he was intended such; but, madam, on your account I am determined to defer my daughter's marriage till I am satisfied, from your own mouth, of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

Ind. His actions, sir, his eyes, have only made me think he designed to make me the partner of his heart. The goodness and gentleness of his demeanour made me misinterpret all; 'twas my own hope, my own passion, that deluded me. He never made one amorous advance to me; his large heart and bestowing hand have only helped the miserable: nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care, the object on which to indulge and please himself with pouring favours.

Seal. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am, methinks, afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the same thing as if we had talked ever so distinctly; he ne'er shall have a daughter of mine.

Ind. If you say this from what you think of me, you wrong yourself and him. Let not me, miserable though I may be, do injury to my benefactor: no, sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you to his virtues. If to bestow, without a prospect of return; if to delight in supporting what might, perhaps, be thought an object of desire, with no other view than to be her guard against those who would not be so disinterested; if these actions, sir, can, in a careful parent's eye, commend him to a daughter, give your's, sir; give her to my honest, generous Bevil! What have I to do but sigh and weep, to rave, run wild, a lunatic in chains; or hid in darkness, mutter in distracted starts and broken accents my strange, strange story!

Seal. Take comfort, madam.

Ind. All my comfort must be to expostulate in madness, to relieve with frenzy my despair, and shrieking to demand of fate why, why was I born to such a variety of sorrows?

Seal. If I have been the least occasion—

Ind. No, 'twas heaven's high will I should be such: to be plundered in my cradle, tossed on the seas, and even there, an infant captive, to lose my mother, hear but of my father, to be adopted, lose my adopter, then plunged again in worse calamities.

Seal. An infant captive!

Ind. Yet, then, to find the most charming of mankind once more to set me free from what I thought the last distress; to load me with his services, his bounties, and his favours; to support my very life in a way that stole my very soul itself from me.

Seal. And has young Bevil been this worthy man?

Ind. Yet, then again, this very man to take another, without leaving me the right, the pretence, of easing my fond heart with tears! for, oh! I can't

reproach him, though the same hand that raised me to this height now throws me down the precipice.

Seal. Dear lady, oh! yet, one moment's patience; my heart grows full with your affliction: but yet, there's something in your story that promises relief, when you least hope it.

Ind. My portion here is bitterness and sorrow.

Seal. Do not think so. Pray, answer me; does Bevil know your name and family?

Ind. Alas! too well. Oh! could I be any other thing than what I am! I'll tear away all traces of my former self, my little ornaments, the remains of my first state, the hints of what I ought to have been. (*In her disorder she throws away her bracelet, which Sealand takes up, and looks earnestly at it.*)

Seal. Ha! what's this? my eyes are not deceived! It is, it is the same; the very bracelet which I bequeathed my wife at our last mournful parting.

Ind. What said you, sir? your wife! Whither does my fancy carry me? what means this new-felt motion at my heart? And yet, again, my fortune but deludes me; for if I err not, sir, your name is Sealand; but my lost father's name was—

Seal. Danvers, was it not? [family.

Ind. What new amazement! that is, indeed, my

Seal. Know, then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reasons too tedious now to mention, I changed my name of Danvers into Sealand.

Re-enter Isabella.

Isa. If there yet wants an explanation of your wonder, examine well this face; your's sir, I well remember. Gaze on, and read in me your sister

Seal. My sister! [Isabella.

Isa. But here's a claim more tender yet: your Indiana, sir, your long-lost daughter.

Seal. Oh! my child, my child!

Ind. All-gracious heaven! is it possible? do I embrace my father?

Seal. And do I hold thee? These passions are too strong for utterance. Rise, rise, my child, and give my tears their way. Oh! my sister! (*Embraces Isa.*)

Isa. Now, dearest niece, if I have wronged thy noble lover with too hard suspicions, my just concern for thee, I hope, will plead my pardon.

Seal. Oh! make him, then, the full amends, and be yourself the messenger of joy: fly this instant: tell him all these wondrous turns of Providence in his favour; tell him I have now a daughter to bestow which he no longer will decline; that this day he still shall be a bridegroom; nor shall a fortune, the merit which his father seeks, be wanting. Tell him the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance. [*Exit Isabella.*] My dearest Indiana!

Ind. Have I, then, at last, a father's sanction on my love? his bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a present worthy of Bevil's generosity?

Seal. Oh! my child, how are our sorrows past o'erpaid by such a meeting! Though I have lost so many years of soft, paternal dalliance with thee, yet in one day to find thee thus, and thus bestow thee, in such perfect happiness, is ample, ample reparation; and yet, again, the merit of thy lover—

Ind. Oh! had I spirits left to tell you of his actions, the pride, the joy of his alliance, sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquered mine.

Seal. How laudable is love when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him.

Ind. See, sir, my aunt already has succeeded, and brought him to your wishes.

Re enter Isabella, *with* Sir John Bevil, Bevil, Mrs. Sealand, Cimberton, Myrtle, *and* Lucinda.

Sir J. Where, where's this scene of wonder? Mr. Sealand, I congratulate, on this occasion, our mutual happiness. Your good sister, sir, has, with the story of your daughter's fortune, filled us with surprise and joy. Now all exceptions are removed; my son has now avowed his love, and turned all former jealousies and doubts to approbation; and, I am told, your goodness has consented to reward him.

Seal. If, sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes can make this object worthy his acceptance.

Bevil. I hear your mention, sir, of fortune with pleasure only, as it may prove the means to reconcile the best of fathers to my love: let him be provident, but let me be happy. My ever destined, my acknowledged wife! (*Embraces Indiana.*)

Ind. Wife! oh! my ever loved, my lord, my master.

Sir J. I congratulate myself as well as you that I have a son who could, under such disadvantages, discover your great merit.

Seal. Oh! Sir John, how vain, how weak, is human prudence! what care, what foresight, what imagination, could contrive such blest events to make our children happy, as Providence, in one short hour, has laid before us?

Cim. I am afraid, madam, Mr. Sealand is a little too busy for our affair: if you please, we'll take another opportunity. (*To Mrs. Sealand.*)

Mrs. S. Let us have patience, sir.

Cim. But we make Sir Geoffry wait, madam.

Myr. Oh! sir, I'm not in haste. (*During this, Bevil presents Lucinda to Indiana.*)

Seal. But here, here's our general benefactor. Excellent young man! that could be at once a lover to her beauty, and a parent to her virtue!

Bevil. If you think that an obligation, sir, give me leave to overpay myself in the only instance that can now add to my felicity, by begging you to bestow this lady on Mr. Myrtle.

Seal. She is his, without reserve. I beg he may be sent for. Mr. Cimberton, notwithstanding you never had my consent, yet there is, since I saw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

Cim. I hope, sir, your lady has concealed nothing from me?

Seal. Troth, sir, nothing but what was concealed from myself; another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my estate.

Cim. How, Mr. Sealand? why, then, if half Mrs. Lucinda's fortune is gone, you can't say that any of my estate is settled upon her: I was in treaty for the whole; but if that's not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain. Sir, I have nothing to do but to take my leave of your good lady, my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

Myr. That you have, Mr. Cimberton, with all my heart. (*Discovers himself.*)

All. Mr. Myrtle!

Myr. And I beg pardon of the whole company that I assumed the person of Sir Geoffry only to be present at the danger of this lady's being disposed of; and, in the utmost exigence, to assert my right to her, which, if her parents will ratify, as they once favoured my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value for me.

Luc. Generous man!

Seal. If, sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one who has meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is your's.

Luc. Mr. Myrtle, though you have ever had my heart, yet now I find I love you more, because I deserve you less.

Mrs. S. Well, however, I'm glad the girl's disposed of any way. (*Aside.*)

Bevil. Myrtle, no longer rivals now, but brothers.

Myr. Dear Bevil! you are born to triumph over me, but now our competition ceases. I rejoice in the pre-eminence of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

Sir J. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example; your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit, and the several difficulties you have struggled with evidently shew

Whate'er the gen'rous mind itself denies,
The secret care of Providence supplies. [*Exeunt.*

THE CONSTANT COUPLE;

Or, A TRIP TO THE JUBILEE:

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY GEORGE FARQUHAR.



Act II.—Scene 5.

CHARACTERS.

SIR HARRY WILDAIR	CLINCHER, SEN.	CONSTABLE	LADY DARLING
COLONEL STANDARD	CLINCHER, JUN.	SERVANTS	ANGELICA
ALDERMAN SMUGGLER	DICKY	MOB	PARLEY
VIZARD	TOM ERRAND	LADY LUREWELL	ERRAND'S WIFE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter VIZARD *with a letter, a Servant following him.*

Viz. Angelica send it back unopened! say you?

Serv. As you see, sir.

Viz. The pride of these virtuous women is more insufferable than the immodesty of prostitutes. After all my encouragement, to slight me thus!

Serv. She said, sir, that imagining your morals sincere, she gave you access to her conversation; but that your late behaviour, in her company, has convinced her, that your love and religion are both hypocrisy; and that she believes your letter, like yourself, fair on the outside, foul within; so sent it back unopened.

Viz. I'll be revenged the very first opportunity. Saw you the old Lady Darling, her mother?

Serv. Yes, sir; and she was pleased to say much in your commendation.

Viz. That's my cue. (*Aside.*) Run to the Lady Lorewell's, and know of her maid, whether her ladyship will be at home this evening. Her beauty is sufficient cure for Angelica's scorn.

[*Exit Servant. Vizard pulls out a book, reads and walks about.*

Enter ALDERMAN SMUGGLER.

Ald. S. Ay, there's a pattern for the young men o' th' times! At his meditation so early; some book of pious ejaculations, I'm sure.

Viz. This Hoyle is an excellent fellow! (*Aside.*) Oh! uncle Smuggler, to find you at this end o' th' town is a miracle.

Ald. S. I have seen a miracle this morning, indeed, cousin Vizard!

Viz. What is it, pray, sir?

Ald S. A man at his devotions so near the court; I'm very glad, boy, that you keep your sanctity untainted in this infectious place; the very air of this park is heathenish, and every man's breath I meet scents of atheism.

Viz. Surely, sir, some great concern must bring you to this unsanctified end of the town.

Ald. S. A very unsanctified concern, truly, cousin.

Viz. What is it?

Ald. S. A law-suit, boy: shall I tell you? My ship, the Swan, is newly arrived from St. Sebastian, laden with Portugal wines: now the impudent rogue of a tide-waiter has the face to affirm it is French wine in Spanish casks, and has indicted me upon the statute. Oh! conscience, conscience! these tide-waiters and surveyors plague us more with their French wines, than the war did with French privateers.—Ay, there's another plague of the nation—

Enter COLONEL STANDARD.

A red coat and cockade.

Viz. Colonel Standard, I'm your humble servant.

Col. S. May be not, sir.

Viz. Why so?

Col. S. Because—I'm disbanded.

Viz. How! broke?

Col. S. This very morning, in Hyde-park, my brave regiment, a thousand men that looked like lions yesterday, were scattered, and looked as poor and simple as the herd of deer that grazed beside them.

Ald. S. Tal, al, deral. (*Singing.*) I'll have a bonfire this night as high as the monument.

Col. S. A bonfire! thou dry, withered, ill-natured—had not those brave fellows' swords defended you, your house had been a bonfire ere this about your ears. Did we not venture our lives, sir?

Ald. S. And did we not pay for your lives, sir?

Venture your lives! I'm sure we ventured our money, and that's life and soul to me. Sir, we'll maintain you no longer.

Col. S. Then your wives shall, old Actæon. There are five-and-thirty strapping officers gone this morning to live upon free quarter in the city.

Ald. S. Oh! lord, oh! lord, I shall have a son within these nine months, born with a half-pike in his hand. Sir, you are—

Col. S. What, sir?

Ald. S. Sir, I say that you are—

Col. S. What, sir?

Ald. S. Disbanded, sir, that's all. I see my lawyer yonder. [*Exit.*

Viz. Sir, I am very sorry for your misfortune.

Col. S. Why so? I don't come to borrow money of you; if you're my friend, meet me this evening at the Shakspeare. I'll drink a health to my king, prosperity to my country, and away for Hungary to-morrow morning.

Viz. What! you won't leave us?

Col. S. What! a soldier stay here, to look like an old pair of colours in Westminster-hall, ragged and rusty! no, no. I met yesterday a broken lieutenant, he was ashamed to own that he wanted a dinner, but begged ten shillings of me to buy a new scabbard for his sword.

Viz. Oh! but you have good friends, Colonel!

Col. S. Oh! very good friends; my father's a lord, and my elder brother a beau; mighty good friends, indeed! [sword again.

Viz. But your country may, perhaps, want your

Col. S. Nay, for that matter, let but a single drum beat up for volunteers between Ludgate and Charing-cross, and I shall undoubtedly hear it at the walls of Buda.

Viz. Come, come, Colonel, there are ways of making your fortune at home: make your addresses to the fair; you're a man of honour and courage.

Col. S. Ay, my courage is like to do me wondrous service with the fair: this pretty cross over my eye will attract a duchess: I warrant 'twill be a mighty grace to my ogling. Had I used the stratagem of a certain brother colonel of mine, I might succeed.

Viz. What was it, pray?

Col. S. Why, to save his pretty face for the women, he always turned his back upon the enemy: he was a man of honour for the ladies.

Viz. Come, come, the loves of Mars and Venus will never fail; you must get a mistress.

Col. S. Pr'ythee, no more on't; you have awakened a thought, from which and the kingdom, I would have stolen away at once. To be plain, I have a mistress.

Viz. And she's cruel?

Col. S. No.

Viz. Her parents prevent your happiness?

Col. S. Nor that.

Viz. Then she has no fortune?

Col. S. A large one; beauty to tempt all mankind, and virtue to beat off their assaults. Oh! Vizard, such a creature! (*Sir Harry Wildair sings without.*) Heyday! who the devil have we here?

Viz. The joy of the play-house, and life of the park; Sir Harry Wildair, newly come from Paris.

Col. S. Sir Harry Wildair! did not he make a campaign in Flanders some three or four years ago?

Viz. The same.

Col. S. Why, he behaved himself very bravely.

Viz. Why not? Dost think bravery and gaiety are inconsistent? He's a gentleman of most happy circumstances, born to a plentiful estate; has had a genteel and easy education, free from the rigidness of teachers, and pedantry of schools. His florid constitution, being never ruffled by misfortune, nor stinted in its pleasures, has rendered him entertaining to others, and easy to himself. Turning all passion into gaiety of humour, by which he chooses rather to rejoice with his friends, than be hated by any; as you shall see.

Enter Sir Harry Wildair.

Sir H. Ha, Vizard!

Viz. Sir Harry!

Sir H. Who thought to find you out of the rubric so long? I thought thy hypocrisy had been wedded to a pulpit-cushion long ago. Sir, if I mistake not your face, your name is Standard.

Col. S. Sir Harry, I'm your humble servant.

Sir H. Come, gentlemen, the news, the news of the town! for I'm just arrived.

Viz. Why, in the city end of the town, we're playing the knave to get estates.

Col. S. And, in the court-end, playing the fool, in spending them.

Sir H. Just so in Paris. I'm glad we're grown so modish.

Viz. We are so reformed, that gallantry is taken for vice.

Col. S. And hypocrisy for religion.

Sir H. A la mode de Paris again. But this is trifling; tell me news, gentlemen. What lord has lately broke his fortune at Brooks's, or his heart at Newmarket for the loss of a race? What wife has been lately suing in Doctors' Commons for alimony? or what daughter run away with her father's valet? What beau gave the noblest hall, or had the finest coach on the birth-day? I want news, gentlemen.

Col. S. 'Faith, sir, these are no news at all.

Viz. But, Sir Harry, we heard that you designed to make the tour of Italy; what brought you back so soon?

Sir H. That which brought you into the world, and may, perhaps, carry you out of it—a woman.

Col. S. What! quit the pleasures of travel for a woman!

Sir H. Ay, Colonel, for such a woman! I had rather see her *ruelle* than the palace of *Louis le Grand:* there's more glory in her smile, than in the jubilee at Rome; and I would rather kiss her hand than the Pope's toe.

Viz. You, Colonel, have been very lavish in the beauty and virtue of your mistress; and Sir Harry here has been no less eloquent in the praise of his. Now will I lay you both ten guineas each, that neither of them is so pretty, so witty, or so virtuous, as mine.

Col. S. 'Tis done.

Sir H. I'll double the stakes. But, gentlemen, now I think on't, how shall we be resolved? For I know not where my mistress may be found; she left Paris about a month before me, and I had an account—

Col. S. How, sir! left Paris about a month before you?

Sir H. Yes, sir; and I had an account that she lodged somewhere in St. James's.

Viz. How! somewhere in St. James's, say you?

Sir H. Ay, sir; but I know not where, and perhaps mayn't find her this fortnight.

Col. S. Her name, pray, Sir Harry?

Viz. Ay, ay, her name; perhaps we know her.

Sir H. Her name! ay,—she has the softest, whitest hand that e'er was made of flesh and blood; her lips so balmy sweet—

Col. S. But her name I want, sir.

Sir H. Then her eyes, Vizard!

Col. S. Psha! Sir Harry, her name or nothing.

Sir H. Then if you must have it, she's called the Lady—But then her foot, gentlemen; she dances to a miracle. She does dance devilish well indeed. Vizard, you have certainly lost your wager.

Viz. Why, you have certainly lost your senses; we shall never discover the picture, unless you subscribe the name.

Sir H. Then her name is Lurewell.

Col. S. 'Sdeath, my mistress! (*Aside.*)

Viz. My mistress, by Jupiter! (*Aside.*)

Sir H. Do you know her, gentlemen?

Col. S. I have seen her, sir.

Sir H. Canst tell where she lodges? Tell me, dear Colonel.

Col. S. Your humble servant, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir H. Nay, hold! Colonel; I'll follow you, and will know. [*Runs out.*

Viz. The Lady Lurewell his mistress! he loves her; but she loves me. But he's a baronet, and I plain Vizard; he has a coach and six, and I walk on foot; I was bred in London, and he in Paris. That very circumstance has murdered me: then some stratagem must be laid to divert his pretensions.

Re-enter SIR HARRY WILDAIR.

Sir H. Pr'ythee, Dick, what makes the Colonel so out of humour?

Viz. Because he's out of pay, I suppose.

Sir H. 'Slife! that's true; I was beginning to mistrust some rivalship in the case.

Viz. And suppose there were, you know the Colonel can fight, Sir Harry.

Sir H. Fight! psha! but he can't dance. Ha! he contend for a woman, Vizard! 'Slife! man, if ladies were to be gained by sword and pistol only, what the devil should all we beaux do?

Viz. I'll try him farther. (*Aside.*) But would not you, Sir Harry, fight for this woman you so much admire?

Sir H. Fight! let me consider. I love her, that's true; but then I love honest Sir Harry Wildair better. The Lady Lurewell is divinely charming—right—but then a thrust in the guts, or a Middlesex jury, is as ugly as the devil.

Viz. Ay, Sir Harry, 'twere dangerons to be tried by a parcel of greasy, grumbling, bartering boobies, who would hang you, purely because you are a gentleman.

Sir H. But no more of her. Pr'ythee, Vizard, can't you recommend a friend to a pretty mistress, by the by, till I can find my own? You have store, I'm sure; you cunning poaching dogs make surer game, than we that hunt open and fair. Pr'ythee, now, good Vizard.

Viz. Let me consider a little.—Now love and revenge inspire my politics! (*Aside. Pauses, whilst Sir Harry walks, singing.*)

Sir H. Psha! thou'rt as long studying for a new mistress, as—

Viz. I design a charming girl for you; you'll therefore bear a little expectation.

Sir H. Ha! sayest thou, dear Vizard?

Viz. A girl of sixteen, Sir Harry.

Sir H. Now, sixteen thousand blessings light on thee.

Viz. Pretty and witty.

Sir H. Ay, ay, but her name, Vizard.

Viz. Her name! yes,—she has the softest, whitest hand that e'er was made of flesh and blood; her lips so balmy sweet— [man?

Sir H. Well, well; but where shall I find her,

Viz. Find her!—but then her foot, Sir Harry; she dances to a miracle.

Sir H. Pr'ythee, don't distract me.

Viz. Well, then, you must know, that this lady is the greatest beauty in town; her name's Angelica: she that passes for her mother is very commode, and called the Lady Darling; she goes for a baronet's lady (no disparagement to your honour, Sir Harry,) I assure you.

Sir H. Psha! hang my honour; but what street, what house?

Viz. Not so fast, Sir Harry; you must have my passport for your admittance, and you'll find my recommendation in a line or two will procure you very civil entertainment; I suppose twenty or thirty pieces, handsomely placed, will gain the point.

Sir H. Thou dearest friend to a man in necessity. Here, sirrah, order my coach about to St. James's; I'll walk across the park. (*To his Servant.*)

Enter CLINCHER, *Senior.*

Clin. sen. Here, sirrah, order my coach about to St. James's; I'll walk across the park, too.—Mr. Vizard, your most devoted—Sir, (*to Sir H.*) I admire the mode of your dress-knot; methinks it very emphatically carries an air of travel in it; your sword-knot, too, is most ornamentally modish, and bears a foreign mien.

Gentlemen, my brother is just arriv'd in town;
So that, being upon the wing to kiss his hands,
I hope you'll pardon the abrupt departure of,
Gentlemen, your most devoted, and most faithful humble servant. [*Exit.*

Sir H. Pr'ythee, dost know him?

Viz. Know him! Why, 'tis Clincher, who was apprentice to my uncle Smuggler, the merchant, in the city.

Sir H. What makes him so gay?

Viz. Why, he's in mourning.

Sir H. In mourning!

Viz. Yes, for his father. The kind old man, in Hertfordshire, the other day, broke his neck a fox-hunting; the son, upon the news, has broke his indentures; whipped from behind the counter into the side-box; and now talks of nothing but wines, intrigues, plays, fashions, and going to the jubilee.

Sir H. Ha, ha, ha! how many pounds of mareschal must the fellow use in sweetening himself from the smell of hops and tobacco? But now for Angelica, that's her name; we'll to the coffee-house, where you shall write my passport. *Allons.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Lady Lurewell's Lodgings.*

Enter LADY LUREWELL *and* PARLEY.

Lady L. Parley, my pocket-book. Let me see, Madrid, Venice, Paris, London!—Ay, London! they may talk what they will of the hot countries, but I find love most fruitful under this climate. In a month's space have I gained—let me see, *imprimis*, Colonel Standard—

Par. And how will your ladyship manage him?

Lady L. As all soldiers should be managed; he shall serve me till I gain my ends, then I'll disband [him.

Par. But he loves you, madam.

Lady L. Therefore I scorn him; I hate all that don't love me, and slight all that do. My unwary innocence was wronged by faithless man; but now, let me survey my captives. The Colonel leads the van; next, Mr. Vizard, he courts me out of the Practice of Piety, therefore is a hypocrite; then Clincher, he adores me with *orangerée*, and is, consequently, a fool; then my old merchant, Alderman Smuggler, he's a compound of both; out of which medley of lovers, if I don't make good diversion—What d'ye think, Parley?

Par. I can't be persuaded though, madam, but that you really loved Sir Harry Wildair in Paris.

Lady L. Of all the lovers I ever had, he was my greatest plague, for I could never make him uneasy: I left him involved in a duel upon my account; I long to know whether the fop be killed or not. Oh, lord! no sooner talk of killing, but the soldier is conjured up.

Enter COLONEL STANDARD.

You're upon hard duty, Colonel, to serve your king, your country, and a mistress, too.

Col. S. I once, madam, hoped the honour of defending you from all injuries, through a title to your lovely person; but now my love must attend my fortune. My commission, madam, was my passport to the fair; 'twas once the life of honour, but now its winding-sheet, and with it must my love be buried.

Par. What! disbanded, Colonel?

Col. S. Yes, Mrs. Parley.

Par. Faugh! the nauseous fellow! poverty in his looks already. (*Aside.*)

Lady L. His misfortune troubles me. (*Aside.*)

Col. S. I'll choose, madam, rather to destroy

my passion by absence abroad, than have it starved at home.

Lady L. I'm sorry, sir, you have so mean an opinion of my affection, as to imagine it founded upon your fortune. And to convince you of your mistake, here I vow, by all that's sacred, I own the same affection now as before. Let it suffice, my fortune is considerable.

Col. S. No, madam, no; I'll never be a charge to her I love! the man that sells himself for gold, is the worst of prostitutes.

Lady L. Now, were he any other creature but a man, I could love him. (*Aside.*)

Col. S. This only last request I make, that no title recommend a fool, no office introduce a knave, nor coat a coward, to my place in your affections; so farewell my country, and adieu my love. [*Exit.*

Lady L. Now the devil take thee for being so honourable. Here, Parley, call him back. [*Exit. Parley.*] I shall lose half my diversion else. Now for a trial of skill.

Re-enter PARLEY *and* COLONEL STANDARD.

Sir, I hope you'll pardon my curiosity: when do you take your journey?

Col. S. To-morrow morning early, madam.

Lady L. So suddenly! which way are you designed to travel?

Col. S. That I can't yet resolve on.

Lady L. Pray, sir, tell me; pray, sir; I entreat you; why are you so obstinate?

Col. S. Why are you so curious, madam?

Lady L. Because—

Col. S. What?

Lady L. Because I, I—

Col. S. Because what, madam?—Pray tell me.

Lady L. Because I design to follow you. (*Crying.*)

Col. S. Follow me! by all that's great, I ne'er was proud before. Follow me! What! expose thee to the hazards of a camp. Rather I'll stay, and here bear the contempt of fools, and worst of fortune.

Lady L. You need not, shall not; my estate for both is sufficient.

Col. S. Thy estate! no, I'll turn a knave, and purchase one myself; I'll cringe to the proud man I undermine, and fawn on him that I would bite to death; I'll tip my tongue with flattery, and smooth my face with smiles; I'll turn informer, office-broker, nay, coward, to be great, and sacrifice it all to thee, my generous fair.

Lady L. And I'll dissemble, lie, swear, jilt, anything, but I'll reward thy love, and recompense thy noble passion.

Col. S. Sir Harry, ha, ha, ha! poor Sir Harry, ha, ha, ha! Rather kiss her hand, than the Pope's toe, ha, ha, ha! [Harry?

Lady L. What Sir Harry, Colonel? What Sir

Col. S. Sir Harry Wildair, madam.

Lady L. What! is he come over?

Col. S. Ay, and he told me—but I don't believe a syllable on't.

Lady L. What did he tell you?

Col. S. Only called you his mistress; and pretending to be extravagant in your commendation, would vainly insinuate the praise of his own judgment and good fortune in a choice—

Lady L. How easily is the vanity of fops tickled by our sex!

Col. S. Why, your sex is the vanity of fops.

Lady L. On my conscience, I believe so. This gentleman, because he danced well, I pitched on for a partner at a ball in Paris; and ever since, he has so persecuted me with letters, songs, dances, serenading, flattery, foppery, and noise, that I was forced to fly the kingdom: and I warrant you, he made you jealous.

Col. S. Faith, madam, I was a little uneasy.

Lady L. You shall have a plentiful revenge; I'll send him back all his foolish letters, songs, and verses, and you yourself shall carry them; 'twill afford you opportunity of triumphing, and free me from his further impertinence; for, of all men, he's my aversion. I'll run and fetch them instantly. [*Exit.*

Col. S. Dear madam, a rare project! How shall I bait him like Actæon with his own dogs! Well, Mrs. Parley, it is ordered by act of parliament, that you receive no more pieces, Mrs. Parley.

Par. 'Tis provided, by the same act, that you send no more messages, good Colonel; you must not pretend to send any more letters, unless you can pay the postage.

Col. S. Come, come, don't be mercenary; take example by your lady, be honourable.

Par. Alack-a-day! sir, it shews as ridiculous and haughty for us to imitate our betters in their honour, as in their finery; leave honour to nobility that can support it; we poor folks, Colonel, have no pretence to't. [*Exit.*

Col. S. 'Tis one of the greatest curses of poverty, to be the jest of chambermaids!

Re-enter LADY LUREWELL.

Lady L. Here's the packet, Colonel; the whole magazine of love's artillery. (*Gives him the packet.*)

Col. S. Which, since I have gained, I will turn upon the enemy. Madam, I'll bring you the news of my victory this evening. Poor Sir Harry, ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Clincher Junior's Lodgings.*

Enter CLINCHER, *Junior, reading a letter;* DICKY *following.*

Clin. jun. (*Reads.*) "*Dear Brother,—I will see you presently; I have sent this lad to wait on you; he can instruct you in the fashions of the town. I am your affectionate brother,* CLINCHER."—Very well: and what's your name, sir?

Dicky. My name is Dicky, sir.

Clin. jun. Dicky!

Dicky. Ay, Dicky, sir.

Clin. jun. Very well, a pretty name! And what can you do, Mr. Dicky?

Dicky. Why, sir, I can dress hair, and carry a billet-doux.

Clin. jun. A billet-doux; pray, what's that?

Dicky. Why, a billet-doux is a kind of penny-post letter.

Enter CLINCHER, *Senior.*

Clin. sen. Brother, you're welcome to London.

Clin. jun. I thought, brother, you owed so much to the memory of my father, as to wear mourning for his death.

Clin. sen. Why, so I do, fool; I wear this because I have the estate, and you wear that because you have not the estate. You have cause to mourn indeed, brother. Well, brother, I'm glad to see you; fare you well. (*Going.*)

Clin. jun. Stay, stay, brother; where are you going?

Clin. sen. How natural it is for a country booby to ask impertinent questions. Harkye, sir, is not my father dead?

Clin. jun. Ay, ay, to my sorrow.

Clin. sen. No matter for that, he's dead; and am not I a young extravagant English heir?

Clin. jun. Very right, sir.

Clin. sen. Why, then, sir, you may be sure that I am going to the jubilee, sir.

Clin jun. Jubilee! What's that?

Clin. sen. Jubilee. Why the jubilee is—'faith, I don't know what it is: do you know, Dicky?

Dicky. Why, the jubilee is the same thing with our lord mayor's day in the city; there will be pageants, and squibs, and raree shows, and all that, sir.

Clin. jun. And must you go so soon, brother?

Clin. sen. Yes, sir; for I must stay a month in Amsterdam, to study poetry.

Clin. jun. Then I suppose, brother, you travel

through Muscovy to learn fashions; don't you, brother?

Clin. sen. Brother! Pr'ythee, Robin, don't call me brother; sir will do every jot as well.

Clin. jun. Oh! Jupiter Ammon, why so?

Clin. sen. Because people will imagine that you have a spite at me.—But have you seen your cousin Angelica yet?

Clin. jun. No; my dancing-master has not been with me yet. How shall I salute them, brother?

Clin. sen. Psha! that's easy; 'tis only two scrapes, a kiss, and your humble servant. I'll tell you more when I come from the jubilee. Come along. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Lady Darling's House.*

Enter Sir Harry Wildair, *with a letter.*

Sir H. Well, if this paper-kite flies sure, I'm secure of my game. Humph! The prettiest *bordel* I have seen; a very stately genteel one. (*Footmen cross the stage.*) Heyday! equipage too!—'Sdeath! I'm afraid I've mistaken the house.

Enter Lady Darling.

No, this must be the old lady, by her gravity.

Lady D. Your business, pray, sir?

Sir H. Pleasure, madam.

Lady D. Then, sir, you have no business here.

Sir H. This letter, madam, will inform you farther: Mr. Vizard sent it, with his humble service to your ladyship.

Lady D. How does my cousin, sir?

Sir H. Ay, her cousin, too; that's right procuress again. (*Aside.*)

Lady D. (*Reads.*) "*Madam—Earnest inclination to serve—Sir Harry—Madam—Court my cousin—gentleman—fortune.—Your ladyship's most humble servant,* Vizard." Sir, your fortune and quality are sufficient to recommend you anywhere; but what goes farther with me, is the recommendation of so sober and pious a young gentleman as my cousin Vizard.

Sir H. A right sanctified old lady, on my word. (*Aside.*)

Lady D. Sir Harry, your conversation with Mr. Vizard argues you a gentleman, free from the loose and vicious carriage of the town; I'll therefore call my daughter. [*Exit.*

Sir H. She dresses up a sin so religiously, that the devil would hardly know it of his making.

Enter Angelica.

Oh! all ye powers of love! An angel! 'Sdeath, what money have I got in my pocket? I can't offer her less than twenty guineas; and, by Jupiter, she's worth a hundred! (*Aside.*)

Angel. 'Tis he. The very same! And his person as agreeable as his character of good humour; pray heaven, his silence proceed from respect. (*Aside.*)

Sir H. How innocent she looks! How would that modesty adorn virtue, when it makes even vice look so charming! By heaven, there's such a commanding innocence in her looks, that I dare not ask the question. (*Aside.*)

Angel. Now all the charms of real love and feigned indifference, assist me to engage his heart, for mine is lost already. (*Aside.*)

Sir H. Madam—I, I—I cannot speak to her; but she's a woman, and I will.—Madam, in short, I, I—Oh! hypocrisy, hypocrisy, what a charming sin art thou! (*Aside.*)

Angel. (*Aside.*) He is caught; now to secure my conquest.—I thought, sir, you had some business to communicate.

Sir H. Business to communicate! How nicely she words it. Yes, madam, I have a little business to communicate. Don't you love singing birds, madam?

Angel. That's an odd question for a lover.—(*Aside.*)—Yes, sir.

Sir H. Why, then, madam, here is a nest of the prettiest goldfinches that ever chirped in a cage; twenty young ones, I assure you, madam.

Angel. Twenty young ones! what then, sir?

Sir H. Why, then, madam, there are—twenty young ones.—'Slife! I think twenty is pretty fair.

Angel. He's mad, sure.—Sir Harry, when you have learned more wit and manners, you shall be welcome here again. [*Exit.*

Sir H. Wit and manners! Egad, now I conceive there is a great deal of wit and manners in twenty guineas; I'm sure 'tis all the wit and manners I have about me at present. What shall I do?

Enter Clincher, *Junior, and* Dicky.

What the devil's here? Another cousin, I warrant ye. Harkye! sir, can you lend me ten or a dozen guineas instantly? I'll pay you fifteen for them in three hours, upon my honour.

Clin. jun. These London sparks are plaguy impudent. This fellow, by his assurance, can be no less than a courtier.

Dicky. He's rather a courtier, by his borrowing.

Clin. jun. Faith, sir, I ha'n't above five guineas about me.

Sir H. What business have you here, then, sir? For, to my knowledge, twenty won't be sufficient.

Clin. jun. Sufficient! For what, sir?

Sir H. What, sir! Why, for that, sir; what the devil should it be, sir? I know your business, notwithstanding all your gravity, sir.

Clin. jun. My business! Why, my cousin lives here.

Sir H. I know your cousin does live here, and Vizard's cousin, and everybody's cousin.—Harkye! sir, I shall return immediately, and if you offer to touch her till I come back, I shall cut your throat, rascal. [*Exit.*

Clin. jun. Why the man's mad, sure!

Dicky. Mad, sir, ay; why he's a beau.

Clin. jun. A beau! What's that? Are all madmen beaux?

Dicky. No, sir; but most beaux are madmen. But now for your cousin; remember your three scrapes, a kiss, and your humble servant. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*The Street.*

Enter Sir Harry Wildair, Colonel Standard *following.*

Col. S. Sir Harry, Sir Harry!

Sir H. I'm in haste, Colonel; besides, if you're in no better humour than when I parted with you in the park this morning, your company won't be very agreeable.

Col. S. You're a happy man, Sir Harry, who are never out of humour. Can nothing move your gall, Sir Harry?

Sir H. Nothing but impossibilities, which are the same as nothing.

Col. S. What impossibilities?

Sir H. The resurrection of my father to disinherit me, or an act of parliament against wenching. A man of eight thousand pounds per annum to be vexed! No, no; anger and spleen are companions for younger brothers. [back.

Col. S. Suppose one abused you behind your

Sir H. Why, then, would I abuse him behind his back; so we're even.

Col. S. But suppose you had lost a mistress.

Sir H. Why, then, I would get another.

Col. S. But suppose you were discarded by the woman you love.

Sir H. Colonel, my love is neither romantically honourable, nor meanly mercenary; 'tis only a pitch of gratitude; while she loves me, I love her; when she desists, the obligation's void.

Col. S. But if the Lady Lurewell (only suppose it,) had discarded you—I say, only suppose it, and had sent your discharge by me.

Sir H. Psha! that's another impossibility.

Col. S. Are you sure of that?

Sir H. Why, 'twere a solecism in nature. She dances with me, sings with me, plays with me;

swears with me; in short, we are as like one another as a couple of guineas.

Col. S. Now that I have raised you to the highest pinnacle of vanity, will I give you so mortifying a fall, as shall dash your hopes to pieces. I pray your honour to peruse these papers. (*Gives him the packet.*)

Sir H. What is't, the muster-roll of your regiment, Colonel?

Col. S. No, no; 'tis a list of your forces in your last love campaign; and, for your comfort, all disbanded.

Sir H. Pr'ythee, good metaphorical Colonel, what d'ye mean?

Col. S. Read, sir, read; these are the sybil's leaves, that will unfold your destiny.

Sir H. So it be not a false deed to cheat me of my estate, what care I? (*Opening the packet.*) Humph! my hand! To the Lady Lurewell—To the Lady Lurewell—To the Lady Lurewell. What the devil hast thou been tampering with, to conjure up these spirits?

Col. S. A certain familiar of your acquaintance, sir. Read, read.

Sir H. (*Reads.*) "*Madam, my passion—so natural—your beauty contending force of charms—mankind—eternal admirer,* Wildair."—I never was ashamed of my name before.

Col. S. What, Sir Harry Wildair out of humour! ha, ha, ha! Poor Sir Harry! more glory in her smile than in the jubilee at Rome, ha, ha, ha! But, then, her foot, Sir Harry; she dances to a miracle! ha, ha, ha! Fie, Sir Harry, a man of your parts write letters not worth keeping. What sayest thou, my dear knight errant? Ha, ha, ha! you may seek adventures now, indeed.

Sir H. (*Sings.*) "No, no, let her wander," &c.

Col. S. You are jilted to some tune, sir; blown up with false music, that's all.

Sir H. Now, why should I be angry that a woman is a woman? Since inconstancy and falsehood are grounded in their natures, how can they help it?

Col. S. Then they must be grounded in your nature; for she's a rib of you, Sir Harry.

Sir H. Here's a copy of verses, too; I must turn poet in the devil's name. Stay—'Sdeath, what's here? This is her hand—Oh! the charming characters! (*Reads.*) "*My dear Wildair*—That's I, egad!—*this huff bluff Colonel*—that's he—*is the rarest fool in nature*—the devil he is!—*and as such, have I used him*—with all my heart, faith!—*I had no better way of letting you know that I lodged in St. James's.*—Lurewell." Colonel, I am your most humble servant.

Col. S. Hold! sir, you sha'n't go yet; I ha'n't delivered half my message.

Sir H. Upon my faith, but you have, Colonel.

Col. S. Well, well, own your spleen; out with it, I know you're likely to burst.

Sir H. I am so, egad! ha, ha, ha! (*Laugh, and point at one another.*)

Col. S. Ay, with all my heart, ha, ha! Well, well, that's forced, Sir Harry.

Sir H. I was never better pleased in all my life, by Jupiter.

Col. S. Well, Sir Harry, 'tis prudence to hide your concern, when there's no help for't. But, to be serious now. The lady has sent you back all your papers there. I was so just as not to look upon them.

Sir H. I'm glad on't, sir; for there were some things that I would not have you see.

Col. S. All this she has done for my sake, and I desire you would decline any farther pretensions for your own sake. So, honest, good-natured Sir Harry, I'm your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Sir H. Ha, ha, ha! poor Colonel! Oh! the delight of an ingenious mistress! what a life and briskness it adds to an amour, like the loves of mighty Jove, still suing in different shapes. A legerdemain mistress, who, præsto! pass! and she's vanished, then eh! in an instant, in your arms again. (*Going.*)

Enter Vizard.

Viz. Well met, Sir Harry; what news from the Island of Love?

Sir H. Faith, we make but a broken voyage by your chart; but now I am bound for another port: I told you the Colonel was my rival.

Viz. The Colonel! curs'd misfortune! another! (*Aside.*)

Sir H. But the civilest in the world; he brought me word where my mistress lodges: the story's too long to tell you now, for I must fly.

Viz. What! have you given over all thoughts of Angelica?

Sir H. No, no; I'll think of her some other time. But now for the Lady Lurewell; wit and beauty calls.

That mistress ne'er can pall her lover's joys,
Whose wit can whet, whene'er her beauty cloys.
Her little amorous frauds all truths excel;
And make us happy, being deceiv'd so well. [*Exit.*

Viz. The Colonel my rival, too! how shall I manage? There is but one way: him and the knight will I set a tilting, where one cuts t'other's throat, and the survivor's hanged: so there will be two rivals pretty decently disposed of. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*Lady Lurewell's Lodgings.*

Lady Lurewell *and* Parley.

Lady L. Has my servant brought me the money from my merchant?

Par. No, madam; he met Alderman Smuggler at Charing-cross, who has promised to wait on you himself immediately.

Lady L. 'Tis odd that this old rogue should pretend to love me; and, at the same time, cheat me of my money.

Par. 'Tis well, madam, if he don't cheat you of your estate; for you say the writings are in his hands.

Lady L. But what satisfaction can I get of him? Oh! here he comes.

Enter Alderman Smuggler.

Mr. Alderman, your servant; have you brought me any money, sir?

Ald. S. Faith, madam, trading is very dead; what with paying the taxes, raising the customs, losses at sea abroad, and maintaining our wives at home, the bank is reduced very low.

Lady L. Come, come, sir, these evasions won't serve your turn; I must have money, sir. I hope you don't design to cheat me.

Ald. S. Cheat you, madam! have a care what you say: I'm an alderman, madam! Cheat you, madam! I have been an honest citizen these five-and-thirty years!

Lady L. An honest citizen! bear witness, Parley. I shall trap him in more lies presently.—Come, sir, though I am a woman, I can take a course.

Ald. S. What course, madam? You'll go to law, will ye? I can maintain a suit of law, be it right or wrong, these forty years, I am sure of that, thanks to the honest practice of the courts. But, madam, I have brought you about a hundred and fifty guineas, (a great deal of money as times go) and—

Lady L. Come, give 'em me.

Ald. S. Ah! that hand, that hand, that pretty soft, white—I have brought it, you see; but the condition of the obligation is such, that whereas that leering eye, that pouting lip, that pretty soft hand, that—you understand me; you understand, I am sure you do, you little rogue!

Lady L. Here's a villain, now, so covetous, that he would bribe me with my own money. I'll be revenged. Well, Mr. Alderman, you have such pretty winning ways, that I will, ha, ha, ha!

Ald. S. Will you, indeed, he, he he! my little coquette, and when? and where? and how?

Lady L. 'Twill be a difficult point, sir, to secure both our honours; you must therefore be disguised, Mr. Alderman.

Ald. S. Psha! I'm disguised as I am; our sanctity is all outside, all hypocrisy.

Lady L. No man is seen to come into this house after night-fall; you must therefore sneak in, when 'tis dark, in woman's clothes.

Ald. S. With all my heart. I have a suit on purpose, my little coquette: I love to be disguised; I make a very handsome woman.

Enter a Servant, who whispers Lady L. and exit.

Lady L. Oh! Mr. Alderman, shall I beg you to walk into the next room? here are some strangers coming up.

Ald. S. Buss and guinea first. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR HARRY WILDAIR.

Sir H. "*My life, my soul, my all that heaven can give!*—

Lady L. "*Death's life with thee, without thee, death to live.*"

Welcome, my dear Sir Harry! I see you got my directions.

Sir H. Directions! In the most charming manner, thou dear Machiavel of intrigue.

Lady L. Still brisk and airy, I find, Sir Harry.

Sir H. The sight of you, madam, exalts my air, and makes joy lighten in my face.

Lady L. I have a thousand questions to ask you, Sir Harry. What gallantries are carrying on in the *beau monde?*

Sir H. I should ask you that question, madam, since your ladyship makes the *beau monde* where-ever you come.

Lady L. Ah! Sir Harry, I've been almost ruined, pestered to death here, by the incessant attacks of a mighty Colonel; he has besieged me.

Sir H. I hope your ladyship did not surrender, though.

Lady L. No, but was forced to capitulate; but since you are come to raise the siege, we'll dance, and sing, and laugh—

Sir H. And love.

Lady L. Would you marry me, Sir Harry?

Sir H. Why, marriage is the devil!—But I will marry you.

Lady L. Your word, sir, is not to be relied on; if a gentleman will forfeit his honour in dealings of business, we may reasonably suspect his fidelity in an amour.

Sir H. My honour in dealings of business! why, madam, I never had any business all my life.

Lady L. Yes, Sir Harry, I have heard a very odd story, and am sorry that a gentleman of your figure should undergo the scandal.

Sir H. Out with it, madam.

Lady L. Why, the merchant, sir, that transmitted your bills of exchange to you in France, complains of some indirect and dishonourable dealings.

Sir H. Who, old Smuggler?

Lady L. Ay, ay, you know him, I find.

Sir H. I have some reason, I think; why, the rogue has cheated me of above five hundred pounds within these three years.

Lady L. 'Tis your business then to acquit yourself publicly; for he spreads the scandal everywhere.

Sir H. Acquit myself publicly! Here, sirrah.

Enter a Servant.

My coach; I'll drive instantly into the city, and cane the old villain round the Royal Exchange.

Lady L. Why, he is in the house now, sir.

Sir H. What, in this house?

Lady L. Ay, in the next room.

Sir H. Then, sirrah, lend me your cudgel.

[*Exit Servant.*

Lady L. Sir Harry, you won't raise a disturbance in the house?

Sir H. Disturbance, madam! no, no; I'll beat him with the temper of a philosopher. Here, Mrs. Parley, shew me the gentleman. [*Exit with Parley.*

Lady L. Now shall I get the old monster well beaten, and Sir Harry pestered, next term, with bloodsheds, batteries, costs and damages, solicitors, and attorneys; and if they don't tease him out of his good humour, I'll never plot again. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.—*Another Room in the same house.*

Enter ALDERMAN SMUGGLER.

Ald. S. Oh! this d—d tide-waiter! A ship and cargo worth five thousand pounds; why, 'tis richly worth five hundred perjuries.

Enter SIR HARRY WILDAIR.

Sir H. Dear Mr. Alderman, I'm your most devoted and humble servant.

Ald. S. My best friend, Sir Harry, you're welcome to England.

Sir H. I'll assure you, sir, there's not a man in the king's dominions I am gladder to meet, dear, dear Mr. Alderman. (*Bowing very low.*)

Ald. S. Oh! lord, sir, you travellers have the most obliging ways with you.

Sir H. There is a business, Mr. Alderman, fallen out, which you may oblige me infinitely by—I am very sorry that I am forced to be troublesome; but necessity, Mr. Alderman—

Ald. S. Ay, sir, as you say, necessity—But upon my word, sir, I am very short of money at present; but—

Sir H. That's not the matter, sir; I'm above an obligation that way; but the business is, I'm reduced to an indispensable necessity of being obliged to you for a beating. Here, take this cane.

Ald. S. A beating, Sir Harry! ha, ha, ha! I beat a knight baronet! An alderman turned cudgel-player! ha, ha, ha!

Sir H. Upon my word, sir, you must beat me, or I'll beat you; take your choice.

Ald. S. Psha, psha! you jest.

Sir H. Nay, 'tis sure as fate; so, Alderman, I hope you'll pardon my curiosity. (*Strikes him.*)

Ald. S. Curiosity! Deuce take your curiosity, sir; what d'ye mean?

Sir H. Nothing at all; I'm but in jest, sir.

Ald. S. Oh! I can take anything in jest; but a man might imagine, by the smartness of the stroke, that you were in downright earnest.

Sir H. Not in the least, sir; (*strikes him*) not in the least, indeed, sir.

Ald. S. Pray, good sir, no more of your jests; for they are the bluntest jests that ever I knew.

Sir H. (*Strikes him.*) I heartily beg your pardon, with all my heart, sir.

Ald. S. Pardon, sir! well, sir, that is satisfaction enough from a gentleman: but seriously now, if you pass any more of your jests upon me, I shall grow angry.

Sir H. I humbly beg your permission to break one or two more. (*Strikes him.*)

Ald. S. Oh! lord, sir, you'll break my bones. Are you mad, sir? Murder, felony, manslaughter! (*Falls down.*)

Sir H. Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons; but I am absolutely compelled to't, upon my honour, sir: nothing can be more averse to my inclinations, than to jest with my honest, dear, loving, obliging friend, the Alderman. (*Striking him all this while. Ald. S. tumbles over and over, shakes out his pocket-book on the floor;* LADY LUREWELL *enters, and takes it up.*)

Lady L. The old rogue's pocket-book; this may be of use. (*Aside.*) Oh! lord, Sir Harry's murdering the poor old man.

Ald. S. Oh! dear madam, I was beaten in jest, till I am murdered in good earnest.

Lady L. Well, well, I'll bring you off, seigneur—*frappez, frappez!*

Ald. S. Oh! for charity's sake, madam, rescue a poor citizen.

Lady L. Oh! you barbarous man! hold! hold! *frappez plus rudement. Frappez!* I wonder you are not ashamed. (*Holding Sir H.*) A poor reverend honest elder. (*Helps Ald. S. up.*) It makes me weep to see him in this condition, poor man! Now deuce take you, Sir Harry—for not beating him harder. Well, my dear, you shall come at night, and I'll make you amends. (*Here Sir H. takes snuff.*)

Ald. S. Madam, I will have amends before I leave the place. Sir, how durst you use me thus?

Sir H. Sir?

Ald. S. Sir, I say that I will have satisfaction.

Sir H. With all my heart. (*Throws snuff in his eyes.*)

Ald. S. Oh! murder, blindness, fire! Oh! madam, madam! get me some water! water, fire, water! [*Exit with Lady L.*

Sir H. How pleasant is resenting an injury without passion! 'Tis the beauty of revenge.

Let statesmen plot, and under business groan,
And settling public quiet, lose their own;
I make the most of life, no hour mispend,
Pleasure's the mean, and pleasure is my end.
No spleen, no trouble, shall my time destroy;
Life's but a span, I'll every inch enjoy. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter COLONEL STANDARD *and* VIZARD.

Col. S. I bring him word where she lodged! I, the civilest fellow in the world! 'Tis impossible.

Viz. I shall urge it no further, sir. I only thought, sir, that my character in the world might add authority to my words, without so many repetitions.

Col. S. Pardon me, dear Vizard. Our belief struggles hard before it can be brought to yield to the disadvantage of what we love. But what said Sir Harry?

Viz. He pitied the poor credulous Colonel; laughed heartily; flew away with all the raptures of a bridegroom, repeating these lines:

A mistress ne'er can pall her lover's joys,
Whose wit can whet, whene'er her beauty cloys.

Col. S. A mistress ne'er can pall! By all my wrongs, I'm made their dupe. Vengeance! Vizard, you must carry a note for me to Sir Harry.

Viz. What! a challenge! I hope you don't design to fight?

Col. S. What! wear the livery of my king, and pocket an affront! 'twere an abuse to his sacred majesty. A soldier's sword, Vizard, should start of itself to redress its master's wrong.

Viz. However, sir, I think it not proper for me to carry any such message between friends.

Col. S. I have ne'er a servant here; what shall I do?

Viz. There's Tom Errand, the porter, that plies at the Blue Posts, one who knows Sir Harry and his haunts very well, you may send a note by him.

Col. S. Here, you, friend! (*Calls.*)

Viz. I have some business, and must take my leave; I would advise you, nevertheless, against this affair.

Col. S. No whispering now, nor telling friends to prevent us. He that disappoints a man of an honourable revenge, may love him foolishly like a wife, but never value him as a friend.

Viz. Nay, the devil take him that parts you, say I. [*Exit.*

Enter TOM ERRAND, *running.*

Err. Did your honour call porter?

Col. S. Is your name Tom Errand?

Err. People call me so, an't like your worship.

Col. S. Do you know Sir Harry Wildair?

Err. Ay, very well, sir; he's one of my best masters; many a round half-crown have I had of his worship: he's newly come from France, sir.

Col. S. Go to the next coffee-house, and wait for me. [*Exit Errand.*] Oh! woman, woman, how blest is man, when favoured by your smiles, and how accursed when all those smiles are found but wanton baits to sooth us to destruction! [*Exit.*

Enter SIR HARRY WILDAIR, *and* CLINCHER, *Senior, following.*

Clin. sen. Sir, sir, sir, having some business of importance to communicate to you, I would beg your attention to a trifling affair that I would impart to your understanding.

Sir H. What is your trifling business of importance, pray, sweet sir.

Clin. sen. Pray, sir, are the roads deep between this and Paris?

Sir H. Why that question, sir?

Clin. sen. Because I design to go to the jubilee, sir. I understand that you are a traveller, sir; there is an air of travel in the tie of your cravat, sir; there is, indeed, sir. I suppose, sir, you bought this lace in Flanders?

Sir H. No, sir, this lace was made in Norway.

Clin. sen. Norway, sir?

Sir H. Yes, sir, of the shavings of deal boards.

Clin. sen. That's very strange now, faith—lace made of the shavings of deal boards! Egad, sir, you travellers see very strange things abroad, very incredible things abroad, indeed. Well, I'll have a cravat of the very same lace before I come home.

Sir H. But, sir, what preparations have you made for your journey?

Clin. sen. A case of pocket pistols for the bravos, and a swimming-girdle.

Sir H. Why these, sir?

Clin. sen. Oh! lord, sir, I'll tell you: suppose us in Rome now; away goes I to some ball; for I'll be a mighty beau. Then, as I said, I go to some ball, or some bear-baiting, 'tis all one you know; then comes a fine Italian Bona Roba, and plucks me by the sleeve—"Signior Angle, Signior Angle,—(she's a very fine lady, observe that,)—Signior Angle!" says she—"Signora!" says I; and trips after her to the corner of a street, (suppose it Russell-street here, or any other street;) then you know, I must invite her to the tavern, I can do no less. There up comes her bravo; the Italian grows saucy, and I give him an English douse of the face. I can box, sir, box tightly; I was a 'prentice, sir,—but then, sir, he whips out his stiletto, and I whips out my bull-dog; slaps him through, trips down stairs, turns the corner of Russell-street again, and whips me into the ambassador's train, and there I'm as safe as a beau in a side-box.

Sir H. Is your pistol charged, sir?

Clin. sen. Only a brace of bullets, that's all, sir.

Sir H. 'Tis a very fine pistol, truly; pray let me see it.

Clin. sen. With all my heart, sir.

Sir H. Harkye! Mr. Jubilee, can you digest a brace of bullets?

Clin. sen. Oh! by no means in the world, sir.

Sir H. I'll try the strength of your stomach, however. Sir, you're a dead man. (*Presenting the pistol to his breast.*)

Clin. sen. Consider, dear sir! I am going to the jubilee; when I come home again, I am a dead man at your service.

Sir H. Oh! very well, sir! but take heed you are not so choleric for the future.

Clin. sen. Choleric, sir! Oons! I design to shoot seven Italians a week, sir.

Sir H. Sir, you won't have provocation.

Clin. sen. Provocation, sir! Zounds! sir, I'll kill any man for treading upon my corns; and there

will be a devilish throng of people there; they say that all the princes in Italy will be there.

Sir H. And all the fops and fools in Europe.—But the use of your swimming-girdle, pray, sir?

Clin. sen. Oh! lord, sir, that's easy. Suppose the ship cast away; now, whilst other foolish people are busy at their prayers, I whip on my swimming-girdle, clap a month's provision into my pocket, and sails me away, like an egg in a duck's belly.—And, harkye! sir, I have a new project in my head. Where d'ye think my swimming-girdle shall carry me, upon this occasion? 'Tis a new project.

Sir H. Where, sir?

Clin. sen. To Civita Vechia, faith and troth, and so save the charges of my passage. Well, sir, you must pardon me now, I'm going to see my mistress. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Lady Darling's House.*

Enter Lady Darling, Clincher, *Junior, and* Dicky.

Lady D. This is my daughter, cousin.

Dicky. Now, sir, remember your three scrapes.

Clin. jun. (Saluting Angelica.) One, two, three; your humble servant. Was not that right, Dicky?

Dicky. Ay, faith, sir; but why don't you speak to her?

Clin. jun. I beg your pardon, Dicky, I know my distance. Would you have me speak to a lady at the first sight?

Dicky. Ay, sir, by all means; the first aim is the surest.

Clin. jun. Now for a good jest, to make her laugh heartily.—By Jupiter Ammon, I'll go give her a kiss. (*Goes towards her.*)

Enter Sir Harry Wildair, *interposing.*

Sir H. 'Tis all to no purpose, I told you so before; your pitiful five guineas will never do: you may go, I'll outbid you.

Clin. jun. What the devil! the madman's here again.

Lady D. Bless me, cousin! what d'ye mean? Affront a gentleman of his quality in my house.

Clin. jun. Quality! Why, madam, I don't know what you mean by your madmen, and your beaux, and your quality; they are all alike, I believe.

Lady D. Pray, sir, walk with me into the next room. [*Exeunt Lady D. and Clin.; Dicky follows.*

Angel. Sir, if your conversation be no more agreeable than 'twas the last time, I would advise you to make your visit as short as you can.

Sir H. The offences of my last visit, madam, bore their punishment in the commission; and have made me as uneasy till I receive pardon, as your ladyship can be till I sue for it.

Angel. Sir Harry, I did not well understand the offence, and must therefore proportion it to the greatness of your apology; if you would, therefore, have me think it light, take no great pains in an excuse.

Sir H. How sweet must the lips be that guard that tongue! Then, madam, no more of past offences, let us prepare for joys to come; let this seal my pardon. (*Kisses her hand.*) And this (*again*) initiate me to farther happiness.

Angel. Hold, sir! one question, Sir Harry, and pray answer plainly: d'ye love me?

Sir H. Love you! Does fire ascend? Do hypocrites dissemble, usurers love gold, or great men flatter? Doubt these, then question that I love.

Angel. This shews your gallantry, sir, but not your love.

Sir H. View your own charms, madam, then judge my passion; your beauty ravishes my eye, your voice my ear, and your touch has thrilled my melting soul.

Angel. If your words be real, 'tis in your power to raise an equal flame in me.

Sir H. Nay, then—I seize—

Angel. Hold! sir, 'tis also possible to make me detest and scorn you worse than the most profligate of your deceiving sex.

Sir H. Ha! a very odd turn this. I hope, madam, you only affect anger, because you know your frowns are becoming.

Angel. Sir Harry, you being the best judge of your own designs, can best understand whether my anger should be real or dissembled; think what strict modesty should bear, then judge of my resentments.

Sir H. Strict modesty should bear! Why, faith, madam, I believe, the strictest modesty may bear fifty guineas, and I don't believe 'twill bear one farthing more.

Angel. What d'ye mean, sir?

Sir H. Nay, madam, what do you mean? if you go to that. I think, now, fifty guineas is a fine offer for your strict modesty, as you call it.

Angel. 'Tis more charitable, Sir Harry, to charge the impertinence of a man of your figure on his defect in understanding, than on his want of manners. I'm afraid you're mad, sir.

Sir H. Why, madam, you're enough to make any man mad. 'Sdeath! are you not a—

Angel. What, sir?

Sir H. Why, a lady of—strict modesty, if you will have it so.

Angel. I shall never, hereafter, trust common report, which represented you, sir, a man of honour, wit, and breeding; for I find you very deficient in all three of them. [*Exit.*

Enter Vizard.

Viz. Ah! Sir Harry, have I caught you? Well, and what success?

Sir H. Success! 'tis a shame for you young fellows in town here, to let the wenches grow so saucy: I offered her fifty guineas, and she was in her airs presently, and flew away in a huff. I could have had a brace of countesses in Paris for half the money, and *je vous remercie* into the bargain.

Viz. Gone in her airs, say you? and did not you follow her?

Sir H. Whither should I follow her?

Viz. Into her bed-chamber, man; she went on purpose. You a man of gallantry, and not understand that a lady's best pleased when she puts on her airs, as you call it.

Sir H. She talked to me of strict modesty and stuff.

Viz. Certainly. Most women magnify their modesty, for the same reason that cowards boast their courage, because they have least on't. Come, come, Sir Harry, when you make your next assault, encourage your spirits with brisk Burgundy: if you succeed, 'tis well; if not, you have a fair excuse for your rudeness. I'll go in, and make your peace for what's past. Oh! I had almost forgot,—Colonel Standard wants to speak with you about some business.

Sir H. I'll wait upon him presently: d'ye know where he may be found?

Viz. In the piazza of Covent-garden. About an hour hence, I promised to see him; and there you may meet him—to have your throat cut. (*Aside.*) I'll go in, and intercede for you.

Sir H. But no foul play with the lady, Vizard. [*Exit.*

Viz. No: fair play, I can assure you.

Scene III.—*The Street before Lady Lurewell's Lodgings.*

Enter Colonel Standard.

Col. S. How weak is reason in disputes of love! That daring reason, which so oft pretends to question works of high Omnipotence, yet poorly truckles to our weakest passions, and yields implicit faith to

foolish love, paying blind zeal to faithless women's eyes. I've heard her falsehood with such pressing proofs, that I no longer should distrust it; yet still my love would baffle demonstration, and make impossibilities seem probable. (*Looks up.*) Ah! that fool, too! What, stoop so low as that animal? 'Tis true; women, once fallen, like cowards in despair, will stick at nothing: there's no medium in their actions: they must be bright as angels, or black as fiends. But now for my revenge; I'll kick my rival before her face, curse the whole sex, and leave her. (*Goes in.*)

SCENE IV.—*A Dining-room.*

Enter LADY LUREWELL *and* CLINCHER, *Senior.*

Lady L. Oh! sir, it is my husband. What will become of you?

Clin. sen. Ah! your husband! Oh! I shall be murdered. What shall I do? where shall I run? I'll creep into an oven; I'll climb up the chimney; I'll fly; I'll swim! I wish to the lord I were at the jubilee now.

Lady L. Can't you think of anything, sir?

Clin. sen. Think! not I; I never could think to any purpose in my life.

Enter TOM ERRAND.

Lady L. What do you want, sir?

Err. Madam, I am looking for Sir Harry Wildair: I saw him come in here this morning; and did imagine he might be here still, if he is not gone.

Lady L. A lucky hit! Here, friend, change clothes with this gentleman; quickly strip.

Clin. sen. Ay, ay, quickly strip; I'll give you half-a-crown to boot. Come here; so. (*They change clothes.*)

Lady L. Now slip you (*to Clincher*) down stairs, and wait at the door till my husband be gone; and get you in there (*to the Porter*) till I call you. (*Puts Errand in the next room.*)

Enter COLONEL STANDARD.

Oh! sir, are you come? I wonder, sir, how you have the confidence to approach me after so base a trick? [avail.

Col. S. Oh! madam, all your artifices won't

Lady L. Nay, sir, your artifices won't avail. I thought, sir, that I gave you caution enough against troubling me with Sir Harry Wildair's company, when I sent his letters back by you; yet you, forsooth, must tell him where I lodged, and expose me again to his impertinent courtship!

Col. S. I expose you to his courtship!

Lady L. I'll lay my life you'll deny it now. Come, come, sir; a pitiful lie is as scandalous to a red coat as an oath to a black.

Col. S. You're all lies. First, your heart is false; your eyes are double; one look belies another; and then your tongue does contradict them all: madam, I see a little devil just now hammering out a lie in your pericranium.

Lady L. On my conscience, he's in the right on't. (*Aside.*)

Col. S. I exposed you to the court of your fool, Clincher, too; I hope your female wiles will impose that upon me, also.

Lady L. Clincher! Nay, you're stark mad. I know no such person.

Col. S. Oh! woman in perfection. Not know him? 'Slife! madam, can my eyes, my piercing jealous eyes, be so deluded? Nay, madam, my nose could not mistake him; for I smelt the fop, by his *pulvilio*, from the balcony down to the street.

Lady L. The balcony! ha, ha, ha! the balcony! Ill be hanged but he has mistaken Sir Harry Wildair's footman, with a new French livery, for a beau.

Col. S. 'Sdeath! madam, did not I see him?

Lady L. No, no; you could not see him: you're dreaming, Colonel. Will you believe your eyes, now that I have rubbed them open? Here you, friend!

Enter TOM ERRAND, *in Clincher Senior's Clothes.*

Col. S. This is illusion all; my eyes conspire against themselves. 'Tis legerdemain.

Lady L. Legerdemain! Is that all your acknowledgment for your rude behaviour! Oh! what a curse it is to love as I do. Begone, sir, (*to the Porter,*) to your impertinent master, and tell him I shall never be at leisure to receive any of his troublesome visits. Send to me to know when I should be at home! [*Exit Tom Errand.*] I am sure he has made me an unfortunate woman. (*Weeps.*)

Col. S. Nay, then there is no certainty in nature; and truth is only falsehood well disguised.

Lady L. Sir, had not I owned my fond foolish passion, I should not have been subject to such unjust suspicions: but it is an ungrateful return. (*Weeping.*)

Col. S. I hope, madam, you'll pardon me; since jealousy, that magnified my suspicion, is as much the effect of love, as my easiness in being satisfied.

Lady L. Easiness in being satisfied! No, no sir; cherish your suspicions, and feed upon your jealousy: 'tis fit meat for your squeamish stomach.

With me all women should this rule pursue:
Who think us false, should never find us true.
[*Exit in a rage.*

Enter CLINCHER, *Senior, in the Porter's clothes.*

Clin. sen. Well, intriguing is the prettiest, pleasantest thing! How shall we laugh at the husband when he is gone? To make a colonel a cuckold! 'twill be rare news for the Alderman. (*Aside.*)

Col. S. All this Sir Harry has occasioned; but he is brave, and will afford me a just revenge. Oh! this is the porter I sent the challenge by. Well, sir, have you found him?

Clin. sen. What the devil does he mean, now?

Col. S. Have you given Sir Harry the note, fellow?

Clin. sen. The note! what note?

Col. S. The letter, blockhead, which I sent by you to Sir Harry Wildair: have you seen him?

Clin. sen. Oh, lord! what shall I say now? Seen him? Yes, sir—no, sir. I have, sir—I have not, sir.

Col. S. The fellow's mad. Answer me directly, sirrah, or I'll break your head.

Clin. sen. I know Sir Harry very well, sir; but as to the note, sir, I can't remember a word on't: truth is, I have a very bad memory.

Col. S. Oh! sir, I'll quicken your memory. (*Strikes him.*) [note.

Clin. sen. Zauns! sir, hold! I did give him the

Col. S. And what answer?

Clin. sen. I mean I did not give him the note.

Col. S. What, d'ye banter, rascal? (*Strikes him again.*) [swer.

Clin. sen. Hold, sir, hold! He did send an an-

Col. S. What was it, villain?

Clin. sen. Why, he sent his service to you. Truly, sir, I had forgot it: I told you that I had a very treacherous memory.

Col. S. I'll engage you shall remember me this month, rascal. [*Beats him off, and exit.*

Re-enter CLINCHER, *Senior.*

Clin. sen. Ah! the devil take all intriguing, say I, and him who first invented canes. That cursed Colonel has got such a knack of beating his men, that he has left the mark of a collar of bandileers about my shoulders.

Enter LADY LUREWELL *and* PARLEY.

Lady L. Oh! my poor gentleman. And was it beaten?

Clin. sen. Yes, I have been beaten. But where's my clothes, my clothes?

Lady L. What, you won't leave me soon, my dear, will ye?

Clin. sen. Will ye? If ever I peep into a colonel's tent again, may I be forced to run the gauntlet. But my clothes, madam.

Lady L. I sent the porter down stairs with them. Did not you meet him?

Clin. sen. Meet him! no, not I.

Par. No! He went out at the back-door, and is run clear away, I'm afraid.

Clin. sen. Gone, say you? and with my clothes, my fine jubilee clothes? Oh! the rogue, the thief! I'll have him hanged for murder. But how shall I get home in this pickle?

Par. I am afraid, sir, the Colonel will be back presently; for he dines at home.

Clin. sen. Oh! then I must sneak off.

Was ever such an unfortunate beau, [*also?*
To have his back well thrash'd, and lose his coat
[*Exit.*

Par. Methinks, madam, that the injuries you have suffered by men may be very great, yet your anger should be only confined to the author of your wrongs.

Lady L. The author! Alas! I know him not.

Par. Not know him!

Lady L. Twelve years ago, I lived at my father's house, in Oxfordshire, blessed with innocence, the ornamental but weak guard of blooming beauty. Then it happened, that three young gentlemen from the university, being benighted and strangers, called at my father's. He was very glad of their company, and offered them the entertainment of his house. Two of them had a heavy, pedantic, university air; but the third—

Par. Ah! the third madam! the third!

Lady L. My father was so well pleased with his conversation, that he begged their company next day: they consented, and next night, Parley, he bribed my maid, with his gold, out of her honesty; and me, with his rhetoric, out of my honour.

Par. The old bait! the old bait! I was cheated just so myself. (*Aside.*) But had not you the wit to know his name all this while?

Lady L. Alas! what wit had innocence like mine? He told me, that he was under an obligation to his companions of concealing himself then; but that he would write to me in two days, and let me know his name and quality. After all the binding oaths of constancy, I gave him a ring with this motto, "Love and honour;" then we parted; but I never saw the dear deceiver more.

Par. No, nor never will, I warrant you. But don't you still love this dear dissembler?

Lady L. Most certainly; 'tis love of him that keeps my anger warm. Go, get me pen and ink; I must write to Vizard. [*Exit Parley.*] Fortune, this once assist me as before:

Two such machines can never work in vain,
As thy propitious wheel, and my projecting brain.
[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Covent Garden.*

SIR HARRY WILDAIR *and* COLONEL STANDARD, *meeting.*

Col. S. I thought, Sir Harry, to have met you, ere this, in a more convenient place; but since my wrongs were without ceremony, my revenge shall be so, too. Draw, sir!

Sir H. Draw, sir! What shall I draw?

Col. S. Come, come, sir; I like your facetious humour well enough; it shews courage and unconcern. I know you're brave, and therefore use you thus. Draw your sword.

Sir H. Nay, to oblige you, I will draw; but the devil take me if I fight. Perhaps, Colonel, this is the prettiest blade you have seen.

Col. S. I doubt not but the arm is good; and, therefore, think both worth my resentment. Come, sir.

Sir H. But, pr'ythee, Colonel, dost think that I am such a madman as to send my soul to the devil, and my body to the worms, upon every fool's errand. (*Aside.*)

Col. S. I hope you're no coward, sir.

Sir H. Coward, sir! I have eight thousand pounds a year, sir.

Col. S. You fought in Flanders, to my knowledge.

Sir H. Ay, for the same reason that I wore a red coat—because 'twas fashionable.

Col. S. Sir, you fought a French count in Paris.

Sir H. True, sir; but there was no danger of lands nor tenements; besides, he was a beau, like myself. Now, you're a soldier, Colonel, and fighting's your trade; and I think it downright madness to contend with any man in his profession.

Col. S. Come, sir, no more dallying: I shall take very unseemly methods, if you don't shew yourself a gentleman.

Sir H. A gentleman! Why there again now. A gentleman! I tell you once more, Colonel, that I am a baronet, and have eight thousand pounds a year. I can dance, sing, ride, fence, understand the languages. Now, I can't conceive how running you through the body should contribute one jot more to my gentility. But pray, Colonel, I had forgot to ask you, what's the quarrel?

Col. S. A woman, sir.

Sir H. A woman! Take her.

Col. S. Sir, my honour's concerned.

Sir H. Nay, if your honour be concerned with a woman, get it out of her hands as soon as you can. An honourable lover is the greatest slave in nature; some will say, the greatest fool. Come, Colonel, this is something about the Lady Lurewell, I warrant; I can give you satisfaction in that affair.

Col. S. Do so, then, immediately.

Sir H. Put up your sword first. You know I dare fight; but I had much rather make you a friend than an enemy. I can assure you, this lady will prove too hard for one of your temper. You have too much honour, too much in conscience, to be a favourite with the ladies.

Col. S. I am assured, sir, she never gave you any encouragement.

Sir H. A man can never hear reason with a sword in his hand. Sheath your weapon; and then if I don't satisfy you, sheath it in my bosom.

Col. S. Give me but demonstration of her granting you any favour, and it is enough.

Sir H. Will you take my word?

Col. S. Pardon me, sir, I cannot.

Sir H. Will you believe your own eyes?

Col. S. 'Tis ten to one whether I shall or no, they have deceived me already.

Sir H. That's hard. But some means I shall devise for your satisfaction.

Wife. (*Without.*) Come, away with him!

Sir H. We must fly this place, else that cluster of mob will overwhelm us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mob, and Tom Errand's Wife, hurrying in CLINCHER, *Senior, in Errand's clothes.*

Wife. Oh! the villain, the rogue! he has murdered my husband. Ah! my poor Timothy! (*Cries.*)

Clin. sen. D— your Timothy! Your husband has murdered me, woman; for he has carried away my fine jubilee clothes.

Wife. Ay, you cut-throat! have you not got his clothes upon your back there? Neighbours, don't you know poor Timothy's coat and apron?

Mob. Ay, ay, it is the same.

1 *Mob.* What shall we do with him, neighbours?

2 *Mob.* We'll pull him in pieces.

1 *Mob.* No, no; then we may be hanged for murder: but we'll drown him.

Clin. sen. Ah! good people, pray don't drown me; for I never learnt to swim in all my life. Ah! this is plaguy intriguing. (*Aside.*)

Mob. Away with him! away with him to the Thames. [now!

Clin. sen. Oh! if I had but my swimming-girdle

Enter Constable.

Const. Hold! neighbours, I command the peace.

Wife. Oh! Mr. Constable, here's a rogue that has murdered my husband, and robbed him of his clothes.

Const. Murder and robbery! then he must be a gentleman. Hands off there! He must not be abused. Give an account of yourself. Are you a gentleman?

Clin. sen. No, sir, I am a beau.

Const. A beau! Then you have killed nobody, I'm persuaded. How came you by these clothes, sir?

Clin. sen. You must know, sir, that walking along, sir—I don't know how, sir—I can't tell where, sir—and so the porter and I changed clothes.

Const. Very well; the man speaks reason, and like a gentleman.

Wife. But, pray, Mr. Constable, ask him how he changed clothes with him.

Const. Silence, woman! and don't disturb the court. Well, sir, how did you change clothes?

Clin. sen. Why, sir, he pulled off my coat, and I drew off his; so I put on his coat, and he put on mine.

Const. Why, neighbours, I don't find that he is guilty. Search him; and if he carries no arms about him, we'll let him go. (*They search his pockets, and pull out his pistols.*)

Clin. sen. Oh, gemini! my jubilee pistols.

Const. What, a case of pistols. Then the case is plain. Speak, what are you, sir? Whence come you, and whither go you?

Clin. sen. Sir, I came from Russell-street, and am going to the jubilee.

Wife. You shall go to the gallows, you rogue!

Const. Away with him, away with him to Newgate, straight.

Clin. sen. I shall go to the jubilee now, indeed. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter SIR HARRY WILDAIR *and* COLONEL STANDARD.

Sir H. In short, Colonel, 'tis all nonsense. Fight for a woman! Hard by is the lady's house; if you please, we'll wait on her together. You shall draw your sword, I'll draw my snuff-box; you shall produce your wounds received in war, I'll relate mine by Cupid's dart; you shall swear, I'll sigh; you shall *sa, sa,* and I'll *coupée;* and if she flies not to my arms like a hawk to its perch, then my dancing-master deserves to be d—d.

Col. S. With the generality of women, I grant you, these arts may prevail.

Sir H. Generality of women! Why there again you're out. But will you be convinced if our plot succeeds? [Harry.

Col. S. I rely on your word and honour, Sir *Sir H,* Then meet me, half an hour hence, at the Shakspeare. You must oblige me by taking a hearty glass with me toward the fitting me out for a certain project, which this night I undertake.

Col. S. I guess by the preparation, that woman's the design.

Sir H. Yes, 'faith. I am taken devilish ill with two foolish maladies, modesty and love: the first I'll cure with Burgundy, and my love by a night's lodging with the damsel. A sure remedy. *Probatum est.*

Col. S. I'll certainly meet you, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CLINCHER, *Junior, and* DICKY.

Clin. jun. Ah! Dicky, this London is a sad place, a sad vicious place! I wish that I were in the country again. And this brother of mine, I'm sorry he's so great a rake. I had rather see him dead, than see him thus.

Dicky. Ay, sir, he'll spend his whole estate at this same jubilee. Who d'ye think lives at this same jubilee?

Clin. jun. Who, pray?

Dicky. The Pope.

Clin. jun. The devil he does! My brother go to the place where the Pope dwells! He's bewitched, sure.

Enter TOM ERRAND *in Clincher Senior's clothes.*

Dicky. Indeed, I believe he is; for he is strangely altered. [already.

Clin. jun. Altered! why, he looks like a jesuit

Err. This lace will sell. What a blockhead was the fellow to trust me with his coat! If I can get across the garden, down to the water-side, I am pretty secure. (*Aside.*)

Clin. jun. Brother! Alaw! Oh, gemini! Are you my brother?

Dicky. I seize you in the king's name, sir.

Err. Oh, Lord! should this prove some parliament man, now.

Clin. jun. Speak, you rogue, what are you?

Err. A poor porter, sir, and going of an errand.

Dicky. What errand? Speak, you rogue.

Err. A fool's errand, I'm afraid.

Clin. jun. Who sent you?

Err. A beau, sir.

Dicky. No, no; the rogue has murdered your brother, and stripped him of his clothes.

Clin. jun. Murdered my brother! Oh, crimini! Oh! my poor jubilee brother. Stay! by Jupiter Ammon, I'm heir, though. Speak, sirrah! have you killed him? Confess that you have killed him, and I'll give you half-a-crown.

Err. Who I, sir? Alack-a-day! sir, I never killed any man, but a carrier's horse once.

Clin. jun. Then you shall certainly be hanged; but confess that you killed him, and we'll let you go.

Err. Telling the truth hangs a man, but confessing a lie can do no harm; besides, if the worst come to the worst, I can but deny it again. (*Aside.*) Well, sir, since I must tell you, I did kill him.

Clin. jun. Here's your money, sir. But are you sure you killed him dead? [land.

Err. Sir, I'll swear it before any judge in Eng-

Dicky. But are you sure that he's dead in law?

Err. Dead in law! I can't tell whether he be dead in law; but he's dead as a door-nail, for I gave him seven knocks on the head with a hammer.

Dicky. Then you have the estate by statute. Any man that is knocked on the head, is dead in law.

Clin. jun. But are you sure he was *compos mentis* when he was killed?

Err. I suppose he was, sir; for he told me nothing to the contrary afterwards.

Clin. jun. Eh! then I go to the jubilee. Strip, sir, strip. By Jupiter Ammon, strip!

Dicky. Ah! don't swear, sir. (*Puts on his brother's clothes.*)

Clin. jun. Swear, sir! Zoons! ha'n't I got the estate, sir? Come, sir, now I'm in mourning for my brother.

Err. I hope you'll let me go now, sir.

Clin. jun. Yes, yes, sir; but you must do me the favour to swear positively before a magistrate, that you killed him dead, that I may enter upon the estate without any trouble. By Jupiter Ammon! all my religion's gone, since I put on these fine clothes. Eh! call me a coach, somebody. [mediately.

Err. Ay, master, let me go, and I'll call one im-

Clin. jun. No, no. Dicky, carry this spark before a justice; and when he has made oath, you may discharge him: and I'll go see Angelica. [*Exeunt Dicky and Errand.*] Now that I'm an elder brother, I'll court, and swear, and rant, and rake, and go to the jubilee with the best of them.

SCENE II.—*Lady Lurewell's House.*

Enter LADY LUREWELL *and* PARLEY.

Lady L. Are you sure that Vizard had my letter?

Par. Yes, yes, madam; one of your ladyship's footmen gave it to him in the park, and he told the bearer, with all the transports of joy, that he would be punctual to a minute.

Lady L. Thus most villains, some time or other,

are punctual to their ruin; and hypocrisy, by imposing on the world, at last deceives itself. Are all things prepared for his reception.

Par. Exactly to your ladyship's order; the Alderman, too, is just come, dressed and cooked up for iniquity.

Lady L. Then he has got woman's clothes on?

Par. Yes, madam, and has passed upon the family for your nurse.

Lady L. Convey him into that closet, and put out the candles, and tell him, I'll wait on him presently. (*As Parley goes to put out the candles, somebody knocks.*) This must be Sir Harry; tell him I am not to be spoken with.

Par. Sir, my lady's not to be spoken with.

Sir H. (*Without.*) I must have that from her own mouth, mistress.

Enter SIR HARRY WILDAIR, *singing.*

Lady L. This is too early for serenading, Sir Harry.

Sir H. Wheresoever love is, there music is proper; there's an harmonious consent in their natures, and when rightly joined, they make up the chorus of earthly happiness.

Lady L. But, Sir Harry, what tempest drives you here at this hour?

Sir H. No tempest, madam, but love, madam.

Lady L. If this be a love token, (*Sir Harry drops a ring, she takes it up*) your mistresses' favours hang very loosely about you, sir.

Sir H. I can't justly, madam, pay your trouble of taking it up by anything but desiring you to wear it.

Lady L. You gentlemen have the cunningest ways of playing the fool, and are so industrious in your profuseness. Speak seriously, am I beholden to chance or design for this ring?

Sir H. To design, upon my honour. And I hope my design will succeed. (*Aside.*)

Lady L. Shall I be free with you, Sir Harry?

Sir H. With all my heart, madam, so I may be free with you.

Lady L. Then, plainly, sir, I shall beg the favour to see you some other time; for at this very minute I have two lovers in the house.

Sir H. Then, to be as plain, I must begone this minute, for I must see another mistress within these two hours.

Lady L. Frank and free.

Sir H. As you with me. Madam, your most humble servant. [*Exit.*

Lady L. Nothing can disturb his humour. Now for my merchant and Vizard. Parley, do as I bade you. [*Exit, and takes the candles with her.*

PARLEY *goes out, and returns, leading in* ALDERMAN SMUGGLER, *dressed in woman's clothes.*

Par. This way, Mr. Alderman.

Ald. S. Well, Mrs. Parley, I am obliged to you for this trouble; here are a couple of shillings for you. Times are hard, very hard, indeed; but next visit I'll steal a pair of silk stockings from my wife, and bring them to you.

Par. Here, sir, get into this closet, and my lady will wait on you presently. (*Puts him into the closet, runs out, and returns with* VIZARD.)

Viz. Where wouldst thou lead me, my dear, auspicious little pilot?

Par. You're almost in port, sir; my lady's in the closet, and will come out to you immediately.

Viz. Let me thank thee as I ought. (*Kisses her.*)

Par. Psha! who has hired me best; a couple of shillings, or a couple of kisses? [*Aside, and exit.*

Viz. Propitious darkness guides the lover's steps; and night, that shadows outward sense, lights up our inward joy.

Ald. S. (*Peeping out of the closet.*) Bless me! what voice is this? My nephew's! and certainly possessed with an evil spirit; he talks as profanely as an actor possessed with a poet.

Viz. Ha! I hear a voice. Madam! my life, my happiness! where are you, madam?

Ald. S. Madam! he takes me for a woman, too: I'll try him. (*Aside.*) Where have you left your sanctity, Mr. Vizard?

Viz. Talk no more of that ungrateful subject. I left it where it has only business, with daylight; 'tis needless to wear a mask in the dark.

Ald. S. Well, sir, but I suppose you've some other motive besides pleasure?

Viz. Yes, madam, the honestest motive in the world, interest. You must know, madam, that I have an old uncle, Alderman Smuggler; you have seen him, I suppose?

Ald. S. Yes, yes; I have some small acquaintance with him.

Viz. 'Tis the most knavish, precise, covetous, old rogue that ever died of the gout.

Ald. S. Ah! the young son of a whore! (*Aside.*) Well, sir, and what of him? I know him very well.

Viz. Why, madam, he has a swinging estate, which I design to purchase as a saint, and spend like a gentleman. He got it by cheating, and should lose it by deceit. And no sooner's he's dead, but I'll rattle over his grave with a coach and six to inform his covetous ghost how genteelly I spend his money.

Ald. S. I'll prevent you, boy; for I'll have my money buried with me. (*Aside.*)

Viz. Bless me, madam! here's a light coming this way. I must fly immediately: when shall I see you again, madam?

Ald. S. Sooner than you expect, my dear.

Viz. Pardon me, dear madam; I would not be seen for the world. I would sooner forfeit my life, nay, my pleasure, than my reputation. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Lady Darling's House.*

Enter LADY DARLING *and* ANGELICA.

Lady D. Daughter, since you have to deal with a man of so peculiar a temper, you must not think the general arts of love can secure him; you may, therefore, allow such a courtier some encouragement extraordinary, without reproach to your modesty.

Angel. Pray, madam, by what means were you made acquainted with his designs?

Lady D. Means, child! Why, my cousin Vizard, who, I'm sure, is your sincere friend, sent him. He brought me this letter from my cousin. (*Gives her the letter, which she opens.*)

Angel. Ha, Vizard! then I'm abused in earnest. Would Sir Harry, by his instigation, fix a base affront upon me? No, I can't suspect him of so ungenteel a crime. This letter shall trace the truth. (*Aside.*) My suspicions, madam, are much cleared; and I hope to satisfy your ladyship in my management, when next I see Sir Harry.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, here's a gentleman below calls himself Wildair.

Lady D. Conduct him up. Daughter, I won't doubt your discretion. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR HARRY WILDAIR.

Sir H. Oh! the delights of love and Burgundy! Madam, I have toasted your ladyship fifteen bumpers successively.

Angel. And what then, sir?

Sir H. Why, then, madam, the wine has got into my head, and the Cupids into my heart; and unless, by quenching quick my flame, you kindly ease the smart, I'm a lost man, madam.

Angel, Pray, consider who you are so free with, sir; a woman of condition, that can call half-a-dozen footmen upon occasion.

Sir H. Nay, madam, if you have a mind to toss me in a blanket, half-a-dozen chambermaids would do better service. Come, come, madam, though the

wine makes me lisp, yet it has taught me to speak plainer. By all the dust of my ancient progenitors, I must this night rest in your arms.

Angel. Nay, then, who waits there?

Enter Footmen.

Take hold of that madman, and bind him.

Sir H. Nay, then, Burgundy's the word, slaughter will ensue. Hold! do you know, scoundrels, that I have been drinking victorious Burgundy? Nay, then, have among ye, dogs. (*Throws money among them; they scramble, and take it up. He pelting them out, shuts the door, and returns.*) Rascals, poltroons! I have charmed the dragon, and now the fruit's my own.

Angel. Oh! the mercenary wretches! This was a plot to betray me.

Sir H. I have put the whole army to flight; and now I'll take the general prisoner. (*Laying hold of her.*)

Angel. I conjure you, sir, by the sacred name of honour, by your dead father's name, and the fair reputation of your mother's chastity, that you offer not the least violence; already you have wronged me past redress.

Sir H. Thou art a most unaccountable creature!

Angel. What madness, Sir Harry, what wild dream could prompt you to attempt this baseness? View me well. The brightness of my mind, methinks, should lighten outwards, and let you see your mistake in my behaviour. I think it shines with so much innocence in my face, that it should dazzle all your vicious thoughts. Think not I am defenceless because alone; your very self is guard against yourself: I am sure there's something generous in your soul; my words shall snatch it out, and eyes shall fire it for my own defence.

Sir H. (*Mimicking.*) Tal tidum, tidum, tal ti didi, didum. A million to one now, but the girl is just come flush from reading the Rival Queens. Egad! I'll at her in her own cant:

"*Oh! my Statira, oh! my angry dear, turn thine eyes on me!*

Behold thy beau in buskins.

Angel. Behold me, sir! Every glance from my reproaching eye is armed with sharp resentment, and with a virtuous pride that looks dishonour dead.

Sir H. This is the first wench in heroics I ever met with. (*Aside.*) Lookye, madam; as to that slender particular of your virtue, we sha'n't quarrel about it; you may be as virtuous as any woman in England, if you please: you may say your prayers all the time. But pray, madam, be pleased to consider what is this same virtue that you make such a mighty noise about. Can your virtue bespeak you a front row in the boxes? No; for the players can't live upon virtue. Can your virtue keep you a coach and six? No, no; your virtuous woman walks on foot. Can your virtue hire you a pew in the church? Why, the very sexton will tell you no. Can your virtue stake for you at piquet? No. Then what business has a woman with virtue? Come, come, madam, I offered you fifty guineas; there's a hundred. The devil! virtuous still. Why, it is a hundred, five score, a hundred guineas.

Angel. Oh, indignation! Were I a man, you durst not use me thus; but the mean, poor abuse you throw on me, reflects on yourself. Our sex still strikes an awe upon the brave, and only cowards dare affront a woman.

Sir H. Affront! 'Sdeath! madam, a hundred guineas will set up a bank at basset; a hundred guineas will furnish out your lodgings with china; a hundred guineas will give you an air of quality; a hundred guineas will buy you a rich scrutoir for your billet-doux, or a fine common-prayer book for your virtue; a hundred guineas will buy a hundred fine things; and fine things are for fine ladies, and fine ladies are for fine gentlemen, and fine gentlemen are—Egad! this Burgundy makes a man speak like an angel. Come, come, madam, take it, and put it to what use you please.

Angel. I'll use it as I would use the base unworthy giver, thus! (*Throws down the purse, and stamps upon it.*)

Sir H. I have no mind to meddle in state affairs; but these women will make me a parliament-man, spite of my teeth, on purpose to bring in a bill against their extortion. She tramples under foot that deity which all the world adores. Oh! the blooming pride of beautiful eighteen! Psha! I'll talk to her no longer; I'll make my market with the old gentlewoman; she knows business better. (*Goes to the door.*) Here, you friend, pray desire the old lady to walk in. Harkye! madam, I'll tell your mother.

Enter Lady Darling.

Lady D. Well, Sir Harry, and how do you like my daughter, pray?

Sir H. Like her, madam!—(*Aside to Angelica.*) Harkye! will you take it? Why, 'faith, madam—Take the money, I say; or, egad, all's out.

Angel. All shall out. Sir, you're a scandal to the name of gentleman.

Sir H. With all my heart, madam. In short, madam, your daughter has used me somewhat too familiarly, though I have treated her like a woman of quality.

Angel. Hold, sir! stop your abusive tongue, too loose for modest ears to hear. Madam, I did before suspect that his designs were base, now they're too plain. This knight, this mighty man of wit and humour, is made a tool to a knave: Vizard has sent him, on a bully's errand, to affront a woman; but I scorn the abuse, and him that offered it.

Lady D. How, sir! come to affront us? This is beyond sufferance. But say, thou abusive man! what injury have you ever received from me or mine, thus to engage you in this scandalous aspersion?

Angel. Yes, sir, what cause, what motives could induce you thus to debase yourself below your rank?

Sir H. Heyday! Now, dear Roxana, and you, my fair Statira! be not so very heroic in your styles; Vizard's letter may resolve you, and answer all tho impertinent questions you have made me.

Lady D. & Angel. We appeal to that.

Sir H. And I'll stand to it. He read it to me, and the contents were pretty plain, I thought.

Angel. Here, sir, peruse it; and see how much we are injured, and you deceived.

Sir H. But, hold, madam! (*to Lady D.*) before I read, I'll make some condition: Mr. Vizard says here, that I won't scruple forty or fifty pieces; now, madam, if you have clapped in another cipher to the account, and made it three or four hundred, egad! I will not stand to it.

Angel. Now I can't tell whether disdain or anger be the most just resentment for this injury.

Lady D. The letter, sir, shall answer you.

Sir H. Well, then. (*Reads.*) "*Out of my earnest inclination to serve your ladyship, and my cousin Angelica*—Ay, ay, the very words; I can say it by heart—*I have sent Sir Harry Wildair to*—What the devil's this?—*Sent Sir Harry Wildair to court my cousin.*—He read to me quite a different thing.—*He's a gentleman of great parts and fortune*—He's a rascal!—*and would make your daughter very happy*—(*whistles*)—*in a husband.*" (*Looks foolish, and hums a song.*) Oh! poor Sir Harry! what have the angry stars designed?

Angel. Now, sir, I hope you need no instigation to redress our wrongs, since even the injury points the way.

Lady D. Think, sir, that our blood, for many generations, has run in the purest channels of unsullied honour.

Sir H. Yes, madam. (*Bows to her.*)

Angel. Consider what a tender flower is woman's reputation, which the least air of foul detraction blasts.

Sir H. Yes, madam. (*Bows to the other.*)

Lady D. Call, then, to mind your rude and scandalous behaviour.

Sir H. Right, madam. (*Bows again.*)

Angel. Remember the base price you offered me. [*Exit.*

Sir H. Very true, madam. Was ever man so catechised?

Lady D. Then think that Vizard, villain Vizard! caused all this, yet lives: that's all. Farewell!

Sir H. Stay, madam! (*to Lady D.*) one word: is there no other way to redress your wrongs, but by fighting?

Lady D. Only one, sir; which if you can think of, you may do: you know the business I entertained you for.

Sir H. I understand you, madam. [*Exit Lady D.*] Here am I brought to a very pretty dilemma; I must commit murder, or commit matrimony. Which is best now, a license from Doctors' Commons, or a sentence from the Old Bailey? If I kill my man, the law hangs me; if I marry my woman, I shall hang myself. But, d—n it! cowards dare fight. I'll marry, that's the most daring action of the two. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Newgate.*

CLINCHER, *Senior, discovered.*

Clin. sen. How severe and melancholy are Newgate reflections! Last week my father died; yesterday, I turned beau; to-day, I am laid by the heels; and to-morrow, shall be hung by the neck. I was agreeing with a bookseller about printing an account of my journey through France and Italy; but now the history of my travels must be through Holborn to Tyburn: "The last and dying speech of Beau Clincher, that was going to the jubilee. Come, a ha'penny a-piece." A sad sound, a sad sound, faith! 'Tis one way to have a man's death make a great noise in the world.

Enter TOM ERRAND.

A reprieve! a reprieve! Thou dear, dear, d—d rogue! where have you been? Thou art the most welcome—Son of a w—, where's my clothes?

Err. Sir, I see where mine are. Come, sir, strip; strip, sir. [*Exeunt, struggling.*

SCENE III.—*Lady Darling's House.*

Enter SIR HARRY WILDAIR, *with letters; Servants following.*

Sir H. Here, fly all around, and bear these as directed: you to Westminster, you to St. James's, and you into the city. Tell all my friends, a bridegroom's joy invites their presence. Look all of ye like bridegrooms, also: all appear with hospitable looks, and bear a welcome in your faces. Tell them I'm married: if any ask to whom, make no reply; but tell them that I'm married; that joy shall crown the day, and love the night. Begone! fly!

Enter COLONEL STANDARD.

A thousand welcomes, friend! My pleasure's now complete, since I can share it with my friend: brisk joy shall bound from me to you, then back again; and, like the sun, grow warmer by reflection.

Col. S. You're always pleasant, Sir Harry; but this transcends yourself: whence proceeds it?

Sir H. Canst thou not guess, my friend! Whence flows all earthly joy? What is the life of man, and soul of pleasure?—Woman. What fires the heart with transport, and the soul with raptures?—Lovely woman. What is the master-stroke and smile of the creation, but charming, virtuous woman? When nature, in the general composition, first brought woman forth, like a flushed poet, ravished with his fancy, with ecstasy it blest the fair production. Methinks, my friend, you relish not my joy. What is the cause?

Col. S. Canst thou not guess? What is the bane of man, and scourge of life, but woman? What is the heathenish idol man sets up, and is d—d for worshipping? Treacherous woman! What are those, whose eyes, like basilisks, shine beautiful for sure destruction, whose smiles are dangerous as the grin of fiends, but false, deluding woman? Woman! whose composition inverts humanity: their bodies heavenly, but their souls are clay.

Sir H. Come, come, Colonel, this is too much. I know your wrongs received from Lurewell may excuse your resentments against her; but it is unpardonable to charge the failings of a single woman upon the whole sex. I have found one, whose virtues—

Col. S. So have I, Sir Harry; I have found one whose pride's above yielding to a prince; and, if lying, dissembling, perjury, and falsehood, be no breaches in a woman's honour, she's as innocent as infancy.

Sir H. Well, Colonel, I find your opinion grows stronger by opposition; I shall now, therefore, wave the argument, and only beg you for this day to make a shew of complaisance, at least. Here comes my charming bride.

Enter LADY DARLING *and* ANGELICA.

Col. S. (*Saluting Angelica.*) I wish you, madam, all the joys of love and fortune.

Enter CLINCHER, *Junior.*

Clin. jun. Gentlemen and ladies, I'm just upon the spur, and have only a minute to take my leave.

Sir H. Whither are you bound, sir?

Clin. jun. Bound, sir! I'm going to the jubilee, sir.

Lady D. Bless me, cousin! how came you by these clothes?

Clin. jun. Clothes! ha, ha, ha! the rarest jest! ha, ha, ha! I shall burst; by Jupiter Ammon, I shall burst.

Lady D. What's the matter, cousin?

Clin. jun. The matter! ha, ha, ha! Why, an honest porter—ha, ha, ha!—has knocked out my brother's brains, ha, ha, ha!

Sir H. A very good jest, i'faith, ha, ha, ha!

Clin. jun. Ay, sir; but the jest of all is, he knocked out his brains with a hammer, and so he is as dead as a door-nail, ha, ha, ha!

Lady D. And do you laugh, wretch?

Clin. jun. Laugh! ha, ha, ha! let me see ever a younger brother in England that won't laugh at such a jest.

Angel. You appeared a very sober, pious gentleman, some hours ago.

Clin. jun. Psha! I was a fool then: but now, madam, I'm a wit; I can rake now. As for your part, madam, you might have had me once; but, now, madam, if you should fall to eating chalk, or gnawing the sheets, it is none of my fault. Now, madam, I have got an estate, and I must go to the jubilee. (*Going.*)

Enter CLINCHER *Senior, in a blanket.*

Clin. sen. Must you so, rogue! must ye? You will go to the jubilee, will you?

Clin. jun. A ghost, a ghost! Send for the dean and chapter presently.

Clin. sen. A ghost! No, no, sirrah! I'm an elder brother, rogue!

Clin. jun. I don't care a farthing for that; I'm sure you're dead in law.

Clin. sen. Why so, sirrah! why so?

Clin. jun. Because, sir, I can get a fellow to swear he knocked out your brains. Smell him, gentlemen, he has a deadly scent about him.

Clin. sen. Truly, the apprehensions of death may have made me savour a little. O lord! the Colonel!

the apprehensions of him may make the savour worse. I'm afraid, brother, the coat is too short for you.

Clin. jun. It will be long enough before you get it. In short, sir, were you a ghost, or brother, or devil, I will go to the jubilee, by Jupiter Ammon.

[*Exit.*

Col. S. Go to the jubilee! go to the bear-garden. The travel of such fools as you doubly injures our country: you expose our native follies, which ridicule us among strangers; and return fraught only with their vices, which you vend here for fashionable gallantry: a travelling fool is as dangerous as a home-bred villain. Get you to your native plough and cart, converse with animals like yourselves, sheep and oxen; men are creatures you don't understand.

Sir H. Let them alone, Colonel, their folly will be now diverting. Come, gentlemen, we'll dispute this point some other time.

A Servant enters and whispers Sir Harry Wildair.

Madam, shall I beg you to entertain the company in the next room for a moment? (*To Lady D.*)

Lady D. With all my heart. Come, gentlemen.

[*Exeunt all but Sir H.*

Sir H. A lady to inquire for me! who can this be?

Enter Lady Lurewell.

Oh! madam, this favour is beyond my expectation, to come uninvited to dance at my wedding. What d'ye gaze at, madam?

Lady L. A monster! If thou'rt married, thou'rt the most perjured wretch that e'er avouched deceit.

Sir H. Heyday! Why, madam, I'm sure I never swore to marry you: I made, indeed, a slight promise, upon condition of your granting me a small favour, but you would not consent, you know.

Lady L. How he upbraids me with my shame! Can you deny your binding vows when this appears a witness against your falsehood? (*Shews a ring.*) Methinks, the motto of this sacred pledge should flash confusion in your guilty face. Read, read here the binding words of love and honour; words not unknown to your perfidious tongue, though utter strangers to your treacherous heart.

Sir H. What the devil is all this! Madam, I'm not at leisure for raillery; at present, I have weighty affairs upon my hands; the business of pleasure, madam. Any other time—(*Going.*)

Lady L. Stay, I conjure you; stay.

Sir H. Faith, I can't, my bride expects me.

[*Exit.*

Lady L. Grant me some wild expressions, heavens! or I shall burst. Woman's weakness, man's falsehood, my own shame, and love's disdain, at once swell up my breast. Words, words, or I shall burst. (*Going.*)

Enter Colonel Standard.

Col. S. Stay, madam! if you are a perfect woman, you have the confidence to outface a crime, and bear the charge of guilt without a blush.

Lady L. The charge of guilt! What? making a fool of you? I've done't, and glory in the act.

Col. S. Your falsehood can't be reached by malice, nor by satire; against mine own eyes, I still maintained your truth. I imagined Wildair's boasting of your favours to be the pure result of his own vanity: at last, he urged your taking presents of him; as a convincing proof of which, you, yesterday, from him, received that ring; which ring, that I might be sure he gave it, I lent it him for that purpose; and desire you now, madam, to restore it to the just owner.

Lady L. The just owner! Answer me: did not you receive this ring about twelve years ago?

Col. S. I did.

Lady L. And were not you, about that time, entertained two nights at the house of Sir Oliver Manly, in Oxfordshire?

Col. S. I was, I was! (*Runs to her and embraces her.*) The blest remembrance fires my soul with transport. I know the rest—you are the charming she, and I the happy man.

Lady L. How has blind fortune stumbled on the right! But where have you wandered since? 'twas cruel to forsake me.

Col. S. To tell you the particulars of my fortune, are too tedious now; my constant heart has sighed alone for thee; nor fame, nor glory, e'er shall part us more.

Enter Sir Harry Wildair *and* Angelica.

Oh! Sir Harry, fortune has acted miracles to-day. The story's strange and tedious; but all amounts to this, that woman's mind is as charming as her person, and I am made a convert, too, to beauty.

Sir H. I wanted only this to make my pleasure perfect.

Enter Alderman Smuggler.

Ald. S. So, gentlemen and ladies, I'm glad to find you so merry. Is my gracious nephew among ye?

Sir H. Sir, he dares not shew his face among such honourable company; for your gracious nephew is—

Ald. S. What, sir? have a care what you say.

Sir H. A villain, sir.

Ald. S. With all my heart; I'll pardon you the heating me for that very word. Oh! Sir Harry, he is as hypocritical—

Lady L. As yourself, Mr. Alderman. How fares my good old nurse, pray sir?

Ald. S. Oh! madam, I shall be even with you before I part with your writings and money, that I have in my hands.

Lady L. A word with you, Mr. Alderman; do you know this pocket-book?

Ald. S. Oh! lord, it contains an account of all my secret practices in trading. (*Aside.*) How came you by it?

Lady L. Sir Harry here dusted it out of your pocket, at my house yesterday: it contains an account of some secret practices in your merchandizing.—First return all my writings, then I shall consider whether I shall have your proceedings laid before the parliament or not, whose justice will never suffer your smuggling to go unpunished.

Ald. S. Oh! my poor ship and cargo.

Clin. sen. Harkye! master, you had as good come along with me to the jubilee now.

Angel. Come, Mr. Alderman, for once let a woman advise: would you be thought an honest man, banish covetousness, that worst *goût* of age: avarice is a poor pilfering quality of the soul, and will as certainly cheat, as a thief would steal.—Would you be thought a reformer of the times, be less severe in your censures, less rigid in your precepts, and more strict in your example.

Sir H. Right; virtue flows freer from imitation than compulsion.

In vain are musty morals taught in schools,
By rigid teachers, and as rigid rules;
Where virtue, with a frowning aspect stands,
And frights the pupil from its rough commands.
But woman—
Charming women can true converts make,
We love the precepts for the teacher's sake;
Virtue in them appears so bright, so gay,
We hear with transport, and with pride obey.

[*Exeunt.*

THE COUNTRY GIRL;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.

ALTERED FROM WYCHERLY, BY DAVID GARRICK.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

MOODY	BELVILLE	MISS PEGGY
HARCOURT	WILLIAM	ALITHEA
SPARKISH	COUNTRYMAN, &c.	LUCY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Harcourt's Lodgings.*

HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE *discovered sitting.*

Har. Ha, ha, ha! and so you are in love, nephew; not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentleman ought, but sighingly, miserably so; not content to be ankle-deep, you have sous'd over head and ears; ha, Dick?

Bel. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle. (*Sighs.*)

Har. Nay, never blush at it: when I was of your age I was asham'd too; but three years at college, and half a one at Paris, methinks, should have cured you of that unfashionable weakness—modesty.

Bel. Could I have released myself from that, I had perhaps been at this instant happy in the possession of what I must despair now ever to obtain. Heigho!

Har. Ha, ha, ha! very foolish indeed.

Bel. Don't laugh at me, uncle; I am foolish, I know; but, like other fools, I deserve to be pitied.

Har. Pr'ythee don't talk of pity; how can I help you? For this country girl of your's is certainly married.

Bel. No, no; I won't believe it; she is not married, nor she shan't be, if I can help it.

Har. Well said, modesty; with such a spirit you can help yourself, Dick, without my assistance.

Bel. But you must encourage and advise me too, or I shall never make anything of it.

Har. Provided the girl is not married; for I never encourage young men to covet their neighbours' wives.

Bel. My heart assures me, that she is not married.

Har. O, to be sure, your heart is much to be relied upon; but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you in misfortunes as in relationship, you must know——

Bel. What, uncle? You alarm me!

Har. That I am in love, too.

Bel. Indeed!

Har. Miserably in love.

Bel. That's charming.

Har. And my mistress is just going to be married to another.

Bel. Better and better.

Har. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please you; but now prepare for the wonderful wonder-of-wonders!

Bel. Well.

Har. My mistress is in the same house with yours.

Bel. What, are you in love with Peggy too? (*Rising from his chair.*)

Har. Well said, jealousy. No, no; set your heart at rest; your Peggy is too young, and too simple for me. I must have one a little more knowing, a little better bred, just old enough to see the difference between me and a coxcomb, spirit enough to break from a brother's engagements, and choose for herself.

Bel. You don't mean Alithea, who is to be married to Mr. Sparkish?

Har. Can't I be in love with a lady that is going to be married to another, as well as you, sir?

Bel. But Sparkish is your friend?

Har. Pr'ythee don't call him my friend; he can be nobody's friend, not even his own. He would thrust himself into my acquaintance, would introduce me to his mistress, though I have told him again and again that I was in love with her; which, instead of ridding me of him, has made him only ten times more troublesome, and me really in love. He should suffer for his self-sufficiency.

Bel. 'Tis a conceited puppy. And what success with the lady?

Har. No great hopes; and yet if I could defer the marriage a few days, I should not despair; her honour, I am confident, is her only attachment to my rival: she can't like Sparkish; and if I can work upon his credulity, a credulity which even popery would be ashamed of, I may yet have the chance of throwing sixes upon the dice to save me.

Bel. Nothing can save me.

Har. No, not if you whine and sigh, when you should be exerting every thing that is man about you. I have sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours in the house, to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not married already—

Bel. How cruel you are; you raise me up with one hand, and then knock me down with the other.

Har. Well, well, she shan't be married. (*Knocking at the door.*) This is Sparkish, I suppose; don't drop the least hint of your passion to him; if you do, you may as well advertise it in the public papers.

Bel. I'll be careful.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. An odd sort of a person, from the country, I believe, who calls himself Moody, wants to see you, sir; but as I did not know him, I said you were not at home, but would return directly; "And so will I too," said he, very shortly and surlily! and away he went, mumbling to himself.

Har. Very well, Will; I'll see him when he comes. [*Exit Servant.*] Moody call to see me! He has something more in his head than making me a visit; 'tis to complain of you, I suppose.

Bel. How can he know me?

Har. We must suppose the worst, and be prepared for him; tell me all you know of this ward of his, this Peggy—Peggy what's her name?

Bel. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.

Har. Ay, ay, Sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hampshire; and left very young, under the guardianship of my old companion and acquaintance, Jack Moody.

Bel. Your companion!—he's old enough to be your father.

Har. Thank you, nephew; he has greatly the advantage of me in years, as well as wisdom. When I first launched from the university, into this ocean of London, he was the greatest rake in it; I knew him well for near two years, but all of a sudden he took a freak (a very prudent one) of retiring wholly into the country.

Bel. There he gain'd such an ascendancy over the odd disposition of his neighbour, Sir Thomas, that he left him sole guardian to his daughter; who forfeits half her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent. There's the devil, uncle.

Har. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much in love that you would take her with half her value? Ha, nephew?

Bel. I'll take her with anything, with nothing.

Har. What! such an unaccomplish'd, awkward, silly creature? He has scarce taught her to write; she has seen nobody to converse with, but the country people about 'em; so she can do nothing but dangle her arms, look gawky, turn her toes in, and talk broad Hampshire.

Bel. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity; had you but heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall in the country, by moon-light——

Har. Romeo and Juliet, I protest, ha, ha, ha! "Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious—" ha, ha, ha! How often have you seen this fair Capulet?

Bel. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke to her twice; I have leap'd an orchard wall, like Romeo, to come at her; played the balcony scene, from an old summer-house in the garden; and if I lose her, I will find out an apothecary, and play the tomb scene too.

Har. Well said, Dick! this spirit must produce something; but has the old dragon ever caught you sighing at her?

Bel. Never in the country; he saw me yesterday kissing my hand to her, from the new tavern window that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately drove her from it, and fastened up the window-shutters.

Spark. (*Without.*) Very well, Will, I'll go up to 'em.

Har. I hear Sparkish coming up; take care of what I told you; not a word of Peggy; hear his intelligence, and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

Bel. Mum, mum, uncle.

Enter Sparkish.

Spark. O, my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing; I have such news for thee, ha, ha, ha! What, your nephew too, and a little dumpish, or so; you have been giving him a lecture upon economy, I suppose—you, who never had any, can best describe the evils that arise from the want of it. I never mind my own affairs, not I; "The gods take care of Cato."—I hear, Mr. Belville, you have got a pretty snug house, with a bow-window that looks into the Park, and a back-door that goes out into it. Very convenient, and well-imagined; no young handsome fellow should be without one; you may be always ready there, like a spider in his web, to seize upon stray'd women of quality.

Har. As you used to do—you vain fellow, you; pr'ythe don't teach my nephew your abandoned tricks; he is a modest young man, and you must not spoil him.

Spark. May be so, but his modesty has done some mischief at our house; my surly, jealous brother-in-law saw that modest young gentleman casting a wishful eye at his forbidden fruit, from the new tavern window.

Bel. You mistake the person, Mr. Sparkish; I don't know what young lady you mean.

Har. Explain yourself, Sparkish, you must mistake; Dick has never seen the girl.

Spark. I don't say he has; I only tell you what Moody says. Besides, he went to the tavern himself, and enquired of the waiter who dined in the back room, No. 4; and they told him it was Mr. Belville, your nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to know of it, faith.

Har. He kiss'd his hand, indeed, to your lady, Alithea, and is more in love with her than you are, and very near as much as I am; so look about you, such a youth may be dangerous.

Spark. The more danger the more honour: I defy you both; win her and wear her, if you can;—*Dolus an virtus* in love as well as in war, though you must be expeditious, faith; for I believe, if I don't change my mind, I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after. Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt, no fellow-collegian to recommend me, to do the business?

Har. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. (*Aside.*) Why, faith, I have, Sparkish; my brother, a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands. I am a very generous rival, you see, to lend you my brother to marry the woman I love.

Spark. And so am I too, to let your brother

come so near us; but Ned shall be the man; poor Alithea grows impatient; I can't put off the evil day any longer. I fancy the brute, her brother, has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Bel. How, country idiot, sir?

Har. Hold your tongue. (*Apart to Belville.*) I thought he had been married already.

Spark. No, no, he's not married, that's the joke of it.

Bel. No, no, he is not married.

Har. Hold your tongue. (*Elbowing Belville.*)

Spark. Not he; I have the finest story to tell you—by-the-by, he intends calling upon you, for he asked me where you lived, to complain of modesty there. He picked up an old raking acquaintance of his as we came along together, Will Frankly, who saw him with his girl, skulking and muffled up, at the play last night; he plagu'd him much about matrimony, and his being ashamed to show himself; swore he was in love with his wife, and intended to cuckold him. "Do you?" cried Moody, folding his arms, and scowling with his eyes thus—"You must have more wit than you used to have; besides, if you have as much as you think you have, I shall be out of your reach, and this profligate metropolis, in less than a week." Moody would fain have got rid of him, but the other held him by the sleeve, so I left 'em; rejoiced most luxuriously to see the poor devil tormented.

Bel. I thought you said, just now, that he was not married; is not that a contradiction, sir? (*Harcourt still makes signs to Belville.*)

Spark. Why, it is a kind of one; but considering your modesty, and the ignorance of the young lady, you are pretty tolerably inquisitive, methinks; ha, Harcourt! ha, ha, ha!

Har. Pooh, pooh! don't talk to that boy, tell me all you know.

Spark. You must know, my booby of a brother-in-law hath brought up this ward of his (a good fortune let me tell you), as he coops up and fattens his chickens for his own eating; he is plaguy jealous of her, and was very sorry that he could not marry her in the country, without coming up to town; which he could not do on account of some writings or other; so what does my gentleman? He persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking a sixpence, or some nonsense or another, that they are to all intents married in heaven; but that the laws require the signing of articles, and the church service to complete their union: so he has made her call him husband, and bud, which she constantly does; and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, egad; ha, ha, ha! and all won't do.

Bel. Thank you, sir. What heavenly news, uncle! (*Aside.*)

Har. What an idiot you are, nephew. (*Apart.*) And so then you make but one trouble of it, and are both to be tack'd together the same day?

Spark. No, no, he can't be married this week; he d—ns the lawyers for keeping him in town; besides, I am out of favour; and he is continually snarling at me, and abusing me for not being jealous. (*Knocking at the door.*) There he is; I must not be seen with you, for he'll suspect something; I'll go with your nephew to his house, and we'll wait for you, and make a visit to my wife that is to be, and perhaps we shall show young modesty here a sight of Peggy too.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's the strange odd sort of a gentleman come again, and I have shown him into the fore-parlour.

Spark. That must be Moody. Well said, Will; an odd sort of a strange gentleman indeed; we'll step into the next room till he comes into this, and then you may have him all to yourself; much good may he do you. (*Going.*) Remember that he is married, or he'll suspect me of betraying him. [*Exeunt Sparkish and Belville.*

Har. Show him up Will. [*Exit Servant.*] Now must I prepare myself to see a very strange, though a very natural metamorphosis; a once high-spirited, handsome, well-dress'd, raking prodigal of the town, sunk into a surly, suspicious, economical, country sloven.

Enter Moody.

Moo. Mr. Harcourt, your humble servant: have you forgot me?

Har. What, my old friend, Jack Moody! By thy long absence from the town, the grumness of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy; you are certainly married.

Moo. My long stay in the country will excuse my dress, and I have a suit at law that brings me up to town, and puts me out of humour; besides, I must give Sparkish ten thousand pounds tomorrow to take my sister off my hands.

Har. Your sister is very much obliged to you: being so much older than her, you have taken upon you the authority of a father, and have engaged her to a coxcomb.

Moo. I have, and to oblige her: nothing but coxcombs or debauchees are the favourites now-a-days; and a coxcomb is rather the more innocent animal of the two.

Har. She has sense and taste, and can't like him; so you must answer for the consequences.

Moo. When she is out of my hands, her husband must look to the consequences. He's a fashionable fool, and will cut his horns kindly.

Har. And what is to secure your worship from consequences? I did not expect marriage from such a rake—one that knew the town so well; fie, fie, Jack.

Moo. I'll tell you my security; I have married no London wife.

Har. That's all one; that grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful, pamper'd, Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Moo. I wish the devil had both him and his simile. (*Aside.*)

Har. Well, never grumble about it; what's done can't be undone. Is your wife handsome and young?

Moo. She has little beauty but her youth, nothing to brag of but her health, and no attraction but her modesty; wholesome, homely, and housewifely; that's all.

Har. You talk as like a grazier as you look, Jack. Why did you not bring her to town before, to be taught something?

Moo. Which something I might repent as long as I live.

Har. But pr'ythee, why wouldst thou marry her, if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly: she must be rich then?

Moo. As rich as if she had the wealth of the mogul. She'll not ruin her husband, like a London baggage, with a million of vices she never heard of: then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference between me and you; that is, between a man of thirty and one of forty.

Har. Fifty to my knowledge. (*Moody turns off, and grumbles.*) But see how you and I differ, Jack; wit to me is more necessary than beauty; I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Moo. 'Tis my maxim; he's a fool that marries;

but he's a greater that does not marry a fool. I know the town, Mr. Harcourt; and my wife shall be virtuous in spite of you or your nephew.

Har. My nephew! poor sheepish lad, he runs away from every woman he sees: he saw your sister Alithea at the opera, and was much smitten with her; he always toasts her, and hates the very name of Sparkish. I'll bring him to your house, and you shall see what a formidable Tarquin he is.

Moody. I have no curiosity, so give yourself no trouble.—You have heard of a wolf in sheep's clothing; and I have seen your innocent nephew kissing his hands at my windows.

Har. At your sister, I suppose; nor at her unless he was tipsy. How can you, Jack, be so outrageously suspicious? Sparkish has promised to introduce him to his mistress.

Moo. Sparkish is a fool, and may be what I'll take care not to be.—I confess my visit to you, Mr. Harcourt, was partly for old acquaintance sake, but chiefly to desire your nephew to confine his gallantries to the tavern, and not send 'em in looks, signs, or tokens, on the other side of the way. I keep no brothel; so pray tell your nephew. (*Going.*)

Har. Nay, pr'ythee, Jack, leave me in better humour. Well, I'll tell him; ha, ha, ha! Poor Dick, how he'll stare. This will give him a reputation, and the girls won't laugh at him any longer. Shall we dine together at the tavern, and send for my nephew to chide him for his gallantry? Ha, ha, ha! we shall have fine sport.

Moo. I am not to be laugh'd out of my senses, Mr. Harcourt. I was once a modest young gentleman myself; and I never have been half so mischievous before or since, as I was in that state of innocence.—And so, old friend, make no ceremony with me; I have much business, and you have much pleasure, and, therefore, as I hate forms, I will excuse your returning my visit, or sending your nephew to satisfy me of his modesty—and so your servant. [*Exit.*

Har. Ha, ha, ha! poor Jack! what a life of suspicion does he lead! I pity the poor fellow, though he ought and will suffer for his folly.—Folly!—'tis treason, murder, sacrilege! When persons of a certain age will indulge their false, ungenerous appetites, at the expense of a young creature's happiness, dame Nature will revenge herself upon them, for thwarting her most heavenly will and pleasure. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*A Chamber in Moody's house.*

Enter Peggy *and* Alithea.

Peg. Pray, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in in London?

Ali. A pretty question! Why, sister, Vauxhall, Kensington Gardens, and St. James's Park, are the most frequented.

Peg. Pray, sister, tell me why my bud looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up so close, and won't let me go a-walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday?

Ali. O, he's jealous, sister!

Peg. Jealous! What's that?

Ali. He's afraid you should love another man.

Peg. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Ali. Did he not carry you yesterday to the play?

Peg. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people: he would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there; but I would have ventured for all that.

Ali. But how did you like the play?

Peg. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I liked hugeously the actors; they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Ali. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Peg. Ay, how should I help it, sister? Pray, sister, when my guardian comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a-walking?

Ali. A-walking! ha, ha, ha! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a footpost; and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses. (*Aside.*) But here comes my brother; I'll ask him, though I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Enter Moody.

Peg. O my dear, dear bud, welcome home; why dost thou look so fropish? Who has nager'd thee?

Moo. You're a fool. (*Peggy goes aside and cries.*)

Ali. Faith, and so she is, for crying for no fault; poor, tender creature!

Moo. What, would you have her as impudent as yourself; as arrant a girl flirt, a gadder, a magpie; and to say all, a mere notorious town woman.

Ali. Brother, you are my only censurer; and the honour of your family will sooner suffer in your wife that is to be, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the town.

Moo. Hark you, mistress; do not talk so before my wife: the innocent liberty of the town!

Ali. Pray what ill people frequent my lodgings? I keep no company with any woman of scandalous reputation.

Moo. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputation company.

Ali. Would you not have me civil? Answer them at public places? Walk with them when they join me in the Park, Kensington Gardens, or Vauxhall?

Moo. Hold, hold; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found; I believe she's the worse for your town documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance as I do.

Peg. Indeed, be not angry with her, bud: she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a day.

Moo. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find.

Peg. Not I, indeed, dear; I hate London: our place-house in the country is worth a thousand of't; would I were there again!

Moo. So you shall, I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in? You are her encourager in such discourses. (*To Alithea.*)

Peg. No, indeed, dear; she chid me just now for liking the player-men.

Moo. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there's no harm in't. (*Aside.*) Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I do: the player men are finer folks.

Moo. But you love none better than me?

Peg. You are my own dear bud, and I know you: I hate strangers.

Moo. Ay, my dear, you must love me only; and not be like the naughty town women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddles, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town life.

Peg. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town life, London is not so bad a place, dear.

Moo. How! if you love me you must hate London.

Peg. But, bud, do the town women love the player-men too?

Moo. Ay, I warrant you.

Peg. Ay, I warrant you.

Moo. Why, you do not, I hope?

Peg. No, no, bud; but why have we no player-men in the country?

Moo. Ha! Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Peg. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me, as it were, desire it. Pray let me go to a play, dear?

Moo. Hold your peace; I won't.

Peg. Why, love?

Moo. Why, I'll tell you.

Peg. Pray, why, dear?

Moo. First, you like the actors: and the gallants may like you.

Peg. What, a homely country girl? No, bud, nobody will like me.

Moo. I tell you yes, they may.

Peg. No, no, you jest—I won't believe you; I will go.

Moo. I tell you, then, that one of the most raking fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Peg. Indeed: who, who, pray, who was't?

Moo. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware. How overjoy'd she is! (*Aside.*)

Peg. Was it any Hampshire gallant? any of our neighbours?—'Promise you I am beholden to him.

Moo. I promise you, you lie; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds.

Peg. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me? Answer me to that. Methinks he should not; I would do him no harm.

Ali. Ha, ha, ha!

Moo. 'Tis very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company; get you in, get you in.

Peg. But pray, husband, is he a pretty gentleman that loves me?

Moo. In, baggage, in. (*Thrusts her in, and shuts the door.*) What, all the libertines of the town brought to my lodging by this easy coxcomb! 'Sdeath! I'll not suffer it.

Enter Sparkish, Harcourt, *and* Belville.

Spark. Here, Belville, do you approve my choice? Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends the wits. (*To Alithea.*)

Moo. Ay, they shall know her as well as you yourself will, I warrant you. (*Aside.*)

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow; and one you must make welcome; for he's modest. (*Belville crosses and salutes Alithea; Har. does the same.*) Harcourt makes himself welcome, and has not the same foible, though of the same family.

Har. You are too obliging, Sparkish. (*Alithea and Spark. retire.*)

Moo. And so he is, indeed. The fop's horns will as naturally sprout upon his brows as mushrooms upon dunghills. (*Aside.*)

Har. This, Mr. Moody, is my nephew you mentioned to me. I would bring him with me; for a sight of him will be sufficient, without poppy or mandragora to restore you to your rest. (*Joins Alithea and Sparkish.*)

Bel. I am sorry, sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness: it was not so intended, I assure you, sir.

Moo. It may be so, sir, but not the less criminal for that. My wife, sir, must not be smirk'd and nodded at from tavern windows. I am a good shot, young gentleman, and don't suffer magpies to come near my cherries.

Bel. Was it your wife, sir?

Moo. What's that to you, sir? Suppose it were my grandmother.

Bel. I would not dare to offend her.—Permit me to say a word in private to you.

[*Exeunt Moody and Bel.*

Spark. Now old surly is gone, tell me Harcourt, if thou likest her as well as ever.—My dear, don't look down; I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Ali. For shame, Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost like her? Thou hast stared upon her enough to resolve me.

Har. So infinitely well, that I could wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Ali. Sir, Mr. Sparkish has often told me that his acquaintance were all wits and railers; and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him. I do assure you he is the honestest, worthiest, truest-hearted gentleman; a man of such perfect honour, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that—

Spark. Nay, 'egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely; I see it in your eyes.—He does admire you, madam; he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times; have you not, Harcourt? You do admire her; by the world, you do—don't you?

Har. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it, her whole sex; and till now I never thought I should have envied you or any man about to marry; but you have the best excuse to marry I ever knew.

Ali. Nay, now, sir, I am satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is most civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, the common butt of every railer.

Har. Truly, madam, I was never any enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Ali. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? Because it robs you of your friend here? For you look upon a friend married as one gone into a monastery, that is dead to the world.

Har. 'Tis indeed, because you marry him: I see, madam, you can guess my meaning. I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by heavens I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Ali. Would you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no; 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank! No, egad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Ali. Great kindness to you, indeed!—Insensible! Let a man make love to his mistress to his face. (*Aside.*)

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shalt enjoy my company sometimes, dear rogue.—By my honour, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest. I think that was prettily said of me, ha, Harcourt? Pr'ythee, Frank, dost think my wife that shall be, there, a fine person?

Har. I could gaze upon her till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How as I am? How?

Har. Because you are a lover; and true lovers are blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too, as well as beauty. Go, go, with her into a corner, and try if she has wit; (*He puts Har. over to Ali.*) talk to her anything, she's bashful before me—take her into a corner. (*Har. courts Alithea aside.*)

Re-enter Moody.

Moo. How, sir! If you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister. Be a pander to your own wife, bring men to her, let 'em make love before your face, thrust them into

a corner together, then leave 'em in private! Is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha! a silly, wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool, ha, ha, ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee by the world. What have you done with Belville? (*Struggles with Moody to keep him from Harcourt and Alithea.*)

Moo. Shewn him the way out of my house, as you should to that gentleman.

Spark. Nay, but pr'ythee let me reason with thee. (*Talks apart with Moody.*)

Ali. The writings are drawn, sir—settlements made: 'tis too late, sir, and past all revocation.

Har. Then so is my death.

Ali. I would not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so?

Ali. I have no obligations to you.

Har. My love.

Ali. I had his before.

Har. You never had it: he wants, you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Ali. Love proceeds from esteem: he cannot distrust my virtue; besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Har. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than bribing your woman, that he may marry you is a sign of his generosity. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Ali. No, now you have put a scruple in my head.—But, in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him; my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Har. No: if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation must suffer in the world.

Ali. Nay, now you are rude, sir. Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend here is very troublesome and very loving.

Har. Hold, hold! (*Aside to Alithea.*)

Moo. D'ye hear that, senseless puppy?

Spark. Why, d'ye think I'll seem jealous, like a country bumpkin?

Moo. No; rather be dishonour'd, like a credulous driveller. (*They retire.*)

Har. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him?

Ali. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Har. Wrong him! no man can do it; he's beneath an injury: a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot! a wretch, so contemptible to all the world but you, that—

Ali. Hold, do not rail at him; for, since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him: nay, I think I am obliged to tell him, you are not his friend. Mr. Sparkish! Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. What—what? Now, dear rogue, has she not wit?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had. (*Surlily.*)

Ali. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you?

Har. Madam!

Spark. How! No; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant: what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Ali. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him.

Moo. And he was in the right on't.

Ali. Besides, he has been making love to me.

Moo. And I told the fool so.

Har. True; d—d tell-tale woman! (*Aside.*)

Spark. Psha! to shew his parts; we wits rail and make love often, but to shew our parts: as we have no affections, so we have no malice. We—

Moo. Did you ever hear such an ass?

Ali. He said you were a wretch, below an injury.

Spark. Psha!

Ali. A common bubble.

Spark. Psha!

Ali. A coward!

Spark. Psha! psha!

Ali. A senseless, drivelling idiot.

Moo. True, true, true; all true.

Spark. How! did he disparage my parts; Nay then, my honour's concerned. I can't put up that. Brother, help me to kill him. (*Offers to draw.*)

Ali. Hold! hold!

Moo. If Harcourt would but kill Sparkish, and run away with my sister, I should be rid of three plagues at once. (*Aside.*)

Ali. Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said, after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How! say I am a fool,—that is no wit,—out of friendship to me!

Ali. Yes, to try whether I was concerned enough for you; and made love to me only to be satisfied of my virtue, for your sake.

Har. Kind, however! (*Aside.*)

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon; but why would not you tell me so, 'faith?

Har. Because I did not think on't, 'faith.

Spark. Come, Belville is gone away: Harcourt, let's be gone to the new play; come, madam.

Ali. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box, and run all about the house, as you used to do.

Spark. Psha! I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box, to entertain you, and that's as good. If I sat in the box, I should be thought no critic. I must run about, my dear, and abuse the author. Come away, Harcourt, lead her down. B'ye, brother.

[*Exeunt Harcourt, Sparkish, and Alithea.*

Moody. B'ye, driveller. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops; such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they're married. But let me go look to my freehold.

Enter a Countryman.

Country. Master, your worship's servant. Here is the lawyer, counsellor gentleman, with a green bag full of papers, come again, and would be glad to speak to you.

Moody. Now here's some other d—d impediment, which the law has thrown in our way. I shall never marry the girl, nor get clear of the smoke and wickedness of this cursed town. (*Aside.*) Where is he?

Country. He's below in a coach, with three other lawyers, counsellor gentlemen. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber.*

Enter PEGGY *and* LUCY.

Lucy. What ails you, Miss Peggy? You are grown quite melancholy.

Peg. Would it not make any one melancholy to see your mistress, Alithea, go every day fluttering about abroad to plays and assemblies, and I know not what, whilst I must stay at home, like a poor, lonely, sullen bird in a cage?

Lucy. Dear Miss Peggy, I thought you chose to be confined: I imagined that you had been bred so young to the cage, that you had no pleasure in flying about, and hopping in the open air, as other young ladies who go a little wild about this town.

Peg. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till somebody told me what pure lives the London ladies lead, with their dancing-meetings, and junketings, and dress'd every day in their best gowns; and, I warrant you, play at nine-pins every day in the week, so they do.

Lucy. To be sure, miss, you will lead a better life when join'd in holy wedlock with your sweet-temper'd guardian, the cheerful Mr. Moody.

Peg. I can't lead a worse, that's one good thing;

but I must make the best of a bad market, for I can't marry nobody else.

Lucy. How so, miss? That's very strange.

Peg. Why, we have a contraction to one another; so we are as good as married, you know.

Lucy. I know it! Heaven forbid, miss!

Peg. Heigho!

Lucy. Don't sigh, Miss Peggy; if that young gentleman, who was here just now, would take pity on me, I'd throw such a contract as your's behind the fire.

Peg. Lord bless us, how you talk!

Lucy. Young Mr. Belville would make you talk otherwise, if you knew him.

Peg. Mr. Belville! Where is he? When did you see him? You have undone me, Lucy. Where was he? Did he say any thing?

Lucy. Say any thing! very little indeed; he's quite distracted, poor young creature! He was talking with your guardian just now.

Peg. The deuce he was! but where was it, and when was it?

Lucy. In this house, five minutes ago, when your guardian turn'd you into your chamber, for fear of your being seen.

Peg. I knew something was the matter, I was in such a fluster. But what did he say to my bud?

Lucy. What do you call him bud for? Bud means husband, and he is not your husband yet, and I hope never will be; and, if he were my husband, I'd bud him, a surly, unreasonable beast!

Peg. I'd call him any names, to keep him in good humour; if he'd let me marry anybody else (which I can't do), I'd call him husband as long as he lived. But what said Mr. Belville to him?

Lucy. I don't know what he said to him, but I'll tell you what he said to me, with a sigh, and his hand upon his breast as he went out of the door:—"If you ever were in love, young gentlewoman (meaning me), and can pity a most faithful lover, tell the dear object of my affections——"

Peg. Meaning me, Lucy?

Lucy. Yes, you, to be sure.—"Tell the dear object of my affections, I live but upon the hopes that she is not married; and when those hopes leave me, she knows the rest;" then he cast up his eyes, thus;—gnash'd his teeth—struck his forehead;—would have spoke again, but he could not;—fetch'd a deep sigh, and vanish'd.

Peg. That is really very fine: I am sure it makes my heart sink within me, and brings tears into my eyes. O, he's a charming, sweet—But hush, hush! I hear my husband.

Lucy. Don't call him husband. Go into the Park this evening, if you can.

Peg. Mum, mum.

Enter Moody.

Moo. Come, what's here to do? you are putting the town pleasures in her head, and setting her a-longing.

Lucy. Yes, after nine-pins; you suffer none to give her those longings but yourself.

Moo. Come, Mrs. Flippant, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us: the liberty your mistress takes abroad makes her hanker after it, and out of humour at home. Poor wretch! she desired not to come to London; I would bring her.

Lucy. O yes, you surfeit her with pleasures.

Moo. She has been this fortnight in town, and never desired, till this afternoon, to go abroad.

Lucy. Was she not at the play yesterday?

Moo. Yes, but she never ask'd me; I was myself the cause of her going.

Lucy. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my mistress.

Moo. Well, next week I shall be rid of you all, rid of this town, and my dreadful apprehensions. Come, be not melancholy, for thou shalt go into the country very soon, dearest.

Peg. Pish! what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Moo. How's this? What! flout at the country?

Peg. Let me alone; I am not well.

Moo. O, if that be all—what ails my dearest?

Peg. Truly, I don't know; but I have not been well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Moo. Ha!

Lucy. That's my mistress too.

Moo. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concern'd, because a raking fellow chanced to lie, and say he liked you, you'll make me sick too.

Peg. Of what sickness?

Moo. O, of that which is worse than the plague; jealousy!

Peg. Pish! you jeer: I'm sure there's no such disease in your receipt-book at home.

Moo. No, you never met with it, poor innocent.

Peg. Well, but pray, bud, let's go to a play to-night.

Moo. No, no; no more plays. But why are you so eager to see a play?

Peg. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the player-men, and would see, if I could, the gallant you say loves me; that's all, dear bud.

Moo. Is that all, dear bud?

Lucy. (*Aside.*) This proceeds from my mistress's example.

Peg. Let's go abroad, however, dear bud, if we don't go to the play.

Moo. Come, have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the country next week.

Peg. Therefore I would first see some sights to tell my neighbours of: nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Moo. What, you have put this into her head? (*To Lucy.*)

Lucy. Heaven defend me, what suspicions! somebody has put more things into your head than you ought to have.

Moo. Your tongue runs too glibly, madam; and you have lived too long with a London lady, to be a proper companion for innocence. I am not over-fond of you, mistress.

Lucy. There's no love lost between us.

Moo. You admitted those gentlemen into the house, when said I would not be at home; and there was the young fellow too who behaved so indecent to my wife at the tavern window.

Lucy. Because you would not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodgings.

Peg. Why, O lord, did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Moo. No, no. You are not the cause of that d—d question too? (*To Lucy.*)

Peg. Come, pray, bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late: for I will go, that's flat and plain—only into the Park.

Moo. So! the obstinacy already of the town wife; and I must, while she's here, humour her like one. (*Aside.*) How shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Lucy. Muffle her up with a bonnet and cloak, and I'll go with her to avoid suspicion.

Moo. No, no, I am obliged to you for your kindness, but she shan't stir without me.

Lucy. What will you do then?

Peg. What, shall we go? I am sick with staying at home: if I don't walk in the Park, I'll do nothing that I'm bid for a week. I won't be mop'd.

Lucy. O, she has a charming spirit! I could stand your friend now, and would, if you had ever a civil word to give me. (*To Moody.*)

Moo. I'll give thee a better thing; I'll give thee a guinea for thy good advice, if I like it; and I can have the best of the college for the same money.

Lucy. I despise a bribe: when I am your friend, it shall be without fee or reward.

Peg. Don't be long then, for I will go out.

Lucy. The tailor brought home last night the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Peg. You must not tell that, Lucy.

Lucy. But I will, madam. When you were with your lawyers last night, Miss Peggy, to divert me and herself, put 'em on, and they fitted her to a hair.

Moo. Thank you, thank you, Lucy, 'tis the luckiest thought! Go this moment, Peggy, into your chamber, and put 'em on again, and you shall walk with me into the Park, as my godson. Well thought of, Lucy; I shall love you for ever for this.

Peg. And so shall I too, Lucy: I'll put 'em on directly. (*Going.*) I suppose, bud, I must keep on my petticoats, for fear of showing my legs.

Moo. No, no, you fool! never mind your legs.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter BELVILLE *and* HARCOURT.

Bel. And the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments through Lucy to Miss Peggy; and here I am, in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Har. And so to blind Moody, and take him off the scent of your passion for this girl, and at the same time to give me an opportunity with Sparkish's mistress (and of which I have made the most), you hinted to him with a grave melancholy face, that you were dying for his sister, Gad-a-mercy, nephew! I will back thy modesty against any other in the three kingdoms: it will do, Dick.

Bel. What could I do, uncle? It was my last stake, and I play'd for a great deal.

Har. You mistake me, Dick; I don't say you could do better; I only can't account for your modesty's doing so much: you have done such wonders, that I, who am rather bold than sheepish, have not yet ceased wondering at you. But do you think that you imposed upon him?

Bel. Faith, I can't say; he said very little, grumbled much, shook his head, and shewed me the door. But what success have you had with Alithea?

Har. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, without having light enough to see an inch before my nose. This day will produce something:—Alithea is a woman of great honour, and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish's absurdity stands my friend, and does everything that the fates ought to do for me.

Bel. Yonder comes the prince of coxcombs, and if your mistress and mine should, by chance, be tripping this way, this fellow will spoil sport: let us avoid him; you can't cheat him before his face.

Har. But I can though, thanks to my wit, and his want of it.

Bel. But you cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Har. Still the better for me, nephew, for fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessaries; and he is to bubbled of his mistress, or of his money (the common mistress,) by keeping him company.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. Who's that that is to be bubbled? Faith, let me snack; I han't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles, like their brother woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Har. He did not hear all, I hope. (*Apart to Bel.*)

Spark. Come, you bubbling rogues, you, where do we sup? O Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have made love—fierce love to her last night, all the play long—ha, ha, ha!—but I——

Har. I make love to her?

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, and I know her; but I am sure I know myself.

Bel. Do you, sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world, and I honour you as such. (*Bows.*)

Spark. O, your servant, sir: you are at your raillery, are you? You can't oblige me more; I'm your man: he'll meet with his match. Ha! Harcourt! did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play last night?

Har. Yes, and was very much disturb'd at it. You put the actors and audience into confusion, and all your friends out of countenance.

Spark. So much the better: I love confusion, and to see folks out of countenance; I was in tip-top spirits, faith, and said a thousand good things.

Bel. But I thought you had gone to plays to laugh at the poet's good things, and not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir; no, I thank you. 'Gad, I go to a play, as to a country treat; I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either; and the reason why we are so often louder than the players is, because we hate authors damnably.

Bel. But why should you hate the poor rogues? You have too much wit, and despise writing, I'm sure.

Spark. O yes, I despise writing; but women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Every body does it; 'tis e'en as common with lovers, as playing with fans: and you can no more help rhyming to your Phillis, than drinking to your Phillis.

Har. But the poets damn'd your songs, did they?

Spark. D—n the poets! they turn'd them into burlesque, as they call it: that burlesque is a hocus-pocas trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hiccius-doccius, topsy-turvy, they make a clever witty thing absolute nonsense. Do you know, Harcourt, that they ridiculed my last song! "Twang, twang," the best I ever wrote.

Har. That may be, and be very easily ridiculed for all that.

Bel. Favour me with it, sir; I never heard it.

Spark. What, and have all the Park about us?

Har. Which you'll not dislike; and so, pr'ythee, begin.

Spark. I never am ask'd twice, and so have at you.

SONG.

Tell me not of the roses and lilies
Which tinge the fair cheek of your Phillis;
Tell me not of the dimples and eyes,
For which silly Corydon dies.
Let all whining lovers go hang;
My heart, would you hit,
Tip your arrow with wit,
And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang,
And it comes to my heart with a twang.

(*At the end of the song, Harcourt and Belville steal away from Sparkish, and leave him singing; he sinks his voice by degrees at the surprise of their being gone.*)

Re-enter HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE.

What the deuce did you go away for?

Har. Your mistress is coming.

Spark. The devil she is! O hide, hide me from her! (*Hides behind Harcourt.*)

Har. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her; for I'm engaged, and at this instant. (*Looking at his watch.*)

Har. Pray first take me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time; faith, it is the lady, and one cannot make excuses to a woman.

Bel. You have need of 'em, I believe.

Spark. Psha! pr'ythee hide me!

Enter MOODY, PEGGY, *in boy's clothes, and* ALITHEA.

Har. Your servant, Mr. Moody.

Moo. Come along. (*To Peggy.*)

Peg. La! what a sweet delightful place this is!

Moo. Come along, I say, don't stare about you so; you'll betray yourself.

[*Exit, pulling Peggy, Alithea following.*

Har. He does not know us.

Bel. Or he won't know us.

Spark. So much the better.

[*Exit, Belville after them.*

Har. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. Some relation of Peggy's, I suppose; for he is something like her in face and gawkiness.

Re-enter BELVILLE.

Bel. By all my hopes, uncle, Peggy in boy's clothes. I am all over agitation. (*Apart to Harcourt.*)

Har. Be quiet, or you'll spoil all. They return.—Alithea has seen you, Sparkish, and will be angry if you don't go to her: besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, my dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's a better reason, dear friend: I would not go near her now for her's or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing: for though I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Har. I am obliged to you, indeed, my dear friend; I would be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends.

Spark. But they shan't though. Come along. (*They retire.*)

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, *and Alithea.*

Moo. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you. (*To Alithea.*) The fool, her gallant, and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here! I begin to be uneasy. (*Aside.*) Come, let's be gone, Peggy.

Peg. Don't you believe that; I han't half my belly-full of sights yet.

Moo. Then walk this way.

Peg. Lord, what a power of fine folks are here!—And Mr. Belville, as I hope to be married. (*Aside.*)

Moo. Come along; what are you muttering at?

Peg. There's the young gentleman there, you were so angry about, that's in love with me.

Moo. No, no; he's a dangler after your sister, or pretends to be; but they are all bad alike. Come along, I say. (*Moody pulls Peggy away. Exeunt Peggy and Moody, Belville following. Sparkish, Harcourt, and Alithea come forward.*)

Spark. Come, dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Ali. For your sake I hate him.

Har. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, madam, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Ali. I hate him because he is your enemy; and you ought to hate him too for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That's a good one? I hate a man for loving you? If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you.

Ali. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow?

Har. But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honour than he is himself? Let his honour alone, for my sake and his. He has no honour.

Spark. How's that?

Har. But what my dear friend can guard himself.

Spark. O ho—that's right again.

Ali. You astonish me sir, with want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour. 'Gad, I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Har. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me: my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: 'would you would do so!—Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and not walk away so; come back again. (*Alithea walks carelessly to and fro.*)

Har. I love you, madam, so—

Spark. How's that? Nay, now you begin to go too far indeed.

Har. So much, I confess I say I love you, that I would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here. (*Claps his hand on his breast, and points to Sparkish.*)

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not; now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no, heavens forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the least of mankind—my dear friend here—I injure him. (*Embraces Sparkish.*)

Ali. Very well.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it: madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me in giving himself such names.

Ali. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Come, come, you shall stay till he has saluted you.

Re-enter MOODY *and* PEGGY, BELVILLE *at a distance.*

Moo. What, invite your wife to kiss men? Monstrous! Are you not ashamed?

Spark. Are you not ashamed that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family than you have? You must not teach me: I am a man of honour, sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir—

Moo. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.—You seem to be angry, and yet won't go. (*To Alithea.*)

Ali. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Moo. Because you like it.—But you ought to blush at exposing your wife as you do. (*To Sparkish.*)

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't as I have to show fine clothes at a play-house the first day, and count money before poor rogues.

Moo. He that shows his wife or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull as eating alone; and so good night, for I must to Whitehall. Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, madam, and sleep if you can; for to-morrow, you know, I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear Harcourt—remember to send your brother. [*Exit.*

Har. You may depend upon me. Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr. Sparkish?

Moo. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her.

Har. Must, sir?

Moo. Yes, sir, she is my sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, sir; for I must be her servant, sir.—Madam—

Moo. Come away, sister; we had been gone if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Har. I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Moo. I have business, sir, and must mind it: your business is pleasure; therefore you and I must go different ways.

Har. Well, you may go on; but this pretty young gentleman (*Takes hold of Peggy.*) shall stay with us; for I suppose his business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Moo. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so sillily; yet if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. (*Aside.*) Come, come.

Har. Had you not rather stay with us? (*To Peggy.*) Pr'ythee who is this pretty young fellow? (*To Moody.*)

Moo. One to whom I am guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of your hands. (*Aside.*)

Har. Who is he? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Moo. Pshaw, do not look upon him so much; he's a poor, bashful youth; you'll put him out of countenance. (*Offers to take her away.*)

Har. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance. You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another. Salute him, Dick, à la Françoise. (*Belville kisses her.*)

Moo. I hate French fashions. Men kiss one another! (*Endeavours to take hold of her.*)

Peg. I am out of my wits. (*Aside.*) What do you kiss me for? I am no woman.

Har. But you are ten times handsomer.

Peg. Nay, now you jeer one; and pray don't jeer me.

Har. Kiss him again, Dick.

Moo. No, no, no;—come away, come away. (*To Peggy.*)

Har. Why, what haste you are in! Why won't you let me talk with him?

Moo. Because you'll debauch him; he's yet young and innocent.—How she gazes upon him! The devil! (*Aside.*) Come, pray let him go; I cannot stay fooling any longer: I tell you my wife stays supper for us.

Har. Does she? Come then, we'll all go sup with her.

Moo. No, no; now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed.—I wish she and I were well out of your hands. (*Aside.*)

Har. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Peg. Thank you heartily, sir.

Moo. 'Sdeath, she will discover herself yet in spite of me. (*Aside.*)

Bel. And mine too, sir.

Peg. That I will indeed. (*Bows.*)

Har. Pray give her this kiss for me. (*Kisses Peggy.*)

Moo. O heavens! What do I suffer? (*Aside.*)

Bel. And this for me. (*Kisses Peggy.*)

Peg. Thank you, sir. (*Courtesies. Belville and Harcourt laugh, and exeunt.*)

Moo. O the idiot!—Now 'tis out. Ten thousand cankers gnaw away their lips! (*Aside.*) Come, come, driveller. (*Moody, Peggy, and Alithea go out and return.*) So, they are gone at last.—Sister, stay with Peggy, till I find my servant. Don't let her stir an inch: I'll be back directly. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Harcourt *and* Belville.

Har. What, not gone yet?—Nephew, show the young gentlemen Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady.

[*Exeunt Belville and Peggy; Alithea and Harcourt struggle.*

Ali. My brother will go distracted.

Re-enter Moody.

Moo. Where? how?—What's become of—gone!—whither?

Ali. In the next walk only, brother.

Moo. Only—only—where—where? [*Exit hastily.*

Har. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned?—But, dearest madam—

Re-enter Moody.

Moo. Gone, gone—not to be found—quite gone—ten thousand plagues go with 'em!—Which way went they?

Ali. But in t'other walk, brother.

Moo. T'other walk! t'other devil. Where are they, I say?

Ali. You are too abusive, brother.

Moo. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family; which you do not dishonour enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of—

Ali. Good brother—

Moo. Damn'd, damn'd sister! [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Another part of the Park.*

Enter Belville *and* Peggy.

Bel. No disguise could conceal you from my heart: I pretended not to know you, that I might deceive the dragon that continually watches over you; but now he's asleep, let us fly from misery to happiness.

Peg. Indeed, Mr. Belville, as well as I like you, I can't think of going away with you so; and as much as I hate my guardian, I must take leave of him a little handsomely, or he will kill me, so he will.

Bel. But, dear miss Peggy, think of your situation; if we don't make the best use of this opportunity, we never may have another.

Peg. Ay but, Mr. Belville, I am as good as married already; my guardian has contracted me, and there wants nothing but the church ceremony to make us one: I call him husband, and he calls me wife already: he made me do so: and we had been married in church long ago, if the writings could have been finished.

Bel. That's his deceit, my sweet creature.—He pretends to have married you, for fear of your liking any body else.—You have a right to choose for yourself; and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you before marriage to a man you cannot like.

Peg. I'fack, no more I believe it does: sister Alithea's maid has told me as much. She's a very sensible girl.

Bel. You are in the very jaws of perdition, and nothing but running away can avoid it; the law will finish your chains to-morrow, and the church will rivet them the day after. Let us secure our happiness by escape, and love and fortune will do the rest for us.

Peg. These are fine sayings, to be sure, Mr. Belville; but how shall we get my fortune out of bud's clutches? We must be a little cunning; 'tis worth trying for. We can at any time run away without it.

Bel. I see by your fears, my dear Peggy, that you live in awe of this brutal guardian; and if he has you once more in his possession, both you and your fortune are secured to him for ever.

Peg. Ay, but it shan't though; I thank him for that.

Bel. If you marry without his consent, he can but seize upon half your fortune.—The other half,

and a younger brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are your own.—Take it, my sweetest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever. (*Kneels, and presses her hand.*)

Peg. I'fackins, but we won't.—Your fine talk has bewitched me.

Bel. (*Rising.*) 'Tis you have bewitch'd me, thou dear, enchanting, sweet simplicity!—Let us fly with the wings of love to my house there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peg. And so we will then.—There, squeeze my hand again.—Now run away with me; and if my guardy follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say. (*Going.*)

Enter MOODY *hastily, and meets them.*

Moo. O! there's my stray'd sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing?—Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again. (*Aside.*) Where have you been, you puppy?

Peg. Been, bud?—We have been hunting all over the Park to find you.

Bel. From one end to t'other, sir. (*Confusedly.*)

Moo. But not where I was to be found, you young devil, you!—Why did you start when you saw me?

Peg. I'm always frighten'd when I see you; and if I did not love you so well, I should run away from you; so I should. (*Pouts.*)

Moo. But I'll take care you don't.

Peg. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, bud? (*Belville makes signs of dislike.*)

Moo. I am not in a humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, though you may. What have you been doing with this young lady—gentleman, I would say?

Peg. Fie, bud, you have told all.

Bel. I have been as civil as I could to the young stranger; and if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and show the young spark Rosamond's pond; for he has not seen it yet.—Come, pretty youth, will you go with me? (*Goes to her.*)

Peg. As my guardian pleases.

Moo. No, no, it does not please me. Whatever I think he ought to see, I shall show him myself. You may visit Rosamond's pond, if you will; and the bottom of it, if you will.—And so, sir, your servant.

[*Exit Moody, with Peggy under his arm, and Belville.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Moody's House.*

Enter LUCY *and* ALITHEA.

Ali. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Mr. Harcourt for ever from your sight? How could you be so hard-hearted.

Ali. 'Twas because I was not hard-heated.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and madness, I warrant.

Ali. It was so; I would see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey-day! a very pretty reason.

Ali. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Ali. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Ali. Hold your tongue.

Lucy. That you know I can't do, madam; and upon this occasion, I will talk for ever. What, give yourself away to one, that poor I, your maid, would not accept of.

Ali. How, Lucy?

Lucy. I would not, upon my honour, madam. 'Tis never too late to repent. Take a man, and give up your coxcomb, I say.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Sparkish, with company, madam, attends you below.

Ali. I will wait upon 'em. [*Exit Servant.*] My heart begins to fail me, but I must go through with it. Go with me, Lucy. [*Exit.*

Lucy. Not I indeed, madam.—If you will leap the precipice, you shall fall by yourself. What excellent advice have I thrown away!—So I'll e'en take it where it will be more welcome.——Miss Peggy is bent upon mischief against her guardian, and she can't have a better privy-counsellor than myself.—I must be busy one way or another. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber in Moody's House.*

Enter MOODY *and* PEGGY.

Moo. I saw him kiss your hand before you saw me.——This pretence of liking my sister was all a blind—the young abandon'd hypocrite! (*Aside.*) Tell me, I say—for I know he likes you, and was hurrying you to his house—tell me, I say——

Peg. Lord, han't I told it a hundred times over?

Moo. I would try if, in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least circumstance; for if her story is false, she is so, too.—(*Aside.*) Come, how was't, baggage?

Peg. Lord! what pleasure you take to hear it, sure.

Moo. No, you take more in telling it, I find; but speak, how was't? No lies: I saw him kiss you; he kiss'd you before my face.

Peg. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither; for, to say the truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Moo. The devil! You were satisfied with it then, and would do it again?

Peg. Not unless he should force me.

Moo. Force you, changeling?

Peg. If I had struggled too much, you know, he would have known I had been a woman; so I was quiet, for fear of being found out.

Moo. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knock'd him down.

Peg. With what, bud? I could not help myself; besides, he did it so modestly, and blush'd so, that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon his mummery too as well as me; and, if so, there was no harm done, you know.

Moo. This is worse and worse. So, 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him; and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love; 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding. I must strangle that little monster whilst I can deal with him. (*Aside.*) Go; fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peg. Yes, I will, bud.

Moo. Go then.

Peg. I'm going.

Moo. Why don't you go then?

Peg. Lord! I'm going. [*Exit.*

Moo. This young fellow loves her, and she loves him; the rest is all hypocrisy. How the young modest villain endeavoured to deceive me! But I'll crush this mischief in the shell. Why should women have more invention in love than men? It can only be because they have more desire, more soliciting passions, more of the devil.

Re-enter PEGGY, *with pen, ink, and paper.* Come, minx, sit down and write.

Peg. Ay, dear, dear bud; but I can't do't very well.

Moo. I wish you could not at all.

Peg. But what should I write for?

Moo. I'll have you write a letter to this young man.

Peg. O Lord! to the young gentleman a letter?

Moo. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peg. Lord, you do but jeer; sure, you jest.

Moo. I am not so merry. Come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peg. What, do you think I am a fool?

Moo. She's afraid I would not dictate my love to him, therefore she's unwilling. (*Aside.*) But you had best begin.

Peg. Indeed, and indeed, but I won't, so I won't.

Moo. Why?

Peg. Because he's in town. You may send for him here, if you will.

Moo. Very well; you would have him brought to you? Is it come to this? I say, take the pen and ink, and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peg. Lord! what do you make a fool of me for? Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country? Now he's in town, and I'm in town too; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Moo. So, I'm glad it's no worse; she is innocent enough yet. (*Aside.*) Yes, you may, when your husband bids, write letters to people that are in town.

Peg. O, may I so? Then I am satisfied.

Moo. Come, begin. *Sir*— (*Dictates.*)

Peg. Sha'n't I say *Dear Sir?* You know one says always something more than bare *Sir* up in a corner.

Moo. Write as I bid you, or I will write something with this penknife in your face.

Peg. Sir— (*Writes.*)

Moo. Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses and embraces——Write!

Peg. Nay, why should I say so? you know, I told you he had a sweet breath.

Moo. Write!

Peg. Let me put out *loath'd.*

Moo. Write, I say!

Peg. Well then. (*Writes.*)

Moo. Let me see what you have writ. (*Reads.*) *Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces* —thou impudent creature, where is *nauseous* and *loath'd?*

Peg. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Moo. Once more write as I'd have you, or I will spoil your writing with this; I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief. (*Holds up the penknife.*)

Peg. O Lord! I will. (*Writes.*)

Moo. So, so, let's see now: *though I suffered last night your nauseous loath'd kisses and embraces* —go on—*yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them.* So— (*Peggy writes.*)

Peg. I have writ it.

Moo. O then—*I then conceal'd myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies*— (*Peggy writes.*)

Peg. To avoid—

Moo. Your insolencies—

Peg. Your insolencies. (*Writes.*)

Moo. The same reason, now I am out of your hands—

Peg. So— (*Writes.*)

Moo. Makes me own to you my unfortunate, though innocent frolic, in being in boy's clothes. (*Peggy writes.*)

Peg. So—

Moo. That you may for evermore—

Peg. Evermore?

Moo. Evermore cease to pursue her, who hates and detests you— (*Peggy writes.*)

Peg. So— (*Sighs.*)

Moo. What do you sigh for? *Detests you, as much as she loves her husband and her honour.*

Peg. I vow, husband, he'll never believe I should write such a letter. (*Writes.*)

Moo. What, he'd expect a kinder one from you? Come, now your name only.

Peg. What, sha'n't I say—*Your most faithful humble servant till death?*

Moo. No, tormenting fiend! (*Peggy writes.*) Her style, I find, would be very soft. (*Aside.*) Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle, and write on the outside—*For Mr. Belville.* [*Exit.*

Peg. (*Writes.*) *For Mr. Belville.* So; I am glad he is gone. Hark! I hear a noise.

Moo. (*Within.*) Well, well; but can't you call again? Well, walk in then.

Peg. I'fack, there's folks with him.

Moo. (*Within.*) Very well; if he must see me, I'll come to him.

Peg. That's pure; now I may think a little. Why should I send dear Mr. Belville such a letter? Can one have no shift? Ah, a London woman would have had a hundred presently. Stay; what if I should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon it too? Ay; but then my guardian would see't. I don't know what to do. But yet y'vads I'll try, so I will; for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Belville, come what will on't. (*Writes, and repeats what she writes.*) *Dear, dear, dear, sweet Mr. Belville*—so—*my guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I won't*—so—*and would have me say I hate you; but I won't* —there—*for I'm sure, if you and I were in the country, at cards together*—so—*I could not help treading on your toe under the table; so pray keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can; so no more at present from one who am, dear, dear, poor dear Mr. Belville, your loving friend till death do us part,* Margaret Thrift. So, now wrap it up just like t'other; so, now write—*For Mr. Belville.* But, oh! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian. (*Puts it in her bosom.*)

Re-enter Moody, *with a candle and sealing-wax.*

Moo. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me; but I fear 'twas to my wife. (*Aside.*) What, have you done?

Peg. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Moo. Let's see't; what d'ye tremble for? (*He opens and reads the first letter.*)

Peg. So, I had been finely serv'd, if I had giv'n him this. (*Aside.*)

Moo. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Peg. Lord! what shall I do? (*Aside.*) Pray, let me see't. Lord! you think I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will. (*Snatches the letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.*)

Moo. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I would not have you.

Peg. So, ha'n't I done it curiously? I think I have; there's my letter going to Mr. Belville, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks. (*Aside.*)

Moo. 'Tis very well; but I warrant you would not have it go now?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I would, bud, now.

Moo. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street. (*Puts her into the chamber.*) At least 'tis fit she think so; if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us. Now I have secur'd all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*Belville's Lodgings.*

Enter Lucy *and* Belville.

Lucy. I run great risks, to be sure, to serve the young lady and you, sir; but I know you are a gentleman of honour, and would scorn to betray a

friend who means you well, and is above being mercenary.

Bel. As you are not mercenary, Mrs. Lucy, I ought to be the more generous; give me leave to present you with this trifle; (*gives her a ring*) not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

Lucy. Though I scorn to be bribed in any cause, yet I am proud to accept it as a mark of your regard, and as such shall keep it for your sake; and now to business.

Bel. But has the dear creature resolved?

Lucy. Has she! why, she will run away and marry you, in spite of your teeth, the first moment she can break prison: so you, in your turn, must take care not to have your qualms. I have known several bold gentlemen not able to draw their swords, when a challenge has come too quick upon 'em.

Bel. I assure you, Mrs. Lucy, that I am no bully in love; and Miss Peggy will meet with her match, come when she will.

Lucy. Ay, so you all say; but talking does no business. Stay at home till you hear from us.

Bel. Blessings on thee, Lucy, for the thought.

Moo. (*Without.*) But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

Lucy. As I hope to be married, Mr. Belville, I hear Mr. Moody's voice. Where shall I hide myself? If he sees me, we are all undone.

Bel. This is our cursed luck again. What the devil can he want here? Get into this closet till he is gone. (*Puts Lucy into the closet.*) Don't you stir, Lucy. I must put the best face upon the matter. Now for it. (*Takes a book and reads.*)

Enter Moody.

Moo. You will excuse me, sir, for breaking through forms, and your servant's entreaties, to have the honour—but you are alone, sir—your fellow told me below, that you were with company.

Bel. Yes, sir, the best company. (*Shews his book.*) When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

Moo. And I chose to interrupt your conversation: the business of my errand must plead my excuse.

Bel. You shall be always welcome to me; but you seem ruffled, sir. What brings you hither, and so seemingly out of humour?

Moo. Your impertinency; I beg pardon, your modesty I mean.

Bel. My impertinency?

Moo. Your impertinency.

Bel. Sir, from the peculiarity of your character, and your intimacy with my uncle, I shall allow you great privileges; but you must consider, youth has its privileges too; and, as I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I am not obliged to bear with your ill humours, or your ill manners.

Moo. They who wrong me, young man, must bear with both; and if you had not made too free with me, I should have taken no liberties with you.

Bel. I could have wished, sir, to have found you a little more civil, the first time I have the honour of a visit from you.

Moo. If that is all you want, young gentleman, you will find me very civil indeed. There, sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether I want either kindness or civility. Look you there, sir. (*Gives him a letter.*)

Bel. What is it?

Moo. Only a love-letter, sir; and from my wife.

Bel. How, is it from your wife? Hum and hum. (*Reads.*)

Moo. Even from my wife, sir. Am not I wondrous kind and civil to you now too? But you'll not think her so. (*Aside.*)

Bel. Ha! is this a trick of his or her's? (*Aside.*)

Moo. The gentleman's surpris'd, I find. What, you expected a kinder letter?

Bel. No, faith, not I. How could I?

Moo. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did; a man so young and well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at the first sight or opportunity.

Bel. But what should this mean? It seems he knows not what the letter contains. (*Aside.*)

Moo. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Bel. Faith, I can't help it.

Moo. Now, I think, I have deserv'd your infinite friendshiip and kinduess; and have shew'd myself sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband; am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant?

Bel. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging kind friend and husband in the world; ha, ha, ha! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't; and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her and you.

Moo. Well then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine; kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome; so, Mr. Modesty, your servant. (*Going.*)

Enter Sparkish, *meeting him.*

Spark. So, brother-in-law that was to have been, I have follow'd you from home to Belville's; I have strange news for you.

Moo. What, are you wiser than you were this morning.

Spark. Faith, I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I sha'n't eat half an ounce the less at dinner for it; there's philosophy for you.

Moo. Insensibility you mean. I hope you don't mean to use my sister ill, sir.

Spark. No, sir, she has used me ill; she's in her tantrums; I have had a narrow escape, sir.

Moo. If thou art endow'd with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this riddle.

Bel. Ay, ay, pr'ythee, Sparkish, condescend to be intelligible.

Spark. Why, you must know, we had settled to be married; it is the same thing to me, whether I am married or not; I have no particular fancy one way or another, and so I told your sister; off or on, 'tis the same thing to me: but the thing was fix'd, you know. You and my aunt brought it about; I had no hand in it. And, to shew you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tie me up to hard terms; and the church would have finish'd me still to harder, but she was taken with her tantrums.

Moo. D—n your tantrums, come to the point.

Spark. Your sister took an aversion to the parson, Frank Harcourt's brother; abused me like a pickpocket, and swore 'twas Harcourt himself.

Moo. And so it was, for I saw him.

Spark. Why, you are as mad as your sister; I tell you it was Ned, Frank's twin brother.

Moo. What, Frank told you so? [story.

Spark. Ay, and Ned too; they were both in a

Moo. What an incorrigible fellow! Come, come, I must be gone.

Spark. Nay, nay, you shall hear my story out. She walk'd up within pistol-shot of the church, then twirl'd round upon her heel, call'd me every name she could think of; and, when she had exhausted her imagination, and tired her tongue (no easy matter, let me tell you), she call'd her chair, sent her footman to buy a monkey before my face, then bid me good morrow with a sneer, and left us with our mouths open in the middle of a hundred people, who were all laughing at us! If these are not tantrums, I don't know what are.

Moo. Ha, ha, ha! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul; 'tis a most exquisite story: I have not had such a laugh for this half year. Thou art a

most ridiculous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee; ha, ha, ha! [*Exit*

Spark. Did you ever hear the like, Belville?

Bel. O yes; how is it possible to hear such a foolish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at 'em? Ha, ha, ha! (*Lucy in the closet laughs.*)

Spark. Hey-day! what's that? What, have you raised a devil in the closet, to make up a laughing chorus at me? I must take a peep. (*Going to the closet.*)

Bel. Indeed, but you must not.

Spark. It was a woman's voice.

Bel. So much the better for me.

Spark. Pr'ythee, introduce me.

Bel. Though you take a pleasure in exposing your ladies, I choose to conceal mine; so, my dear Sparkish, lest the lady should be sick by too long a confinement, and laughing heartily at you, I must entreat you to withdraw. Pr'ythee, excuse me, I must laugh; ha, ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Do you know that I begin to be angry, Belville?

Bel. I can't help that. Ha, ha, ha!

Spark. My character's at stake; I shall be thought a d—d silly fellow; I will call Alithea to an account directly. [*Exit.*

Bel. Ha, ha, ha!

Lucy. (*Peeping out.*) Ha, ha, ha, ha! O dear sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst. What an adventure. (*Comes out and laughs.*)

Bel. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter; and by the dragon himself; there's a spirit for you!

Lucy. There's simplicity for you! Show me a town-bred girl with half the genius. Send you a love-letter, and by a jealous guardian too! Ha, ha, ha! 'Tis too much; too much! Ha, ha, ha! Well, Mr. Belville, the world goes as it should do. My mistress will exchange her fool for a wit; Miss Peggy her brute for a pretty young fellow; I shall dance at two weddings; be well rewarded by both parties; get a husband myself; and be as happy as the best of you; and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Bel. Success attend you, Lucy. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Moody's House.*

PEGGY, *discovered alone, leaning on her elbow on a table, with pen, ink, and paper.*

Peg. Well, 'tis e'en so; I have got the London disease they call love; I am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr. Belville! I have heard this distemper call'd a fever, but methinks it is like an ague; for when I think of my guardian, I tremble, and am so cold; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Belville! my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed. Ah! poor Mr. Belville! Well, I will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like anything. Oh! sick, sick!

Enter MOODY, *who, seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her shoulder.*

Moo. What, (*snatches the paper from her*) writing more letters?

Peg. O Lord, bud! why d'ye fright me so? (*She offers to run out, he stops her, and reads.*)

Moo. How's this! Nay, you shall not stir, madam. (*Reads.*) *Dear, dear, Mr. Belville.* Very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose; but let's see't. *First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done had you not said first you loved me so extremely; which, if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man's, who I loath, nauseate, and detest.* Now you can write these filthy words. But what follows!—*therefore I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice; but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me as I do you, you will try what you can do; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our*—our—what is to follow our? Speak, what? Our journey into the country, I suppose. Oh, woman! d—d woman! and love! d—d love! their old tempter; for this is one of his miracles; in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before. But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together. (*Draws his sword.*)

Peg. O Lord! O Lord! you are such a passionate man, bud!

Moo. Come, take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in a tittle I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this as you deserve. (*Lays his hand on his sword.*) Write what was to follow. Let's see.—*You must make haste, and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our*—what follows our?—(*Peggy takes the pen, and writes.*)

Peg. Must all out then, bud? Look you there then.

Moo. Let's see;—*for I can defer no longer our wedding.*——*Your slighted* ALITHEA. What's the meaning of this? My sister's name to't? Speak; unriddle.

Peg. Yes, indeed, bud.

Moo. But why her name to't? Speak, speak, I say!

Peg. Ay, but you'll tell her again; if you would not tell her again—

Moo. I will not; I am stunn'd; my head turns round. Speak.

Peg. Won't you tell her, indeed, and indeed.

Moo. No; speak, I say.

Peg. She'll be angry with me: but I would rather she should be angry with me than you, bud. And to tell the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Moo. Ha! I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. (*Aside.*) Could she come to you to teach you, since I lock'd you up alone?

Peg. Oh! through the key-hole, bud.

Moo. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself?

Peg. Why she said, because—

Moo. Because what; because—

Peg. Why because, bud—

Moo. Because what, I say?

Peg. Because, lest Mr. Belville, as he was so young, should he inconstant, and refuse her; or be vain afterwards, and shew the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being her's.

Moo. Belville again! Am I to be deceiv'd again with that young hypocrite?

Peg. You have deceiv'd yourself, bud; you have indeed. I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could; but you must know it, and shall know it too. (*Cries.*)

Moo. Dry your tears.

Peg. You always thought he was hankering after me. Good law! he's dying for Alithea, and Alithea for him. They have had private meetings; and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the tavern window, when you thought it was me. I would have discovered all, but she made me swear to deceive you; and so I have finely; have not I, bud?

Moo. Why did you write that foolish letter to him then, and make me more foolish to carry it?

Peg. To carry on the joke, bud; to oblige them.

Moo. And will nothing serve her but that great baby? He's too young for her to marry.

Peg. Why do you marry me then? 'Tis the same thing, bud.

Moo. No, no, 'tis quite different. How innocent she is! (*Aside.*) But hark you, madam, your sister went out this morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Peg. Alack-a-day! she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Moo. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Peg. O Lord! then she'll discover all. (*Aside.*) Pray hold, bud: what, d'ye mean to discover me? She'll know I have told you then. Pray, bud, let me talk with her first.

Moo. I must speak with her to know whether Belville ever made her any promise, and whether she will be married to Sparkish or no.

Peg. Pray, dear bud, don't till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else.

Moo. Go then, and bid her come to me.

Peg. Yes, yes, bud.

Moo. Let me see—

Peg. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wits end. [*Aside, and exit.*

Moo. Well, I resolve it, Belville shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure; I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Re-enter PEGGY.

Peg. O Lord, bud, I told you what anger you would make me with my sister.

Moo. Won't she come?

Peg. No, she won't; she's ashamed to look you in the face; she'll go directly to Mr. Belville, she says. Pray let her have her way, bud; she won't be pacified if you don't; and will never forgive me. For my part, bud, I believe, but don't tell anybody, they have broken a piece of silver between 'em; or have contracted one another, as we have done, you know, which is the next thing to being married.

Moo. Pooh! you fool; she ashamed of talking with me about Belville, because I made the match for her with Sparkish! But Sparkish is a fool, and I have no objection to Belville's family or fortune:

Peg. I will, bud. (*Going.*) [tell her so.

Moo. Stay, stay, Peggy, let her have her own way; she shall go to Belville herself, and I'll follow her; that will be best; let her have her whim.

Peg. You're in the right, bud; for they have certainly had a quarrel, by her crying and hanging her head so: I'll be hang'd if her eyes an't swell'd out of her head, she's in such a piteous taking.

Moo. Belville sha'n't use her ill, I'll take care of that: if he has made her a promise, he shall keep to it; but she had better go first. I will follow her at a distance, that she may have no interruption; and I will wait in the Park before I see them, that they may come to a reconciliation before I come upon 'em.

Peg. La, bud, how wise you are! I wish I had half your wisdom; you see everything at once. Stand a one side then; there, a little further that way.

Moo. And so I will: she shan't see me till I break in upon her at Belville's. (*Sits down in the middle of the stage.*)

Peg. Now for it. [*Exit.*

Moo. My case is something better; for suppose the worst—should Belville use her ill—I had rather fight him for not marrying my sister, than for debauching my wife, for I will make her mine absolutely to-morrow; and of the two, I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife: I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, though differently, troublesome to their keeper. But here she comes. (*Steps aside.*)

Re-enter PEGGY, *dressed like Alithea; and as she passes over the stage, seems to sigh, sob, and wipe her eyes.*

Peg. Heigho! [*Exit.*

Moo. (*Comes forward.*) There the poor devil goes, sighing and sobbing, a woeful example of the fatal consequences of a town education; but I am bound in duty, as well as inclination, to do my utmost to save her; but first I'll secure my own property. (*Opens, and calls.*) Peggy! Peggy! my dear! I will return as soon as possible; do you hear me? Why don't you answer? You may read in the book, I bought you till I come back. As the Jew says in the play, "Fast bind, fast find."—(*Locks the door.*) This is the best, and only security for female affections. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Park, before Belville's house.*

Enter SPARKISH, *fuddled.*

Spark. If I can but meet with her, or anybody that belongs to her, they will find me a match for 'em. When a man has wit, and a great deal of it, Champagne gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it; 'tis a lighted match to gunpowder. I was right to consult my friends, and they all agree with Moody, that I make a d—d ridiculous figure, as matters stand at present. I'll consult Belville; this is his house; he's my friend too; and no fool. It shall be so. D—n it, I must not be ridiculous. (*Going to the door, sees Peggy coming.*) Hold! hold! if the Champagne does not hurt my eye-sight, while it sharpens my wit, the enemy is marching up this way. Come on, madam Alithea; now for a smart fire; and then let's see who will be ridiculous.

Enter PEGGY.

Peg. Dear me, I begin to tremble; there is Mr. Sparkish, and I can't get to Mr. Belville's house without passing by him. He sees me, and will discover me; he seems in liquor too. Bless me!

Spark. O ho! she stands at bay a little; she don't much relish the engagement. The first blow is half the battle. I'll be a little figurative with her. (*Aside, approaches her.*) I find, madam, you like a solo better than a duett. You need not have been walking alone this evening, if you had been wiser yesterday. What, nothing to say for yourself? Repentance, I suppose, makes you as awkward and as foolish as the poor country girl your brother has lock'd up in Pall-mall.

Peg. I'm frighten'd out of my wits. (*Tries to pass him.*)

Spark. Not a step further shall you go till you give me an account of your behaviour, and make me reparation for being ridiculous. What, dumb still! Then if you won't by fair means, I must squeeze you to a confession. (*As he goes to seize her, she slips by him; but he catches hold of her before she reaches Belville's door.*) Not quite so fast, if you please. Come, come, let me see your modest face, and hear your soft tongue, or I shall be tempted to use you ill.

Enter MOODY.

Moo. Hands off, you ruffian! How dare you use a lady, and my sister, in this manner? (*Takes Sparkish from her.*)

Spark. She's my property, sir; transferred to me by you; and though I would give her up to anybody for a dirty sword-knot, yet I won't be bullied out of my right, though it is not worth that.—(*Snaps his fingers.*)

Moo. There's a fellow to be a husband! You are justified in despising him and flying from him. I'll defend you with my purse and my sword. Knock at that door, and let me speak to Belville. (*Peggy knocks; when the footman opens it she runs in.*) Is your master at home, friend?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Moo. Tell him, then, that I have rescued that lady from this gentleman; and, by her desire, and my consent, she flies to him for protection. If he can get a parson, let him marry her this minute; tell him so, and shut the door. [*Exit Footman.*] And now, sir, if your wine has given you courage, you had better shew it upon this occasion; for you are still d—d ridiculous.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like? Lookye, Mr. Moody, we are in the Park, and to draw a sword is an offence to the court; so you may vapour as long as you please. A woman of so little taste is not worth fighting for; she's not worth my sword: but if you'll fight me to-morrow morning for diversion, I am your man.

Moo. Relinquish your title in the lady to Belville peaceably, and you may sleep in a whole skin.

Spark. Belville! he would not have your sister with the fortune of a nabob; no, no, his mouth waters at your country tit-bit at home: much good may it do him.

Moo. And you think so, puppy. Ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Yes, I do, mastiff. Ha, ha, ha!

Moo. Then thy folly is complete. Ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Thine will be so, when thou hast married thy country innocent. Ha, ha, ha! (*They laugh at each other.*) *Re-enter* Harcourt.

Spark. What, my boy, Harcourt!

Moo. What brings you here, sir?

Har. I followed you to Belville's to present a near relation of your's, and a nearer one of mine, to you. [*Exit.*

Spark. What's the matter now?

Re-enter Harcourt, *with* Alithea.

Har. Give me leave, gentlemen, without offence to either, to present Mrs. Harcourt to you.

Spark. Alithea, your wife! Mr. Moody, are you in the clouds too?

Moo. If I am not in a dream, I am the most miserable walking dog that ever run mad with his misfortunes and astonishment!

Har. Why so, Jack? Can you object to my happiness, when this gentleman was unworthy of it? (*Moody walks about in a rage.*)

Spark. This is very fine; very fine, indeed. Where's your story about Belville now, 'squire Moody? Pr'ythee, don't chafe, and stare, and stride, and beat thy head, like a mad tragedy poet; but out with thy tropes and figures.

Moo. Zounds! I can't bear it. (*Goes hastily to Belville's door, and knocks hard.*)

Ali. Dear brother, what's the matter?

Moo. The devil's the matter! the devil and women together. (*Knocks again.*) I'll break the door down, if they won't answer. (*Knocks again.*)

A Footman appears in the balcony, in flat.

Foot. What would your honour please to have?

Moo. Your master, rascal.

Foot. He is obeying your commands, sir; and the moment he has finished, he will do himself the pleasure to wait on you.

Moo. You sneering villain, you! if your master does not produce that she-devil, who is now with him, and who, with a face of innocence, has cheated and undone me, I'll set fire to his house.

[*Exit Footman from the balcony.*

Spark. 'Gad so! now I begin to smoke the business. Well said, simplicity! rural simplicity! 'Egad! if thou hast trick'd Cerberus here, I shall be so ravish'd, that I will give this couple a wedding-dinner. Pray, Mr. Moody, who's d—d ridiculous now?

Moo. (*Going to Sparkish.*) Lookye, sir; don't grin, for if you dare to shew your teeth at my misfortunes, I'll dash 'em down your impudent throat, you jackanapes!

Spark. (*Quite calm.*) Very fine, faith; but I have no weapons to butt with a mad bull, so you may toss and roar by yourself, if you please.

Enter Belville *in the balcony.*

Bel. What does my good friend want with me?

Moo. Are you a villain, or are you not?

Bel. I have obey'd your commands, sir.

Moo. What have you done with the girl, sir?

Bel. Made her my wife, as you desired.

Spark. Very true, I am your witness.

Moo. She's my wife, and I demand her.

Enter Peggy *in the balcony.*

Peg. No; but I an't though, bud. What's the matter, dear, are you angry with me?

Moo. How dare you look me in the face, cockatrice?

Peg. How dare you look me in the face, bud? Have you not given me to another, when you ought to have married me yourself? Have you not pretended to be married to me, when you knew in your conscience you was not? And have you not been shilly-shally for a long time? So that if I had not married dear Mr. Belville, I should not have married at all; so I should not. (*Belville and Peggy retire from the balcony.*)

Spark. Extremely pleasant, faith; ha, ha, ha!

Moo. I am stupified with shame, rage, and astonishment. My fate has o'ercome me; I can struggle no more with it. (*Sighs.*) What is left me? I cannot bear to look, or be looked upon. I will hurry down to my old house, take a twelvemonths provision into it, cut down my drawbridge, run wild about my garden, which shall grow as wild as myself; then will I curse the world, and every individual in it; and when my rage and spirits fail me, I will be found dead among the nettles and thistles, a woeful example of the baseness and treachery of one sex, and of the falsehood, lying, perjury, deceit, impudence, and damnation, of the other. [*Exit.*

Spark. Very droll, and extravagantly comic, I must confess; ha, ha, ha!

Enter Belville *and* Peggy.

Lookye, Belville, I wish you joy with all my heart; you have got the prize, and perhaps have caught a Tartar; that's no business of mine. If you want evidence for Mr. Moody's giving his consent to your marriage, I shall be ready. I bear no ill-will to that pair; I wish you happy; (*to Alithea and Harcourt*) though I'm sure they'll be miserable; and so, your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Peg. I hope you forgive me, Alithea, for playing your brother this trick; indeed, I should have only made him and myself miserable, had we married together.

Ali. Then 'tis much better as it is. But I am yet in the dark how this matter has been brought about; how your innocence, my dear, has outwitted his worldly wisdom.

Peg. I am sure I'll do anything to please my bud, but marry him.

But you, good gentry, what say you to this?
You are to judge me—have I done amiss?
I've reasons will convince you all, and strong ones,
Except old folks, who hanker after young ones.
Bud was so passionate, and grown so thrifty,
'Twas a sad life—and, then, he was near fifty!
I'm but nineteen—my husband too is young,
So soft, so gentle, such a winning tongue!
Have I, pray ladies, speak, done very wrong?
As for poor bud, twas honest to deceive him;
More virtuous, sure, to cheat him than to grieve him.
Great folks, I know, will call me simple slut;
"Marry for love," they cry, "the country put!"
Marriage with them's a fashion—soon grows cool;
But I'm for always loving like a fool.
With half my fortune I would rather part,
Than be all finery with an aching heart.
For these strange awkward notions don't abuse me;
And, as I know no better, pray excuse me.

[*Exeunt.*

THE DESERTED DAUGHTER;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



Act III.—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

MR. MORDENT	DONALD	CLEMENT	MRS. SARSNET
CHEVERIL	ITEM	LADY ANNE	MRS. ENFIELD
LENNOX	GRIME	JOANNA	SERVANTS

ACT I.—SCENE I.—*The House of Mr. Mordent.* *Enter* MORDENT *and* DONALD.

Don. Gin the black de'il glowr at me, I'ze tell ye my mind! Dischairge me, an ye wull; I ha' been nae mair but therty years i' the faimily. I care nae for yeer cankered girns! An ye wad nae hear fashus tales, ye munna be guilty o' fou' deeds!

Mor. Will you speak in a lower key? Earth is wholly inhabited by harpies, and I am eternally haunted by the most malignant of them!

Don. An I get nae tidings of her to-day, I'ze advertize for her i' the public papers: ay, and I'ze gar yeer name be imprented at full langth.

Mor. (*Terrified.*) Print my name?

Don. The de'il hike me on his horns, gin I dunna!

Mor. Demon! I'll blow your brains out!

Don. Fiz, wi' your flash i' the pan! I dunna fear ye! Yeer rash and mad enoch! Sham betide ye! a father abandon his child!

Mor. Leprosy seize your licentious tongue! will you speak lower? Did I abandon her?

Don. Ye wad nae acknowledge her; wad nae see her; never frae the time that she war a wee tot at the knee. Gin ye had a hairt ye wad nae aixpose

Mor. What? [her tul—

Don. Tramp the streets! Aixpald the warld of onesty by her ain father! And why, trow? she is a naitural child! To beget children, and then turn them adrift to bag, steal, or stairve, is a d—d unnaitural deed!

Mor. Prophet of evil! would you tell all the family? Expose me to my wife?

Don. I'ze aixpose ye tul the whole warld, gin I dunna find her. And what the muckle better shall I be gin I do? A thrawart poverty maun be her lot! Ye ha' diced, and drabbed, and squandered, and mortgaged, till ye wull nae ha' a bawbee tul yeersal. [vern this house, or I?

Mor. Cease your croaking, raven! Do you go-

Don. Govern, trow! Balzebub himsal is the governor! There is yeer pet steward—an auld whilly wha! Tak warning! I ha' tould ye aforetime, and I tell ye again, he's a rascal!

Mor. Viper, 'tis false! If the earth holds an honest man, Mr. Item is he.

Don. Onest? A juggling loon o' hell! He feigns to borrow the siller for ye, wetch he lends himsal; aud the walthy possassions ye lang syne held, wull, eftsoon, be aw his ain. [zeal are unexampled.

Mor. I say 'tis false! His truth, integrity, and

Don. Marcy o' God! ye're bewetched!

Mor. What a den of misery is this world! Swarming with one set of fiends that raise the whirlwind of the passions, and with another that beset and tantalize the bewildered wretch for having been overtaken by the storm! [ward!

Don. Poor Joanna! winsom lassy! I'ze keep my

Mor. Can nothing stop your pestiferous tongue? Have I not fifty times descended to explanation, and shewn you that I must not, cannot own her?

Don. Dare not! Ye hanna the hairt to be onest! Ye bogle at shadows!

Mor. Pertinacious devil! The public clamour and disgrace, the affected sufferings and insulting forbearance of Lady Anne, the resentment of her imperious family, are these shadows? [*Enter* MRS. SARSNET.]

Mrs. S. What is it you are pleased to be talking, pray, about my lady, Mr. Scotch Donald? [ill.

Don. Troth, Mrs. English Sarsnet, nae ward o'

Mrs. S. Ill, truly! No, sir; my lady may defy her worst enemies; though there are folks, who ought to adore the very ground she treads upon,

Mor. How now? [that use her like a Turk,

Mrs. S. I name no names.

Mor. Who sent for you here, mistress?

Mrs. S. My lady sent me here, sir. [tinence?

Mor. And did she bid you behave with imper-

Mrs. S. She, indeed! A dear, suffering saint! She bid me always behave with affability and decorum; and so I would, if I could. But it would provoke an angel! [voking?

Mor. And what is it your wisdom thinks so pro-

Mrs. S. To see a sweet lady sit for hours, and pine and grieve; and, then, when some folks are in sight, pretend to smile, and be all contentment, when all the while her poor heart is ready to break.

Mor. Then she complains to you?

Mrs. S. I said no such thing, sir! No; she complains to no christian soul! I wish some folks had a little of my spirit; other folks, mayhap, mut find the difference. [Mrs. Sarsnet.

Don. Troth, an yee wad nae be speaking o' that,

Mrs. S. A poor, weak woman, who can only take her own part by crying and fainting.

Don. Yee forget, Mrs. Sarsnet, there are some poor, weak women that ha' tongues and nails.

Mrs. S. Have they, Mr. Snapshort? Why, then, if I had you for a husband, mayhap, I would let you see that I could use them.

Don. The muckle de'il may doubt yee!

Mrs. S. It's a shame, Mr. Donald, for you to be getting into corners, and whispering, and peering, and plotting to my lady's dishonour!

Don. I plotting? How dare yee, Mrs. Sarsnet—

Mrs. S. You ought to be ashamed of making yourself a spy, and a skip-jack go-between!

Don. I a skip-jack? Varra weel! Yee hear, sir, what are my thanks. 'Tis unco weel! I ha' but my desairts! True enoch, I am a go-between.

Mrs. S. Yes; we know that well, Mr. Donald.

Don. But nae sic go-between as yee, Mrs. Malapert, may thenk me. I ha' been a trust-worthy caterer tul the family; (*to Mordent*) a slave tul yeer revels, and yeer roots, and yeer banquetings. 'Tis lang syne ye made me yeer purveyor; but nae man ever yet made me his pander.

Mor. Begone! See if Mr. Item is returned.

Don. Skip-jack! Go-between! Mag's malison o' yeer spitefu' tongue-gab! [*Exit.*

Mor. Did your lady, I say, instruct you to behave with this insolence?

Mrs. S. You know very well, sir, my lady is the best of wives! she sent me on a civil message, and bid me speak with properiety; and so, if speaking one's mind and telling the truth be a fault, it's [all my own.

Mor. I'll put an end to this.

Mrs. S. Oh! to be sure; you may tell my lady and get me turned away, if you please. Because, I know very well, if you bid her, she will do it.

Mor. Prometheus and his vulture is no fable!

Mrs. S. But, as it is all for love of my lady, I am sure the Earl of Oldcrest, her father, will give me a sitiation. He knows, mayhap, more than you may think; so does the viscount, her brother, too; her aunt, Lady Mary, and her uncle, the bishop: and everybody is not obliged to be so blind, and so tame [as my lady.

Mor. What is it they know?

Mrs. S. That's more than I can say; but they have all been here, and my lady desires to speak with you.

Mor. (*Aside.*) Indeed!—I have no leisure.

Mrs. S. Ah! I told my lady so.

Mor. Begone! inform your lady I have tormentors enough, and have no inclination to increase the number. [*Exit.*

Mrs. S. I prognostified the answer! A good-for-nothing chap! I know very well what is becoming of a husband. He should love his wife dearly, by day and by night: he should wait upon her; and give her her own way; and keep her from the cold and the wet; and provide her with everything comfortable; and if she happen to be in an ill-humour, should coax her, and bear a little snubbing patiently. The fellows! what are they good for? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Steward's Room.*

Enter ITEM *and* GRIME, *meeting.*

Item. (*Eagerly.*) My dear Grime, I am glad you are come. Well, is the deed prepared?

Grime. Ready for sealing. Mr. Mordent never examines what he signs; he trusts all to you.

Item. We cannot be too safe. But this other affair, this Joanna; what have you done? Have you decoyed her to Mrs. Enfield's?

Grime. Really, Mr. Item, she is so fine a creature that, when I consigned her over, I am not a true Christian, if I did not feel such a twinge here— [suspect nothing?

Item. Curse your twinges! Is she safe? Did she

Grime. No, no! The poor innocent blessed herself to think what a kind protectress Providence had sent [her.

Item. That is well! that is well!

Grime. But I do not yet understand why you should seek the ruin of this lovely creature?

Item. I? You mistake; 'tis Mr. Mordent.

Grime. What! wish destruction to his child?

Item. No, no: we neither of us seek her harm, but [our own safety.

Grime. Which way?

Item. He has various tormentors: his wife, or rather, her proud relations, are among the chief; and he dreads they should come to the knowledge of this secret. But his strongest terror is of being detected, in having for years disowned a child, who, if now produced, would be his everlasting disgrace.

Grime. Then he does not know that his daughter is now in the house of Mrs. Enfield?

Item. Not a word. His plan, for the present, is to settle her in some profession; for this he will bestow a thousand pounds, which—ha, ha, ha!—I [am to expend.

Grime. Or keep?

Item. (*Aside.*) Plague! I have said too much.

Grime. (*Aside.*) Oh, oh! A thousand pounds?

Item. That, my dear Grime, would be a paltry mo- [tive.

Grime. (*Aside.*) I'll have my share.

Item. Mr. Mordent has been all his life squandering, like a blockhead, what I have been prudently picking up. [Item.

Grime. And pretty pickings you have had, Mr.

Item. (*Exulting.*) I have him in the toils! Interest accumulating upon interest, and all in arrear. I can foreclose upon him, when I please, for all except the Berkshire estate; and by this second mortgage, agreeably to the deed you have brought, equity of redemption will be forfeited, and that as well as the rest will then be mine!

Grime. If he had but signed and sealed—

Item. Which he shall do this very day.

Grime. Still, why are you the enemy of Joanna? What have you to fear from her?

Item. Much! An action of recovery. [mate.

Grime. How so? She has no title: she is illegiti-

Item. Would she were! No, no; a lawful daughter, born in wedlock: her mother, poor but virtuous, and died in childbed. Fearful it should injure his second marriage with Lady Anne, he never produced the infant; but told his man, Donald, it was a natural daughter, and by his intermission, secretly maintained and had her educated.

Grime. Why not employ the same agent still?

Item. Because this Donald has got the fool's disease—pity; and threatens to make Mordent own his daughter, or impeach. [nald's knowledge?

Grime. And was it prudent to place her beyond Do-

Item. It was.

Grime. Ah! 'tis a strange world! Well, now, Mr. Item, give me leave to say a word or two on my own affairs. [spare not.

Item. To be sure, my dear friend. Speak, and

Grime. There is the thousand pounds you men- [tioned.

Item. (*Aside.*) Hem!

Grime. Then the premium on this mortgage.—In short, Mr. Item, I do all your business, stand in your shoes— [eyes!

Item. You are my right hand, the apple of my

Grime. Ay, but—

Item. The dearest friend I have on earth!

Grime. The division of profits—

Item. Don't mention it. Am not I your friend? I shall not live for ever.

Grime. No, nor I neither. Friendship—

Item. Don't think of it. You can't distrust me! the first and best friend you ever had!

Grime. Fine words—

Item. (*Evading.*) Yonder is my nephew. (*Calls.*) Clement! *Enter* CLEMENT.

Clem. Sir?

Item. Fetch the title-deeds of the Berkshire estate from my good friend, Mr. Grime's.

Grime. Well, but—

Item. Any time to-day.

Clem. Very well, sir. [*Exit.*

Grime. Once again, Mr. Item—

Item. And, Clement—

Grime. I say, the division—

Item. (*Listens.*) Hark! I hear Mr. Mordent!

Grime. (*Aside.*) It shall not pass off thus. I begin to know you.

Item. I would not have you seen just now. My dear Grime! my kind friend! Through this door! —Some other opportunity—Pray oblige me.

Grime. Well, well! (*Aside.*) The next time we meet, you shall know more of my mind. [*Exit.*

Item. The rascal begins to grow troublesome. Take care of the steps, good Mr. Grime! [*Exit.*

Enter MORDENT.

Mor. What is life? a continual cloud, pregnant with mischief, malignity, disease, and death. Happiness? an ignis-fatuus. Pleasure? a non-entity. Existence? a misfortune, a burthen. None but fools condescend to live. Men exert their whole faculties to torture one another: animals are the prey of animals: flowers bloom to be plucked and perish: the very grass grows to be torn and eaten; trees to be mangled, sawed, rooted up, and burned. The whole is a system of exquisite misery, and I have my full proportion. Oh! this girl! Why am I thus perturbed concerning her? She can but be wretched; and wretchedness is the certain fate of all! [*Re-enter* ITEM.]—Well, my good Mr. Item, this poor Joanna! What have you done? Can you secure her happiness? Psha! fool! Can you lighten her misery? I can think of nothing but her; though distraction is in every thought. [thing lightly.

Item. 'Tis a serious affair: you ought to do no-

Mor. Turned adrift! rejected of all! no relation, no friend! never acknowledged, never!

Item. My advice, you know, sir, was, at once boldly to produce her as your daughter. No matter for the impertinent clamours and questions of who her mother was, and what became of her? why the child was never owned? where she had been concealed, and for what purposes?

Mor. Ay, ay, ay! The malignant sneers of friends, the cutting calumny of enemies, the reproaches of Lady Anne, the insults of her pompous family!

Item. For my part, I obey your commands, but I cannot approve them.

Mor. My late ward, Mr. Cheveril, should he hear of it, what would he think? Then this Berkshire mortgage! [advice.

Item. Ay, there again! Totally opposite to my

Mor. Can you shew me any other possible way of paying my debts?

Item. The danger of signing it is extreme.

Mor. 'Tis ruin! But what matter? Is not the whole one mass of wretchedness?

Item. Young Cheveril, I own, has demands.

Mor. Which must be paid. [very insolent.

Item. Then the out-standing bills—tradesmen are

Mor. Ay, ay! They, like the rest, have their appointed office of torture. [warning.

Item. Well, remember I have given you fair

Mor. Certainly: you do your part, and with the best intentions; goad and sting, and add your quantum to the sum of suffering. The consistency of evil is amazing: good and bad all concur. Is the deed

Item. I must first read it through. [ready?

Mor. Do so: I leave it all to you.

Item. But that will not take ten minutes.

Mor. I will be back presently. The gulph is before me; plunge I must, and to plunge blindfold will be to cheat the devil of some part of the pain.

Item. Nay, if you will not be warned, it is not my fault. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Dressing-room of Lady Anne.*

LADY ANNE *and* MRS. SARSNET *discovered.*

Mrs. S. I told your ladyship he would refuse.

Lady A. What reason did he give?

Mrs. S. Reason, forsooth! Husbands never have any reason. [wish to avoid me?

Lady A. (*Aside.*) Unkind man! Why does he thus

Mrs. S. He keeps his distance both day and night: but I would teach him to sleep in two beds! A pretty fashion, truly! I would tell him I was afraid of ghosts; and so I married because I could not, nor I would not, lie alone. So let him remember that. [message back?

Lady A. Why were you so long in bringing the

Mrs. S. Why, that is what I have to tell your ladyship. If there is not bad doings, say I am no

Lady A. What do you mean? [witch.

Mrs. S. Your ladyship must not be angry; but you know I can't help having a sharp eye and a quick ear of my own.

Lady A. What have you been doing now?

Mrs. S. So, I saw my master go into the steward's

Lady A. Psha! folly! What of that? [room—

Mrs. S. So I had all my seven senses and my eye-

Lady A. Pray, have done! [teeth about me—

Mrs. S. So, I clapped my ear to the key-hole; and, then, I heard a—whuz, buz—

Lady A. This was very improper.

Mrs. S. So, I could only catch up a word here and there; and the first was summut about—of a

Lady A. A child? [child—

Mrs. S. And a mother, my lady! Though for the matter of that, where there is a child, one's own natural penetrality will tell one there must be a mother.

Lady A. Of what weakness am I guilty?

Mrs. S. And I thought I catched the sound of Mr. Item of a fathering the child; and I'm posituve he said it wuz against his conscience.

Lady A. Who said so?

Mrs. S. Mr. Item, my lady. And so, a little bit after, my master called somebody a poor injurious girl, and a prodigality of wit and beauty. So, then, I heard somebody's foot on the stairs, and I wuz fain to scamper.

Lady A. I know not why I listen to this indecent prattle. My over-anxious curiosity betrays me, and you are much too forward to profit by my weakness.

Mrs. S. Because you know, my lady, I love you in my heart; and it is all for your own good.

Lady A. A child! an injured girl! Yet why do I feel agitation? His infidelities have been too open for me to be ignorant of them. And who has been to blame; he or I? Oh! doubtful and difficult question! [me, in all its purticlers.

Mrs. S. But I'll come at the truth, I warrant

Lady A. Suffering, perhaps, under the consciousness of error, which the sight of me might increase, he flies from additional anguish. Oh! that I had the power to sooth and reconcile him to himself! Why will he not receive consolation from me?

Mrs. S. I'll rummage about!

Lady A. If I am unhappy, how must I be certain that it is not my own fault? Where there is unhappiness, neither party can be wholly blameless.

Mrs. S. He ought to love and adore such a lady; and clothe her in satin and gold.

Lady A. Shall I tyrannize over the affections that I cannot win? If I want the power to please, let me correct my own defects, and not accuse my husband of insensibility. Oh! nothing is so killing to a husband's love, as a discontented, irksome, wailing wife! let me be anything but that.

Mrs. S. He is a barbarian Turk; and so I as good as told him. If any fellow was to use me so, I know what I would do.

Lady A. Yet have I not lost his love? Dreadful doubt! My family advise a separation; and, if this fatal loss be real, how is it to be avoided? Yet I will not lightly yield: let me hope my efforts will not all be ineffectual. Would this agonizing contest were ended. [*Exit.*

Mrs. S. She may say what she will, but I know very well she is the most miserablest lady alive, and I could tear his eyes out. Husband, indeed! And so, because I listened to the fellow's love, and nonsense-stuff, and took pity on him when he was

going to hang or drown himself, he must think, as soon as he has got me safe, to be my lord and master: I'd tell him another story. My lord and master, truly! [*Exit.*

ACT II.—SCENE I.—*The House of Mrs. Enfield.*

MRS. ENFIELD *and* BETTY *discovered.*

Mrs. E. And, mind me, treat her with great kind-

Betty. I'll be careful. [ness and deference.

Mrs. E. Keep her in continual good-humour: don't let her ask for anything twice; and, above all things, listen to her complaints, and pity them.

Betty. My white handkerchief shall be at her ser-

Mrs. E. Is the messenger returned? [vice.

Betty. Yes, madam; and there is no answer from Mr. Mordent; but Mr. Lennox sent word he will

Mrs. E. Send her to me. [soon be here.

Betty. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Mrs. E. She is young, and ignorant of the town; but I can see she has a quick and courageous spirit. [*Enter* JOANNA.]—Well, my sweet Joanna, do you think you can love me, and follow my advice?

Joanna. Are you not my benevolent protectress? and will it not be my duty?

Mrs. E. Why, that's a precious! Ay, ay; do but as I desire you, darling, and then—

Joanna. Oh! that I will. Come, set me to work.

Mrs. E. Ah! I won't kill you with work. Pretty dear! those delicate arms were not made for work!

Joanna. Fie! You must not tell me that. My mother is dead, and my father—But I must bear my fate with fortitude. Labour is no punishment.

Mrs. E. Labour! Oh! the beauty! Chicken gloves, my lamb, for those white hands! A noble looking-glass, to see that sweet form! a fine chariot, to shew off your charms! These you ought to have, and a thousand other fine things; ay, and if you will take my advice, have them you shall.

Joanna. Fine things! chariots! No, no; not for me. To work, to work! But I'll willingly take your advice; for you are so kind, it cannot be ill.

Mrs. E. Ill! Heaven protect me! I advise a dear, sweet, handsome creature to ill!

Joanna. Handsome! Fie! an orphan! fatherless!

Mrs. E. Ay, very true. Ill! No, no; think me

Joanna. Dear lady! [your parent.

Mrs. E. Ah! my tender lamb! Think of joy; think of pleasure.

Joanna. Be not so kind. You should not soften, but steel my heart: teach it to have neither fear nor feeling of wrong; to laugh when others weep.

Mrs. E. Do not think of it.

Joanna. Did you never see your father?

Mrs. E. Anan, dear!

Joanna. I never saw mine; do not even know his name. I had a strange desire to see him once, but once, and I was denied. I am a high-spirited girl, but I would have kneeled to him; would have kissed his feet; and was refused. No matter.

Mrs. E. Forget it.

Joanna. Well, well! Courage! You must let me work: I'll earn what I eat. I love you for your kindness, but I will not be dependant.

Mrs. E. Since you will—You say you can draw?

Joanna. It has been my delight. I have studied the human countenance; have read Lavater. [you?

Mrs. E. Will you copy the engraving I shewed

Joanna. What, the portrait of that strange—

Mrs. E. Mr. Mordent. (*Handing down a frame.*)

Joanna. Mordent?

Mrs. E. Of Portland-place.

Joanna. He's a wicked man.

Mrs. E. Nay— [tion?

Joanna. A wild eye. I hope he is not your rela-

Mrs. E. No; but has been a very good friend.

Joanna. Take care of him.

Mrs. E. Can you judge so certainly?

Joanna. Looking at such a face, who can fail? (*Examining Mrs. E.*) You are a worthy lady; a kind lady; your actions bespeak it: and yet—don't be angry, there is something about your features that

Mrs. E. Bless me, dear! [I don't like.

Joanna. I must be wrong, because you are good: but you have not a good countenance. That's strange; I never saw such a thing before. And the more I look, the less I like.

Mrs. E. (*Aside.*) Does she suspect me?

Joanna. If ever I draw your face, I'll alter some of the lines. I'll make them such as I think virtue ought to have made them; open, honest, undaunted. You have such a number of little artful wrinkles at the corners of your eyes—You are very cunning.

Mrs. E. (*Aside.*) What does she mean?

Joanna. But what of that? You are kind to me; and I fear no cunning, not I. You found me friendless, have given me work, and I would die to serve you; so I'll copy that wild man's portrait.

Mrs. E. Wild!

Joanna. Nay, for that matter, you need not fear him: but if you know any vain, foolish, young girls, that love flaunting, and will listen to fine promises, bid them beware of him.

Mrs. E. (*Aside.*) A little witch.—[*Enter* BETTY.]

Betty. Mr. Lennox is below, madam. [*Exit.*

Mrs. E. I am glad of that. My sweet Joanna, I'll

Joanna. Me, madam? [introduce you to him.

Mrs. E. Ay, child, that I will. Everybody shall know what an angel my dear young friend is.

Joanna. Consider, madam— [pleasure.

Mrs. E. Nay, I am sure you will not refuse me this

Joanna. You are too kind.

Mrs. E. Come, my precious!

Joanna. Well, I commit myself to your trust. Friendless and fatherless, you will be my guardian. You are too generous to injure the helpless and the forlorn; and the lines in your face are false. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Ante-chamber in Mordent's house.*

MORDENT *and* CHEVERIL *discovered.*

Chev. Grumble no more, guardy! Have done with prognosticating evil. 'Tis all in vain: your gloomy reign is ended: I am of age!—

Mor. To play the fool. [exist!—

Chev. I'm free! I'm alive! I'm beginning to

Mor. Like a wretch at the stake, when the flames first reach him!

Chev. The whole world is before me; its pleasures are spread out, and I long to fall on. The golden apples of delight hang inviting me to pluck,

Mor. Be poisoned. [eat, and—

Chev. Ha, ha, ha!

Mor. As your guardian, I—

Chev. D—n guardianship! I have been guarded too long. Years out of number have I been fed with lean Latin, crabbed Greek, and an abominable olio of the four faculties: served up with the jargon of Aristotle, the quirks of Thomas Aquinas, and the quibbles and quodlibets of Doctor Duns Scotus—

Mor. Take warning—

Chev. Fined for Horace; horsed for Homer; and plucked because I could not parrot over their premises and predicates, majors and minors, antecedents and consequents. My brain was a broker's-shop; the little good furniture it contained all hid by lum-

Mor. Let me tell you, young sir— [ber.

Chev. Not now: your day is done. I am my own man! I breathe! I am abroad! I am on the wing to visit the regions of fruition and Paradise; to banquet with the gods, and sip ambrosia from the lips of Venus and Hebe, the loves, and the graces!

Mor. You are a lunatic!

Chev. No; I am just come to my senses—for I am just come to my estate. High health, high spirits, eight thousand a-year, and one-and-twenty.

Mor. Youth! riches! Poor idiot! Health, too! What is man but a walking hospital? You, boy! you, little as you suspect it, include within yourself a whole pharmacopœia of malady and mischief!

Chev. Zounds! he'll persuade me presently I am

Mor. So you are. [Pandora's box!

Chev. Why, guardy, you are mad!

Mor. True, or I should take the shortest way to get rid of misery, and instantly go hang myself.

Chev. What a picture!

Mor. Equal it in accuracy, if you can.

Chev. Why, I am but a young artist; however, I can dash my brush at the canvas as daringly as you have done. So, what think you of mirth, songs, and smiles; youth, beauty, and kisses; friendship, liberty, and love; with a large, capacious soul of benevolence, that can sooth the afflicted, succour the poor, heal the sick, instruct the ignorant, honour the wise, reform the bad, adore the good, and hug genius and virtue to the heart?

Mor. Every feature a lie!

Chev. Curse me! but I say the likeness is, at least, as good as your's: and I am sure the colouring is infinitely more delightful.—[*Enter* DONALD.]

Don. I'ze ganging aboot the business of the poor lassy, ken ye me? Gin ye want me, I'ze be back in a blink. [not torment me.

Mor. Go to the devil, if you will; so that you do

Chev. Ah! friend Donald, don't you know that I'm of age? Won't you revel and roar, my boy? Why do you look so glum, old honesty?

Don. Troth, ye mistake the maitter, young gentleman; I am an auld go-between.

Chev. Ha, ha, ha!

Don. It's varra true; wetch makes me unco blate. A helpless bairn has been cast upo' the wide warld by a hairtless father, and I am a pairt o' the cause.

Mor. Again, imp?

Chev. A child deserted by the father!

Don. Ye well may shew the gogle o' yeer eyn.

Chev. Is he poor? is he pennyless?

Don. Much thereaboot, an I dunna miss my ken.

Chev. Bring the child to me; bring it to me, old rueful! I'll be its father. I never fathered a child in my life, and I long to begin.

Don. Ye seem, truly, to ha' mair human affaction than some fathers. [vampire!

Mor. Begone! Leave us, blood-sucker! goblin!

Don. Yas; I'ze gang where I tow'd ye; and, gin I dunna hear o' her, ye'ze hear o' me. [*Exit.*

Chev. Bring me the baby, Donald. Zounds! how it would delight me to father all the fatherless children in the world. Poor little dears! I should have a plentiful brood. And so, guardian, I want money.

Mor. What, to purchase destruction wholesale?

Chev. I have five hundred good, wicked, spirited, famous projects on hand. You have seventeen thousand pounds of mine, hard cash: I want it—

Mor. Seventeen thousand plagues!

Chev. Every farthing.

Mor. Your money, sir, is locked up in mortgages.

Chev. Locked up? Oh, d—e! I'll unlock it. I'll send honest Grime to ye; he carries a master-key.

Mor. Have you no regard to my convenience?

Chev. I'll pay the premium; and, if you want security, you may have mine. I must have money! The world must hear of me; I'll be a patron, and a subscriber, and a collector, and an amateur, and a connoisseur, and a dilletanti! I'll hunt, I'll race, I'll dice! I'll grub, plant, plan, and improve! I'll buy a stud, fell a forest, build a palace, and pull down a church! [*Exit.*

Mor. Mr. Cheveril! He is flown! Why, ay, with spirits equally wild, wanton, and ignorant of evil, I began my career. I have now lived long enough to discover that universal nature is universal agony. Oh! this rejected Joanna! Miserable girl! Well, am not I miserable, too? Who is not? The dangers to which she may be exposed! the cruelty of utterly abandoning her! Never shall I again be at peace with myself!

Lady A. (*Without.*) Where is your master?

Mor. Hark! my wife! She tortures me with her silent sufferings and her stifled sighs. Passion, bitter reproach, and violent menace, would be infinitely more supportable. In short, I have not deserved her kindness, and cannot endure it. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY ANNE.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent! Thus does he continually shun me. Why, then, do I haunt him? why intrude myself upon him? Must this have no end? Fond, foolish heart, these aches and pains are fruitless: sleep in forgetfulness, cease to feel, and be at peace!

Mrs. S. (*Without.*) I tell you, I can't stay.

Lady A. The stories, too, with which this kind but officious creature torments me—

Enter MRS. SARSNET, *hastily.*

Mrs. S. I've got it, my lady! I've got it!

Lady A. What is the matter now?

Mrs. S. Why, I'll tell your ladyship. A queer, quandary kind of person brought my master a letter, which I knew was suspicious. So, my master's coat was all powder, over here: how he came by it, I don't know.

Lady A. Psha! Pray don't tease me.

Mrs. S. So, my lady, he took it off, and ordered one of the fellows to give it a brush. So, making a pretence I was close at his heels—

Lady A. At whose heels?

Mrs. S. The footman's, my lady. So, while he was brushing, he had a wranglation with the cook; and turned about to gabble footman's gibberish with she; so I, having a hawk's-eye, twirled my hand behind me, so; and felt in the pocket, and there I found this written letter, which I slyly slipped under my apron, so.

Lady A. Take a letter out of your master's pocket?

Mrs. S. Yes, my lady; because, being broke open, I read the contents, and found that it was from one Mrs. Enfield, to appoint an assassination between my master and a young girl.

Lady A. Give it me. [but wish to see it.

Mrs. S. Yes, my lady; I was sure you could not

Lady A. Mistress Sarsnet, I have frequently cautioned you against practices like these; which are

Mrs. S. My lady! [mean and dishonest.

Lady A. To have robbed your master of his money would have been less culpable than to steal from him the knowledge of transactions which, because of their impropriety, he has not the courage to avow.

Mrs. S. It's very hard, because I can't bear your lady—ladyship's ill-usage; and—and—and always feel as if my very stays were a-bursting, to see your—your treatment, time after time, that I should get myself ill—ill—ill-will, because I love you from the very bottom of my heart.

Lady A. I have winked at these liberties too often; I'll suffer them no longer.

Mrs. S. Very—very well. Since your ladyship is so angry, you may turn—turn me away, if you please, and quite break—break—break my heart.

Lady A. No; the fault is more than half my own: but, from this time, I seriously warn you against such improper, such base actions.

Mrs. S. Very—very well, my lady. I'll be deaf, and dumb, and blind; and when I see you treated worser than a savage, I'll burst twenty laces a-day before I'll speak a word.

Lady A. (*With great kindness.*) What you have done has been affectionately meant. I am sorry to have given you pain, and to have excited your tears; but I must earnestly desire you will commit no more such mistakes. They are wrong in themselves, and every way fatal to my peace.

Mrs. S. (*Kisses her hand.*) You are the tenderest and best of ladies! and I know who is an unfeeling brute! [*Exit Lady A.*

Enter LENNOX *and* CHEVERIL.

Len. Pray, Mrs. Sarsnet, is Mr. Mordent within?

Mrs. S. Indeed, sir, I don't know. (*Muttering.*) Mr. Mordent is a good-for-nothing chap! [*Exit.*

Len. I'll bet you a thousand, Cheveril, your charmer does not equal the girl I have this moment

Chev. Done, for ten thousand. [left.

Len. You would lose.

Chev. You never beheld so peerless a beauty!

Len. How did you become acquainted with her?

Chev. We are not yet acquainted; and I fear we

Len. Oh, oh! [never shall be.

Chev. I met her three times in the Green Park. The first moment I gazed at her with admiration—as soon as she was gone by—

Len. Gone by?

Chev. Good manners, you know, would not let me stare her in the face. Such a shape! such elegance! The next time I determined to speak to her, and approached as resolutely as Hercules to [the Hydra.

Len. A good simile for a beauty.

Chev. I had studied a speech; but, somehow, there was such a sweet severity in her looks, I—I had not the power to utter a word.

Len. Courageous lover!

Chev. The third time, however, it being a little darker, (for it was always in the evening,) I was more undaunted: so, fully determined to throw myself at her feet, and declare my passion, up I marched; but, as the devil would have it, she turned and looked me full in the face; and her beauty, and—and virtue, and—and modesty, were so awful, that my heart sunk within me.

Len. Ha, ha, ha!

Chev. It is now a fortnight since; and although I have walked the Green Park, morning, noon, and night, every day, I could never once again set eyes on her. Intolerable booby that I was, to lose three such precious opportunities—

Len. Of making love to a lady's-maid.

Chev. Oh! for one momentary glance, that I might give vent to the passion that devours me!

Len. Ha, ha, ha!

Chev. What, you think I dare not?

Len. Ha, ha, ha! Look you, Cheveril; I know you: a lighted match and the mouth of a cannon could not cow you like the approach of a petticoat.

Chev. I afraid of women! D—me! I don't understand having my character attacked and traduced. Make a Master Jackey of me? I am a wicked one!

Len. Ha, ha, ha! Wicked! you are as conscientious as a drunken methodist, or a dying miser. You are not only afraid of the woman, but of the sin.

Chev. Why, if—no, d—me! 'tis not true. I have no more conscience than yourself.

Len. Me! I have a deal of conscience. Pleasure, I own, can tempt me; but I make no pretensions, like you, to the sin for the sake of reputation.

Chev. Sir, I make no such pretensions. I am, indeed, resolved to be a fellow of enterprize, pith, and soul; but not by vile, rascally methods. I'll love all the women, and, perhaps, trick some of the men; but not seduce wives, ruin daughters, and murder husbands and fathers. No; if I cannot be wicked without being criminal, d—me, if I do not live and die an honest, dull dog! [*Exit.*

Enter Mordent, *searching his pockets.*

Mor. Curse the letter! it's gone! Careless booby!

Len. What's the matter? [hands of Lady Anne.

Mor. A thousand to one but it has fallen into the

Len. What have you lost?

Mor. A d—d epistle from—

Enter Lady Anne.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent, I am glad to meet with

Mor. Glad! Is the thing so difficult? [you.

Lady A. I did not say so; I meant nothing unkind.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady A. Indeed, I did not. I wish to speak to you.

Mor. (*To Lennox, retiring.*) Stay where you are, Lennox. What, man, you are in no fear of soothing insult? You are not married.

Len. I'll return in five minutes. [*Exit.*

Lady A. Pray, Mr. Mordent—

Mor. Psha! I know I am a bear at the stake; don't shorten my tether.

Lady A. I have a paper—(*Shewing the letter.*)

Mor. Ay, ay; I knew it. Come, I am prepared.

Lady A. It fell into my hands by the reprehensible but unauthorized curiosity of my woman.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady A. Indeed, I have never opened it.

Mor. Nor she either?

Lady A. Yes; but that is not my fault.

Mor. Your's, indeed! Impossible!

Lady A. The heart, which I cannot secure by affection, I will not alienate by suspecting.

Mor. Psha! Meekness is but mockery; forbearance, insult.

Lady A. How shall I behave? Which way frame my words and looks, so as not to offend? Would I could discover!

Mor. You never complain! You have no jealousy!

Lady A. Indeed, I've been very obstinately blind.

Mor. Ay, ay! "Patience on a monument!"

Lady A. Reproach has never escaped my lips.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! As if lips were the only instruments of upbraiding! No deep fetched sighs? no pale, melancholy glances? no obvious hiding of the ever-ready tear?

Lady A. I fear I have been to blame. Indeed, I am sorry that my sensations have been so acute.

Mor. You accuse! You give a husband pain! Insolent supposition!

Lady A. I sincerely wish, my dear, you gave no more than I intend to give. [accuse!

Mor. There! Did not I say so? Ha, ha, ha! You

Lady A. I am wrong; I forgot myself. Pray, forgive me. Why am I subject to these mistakes?

Mor. You are all angel—

Lady A. Would I were!

Mor. And I all demon! [tion you once bore—

Lady A. Do not, Mr. Mordent, by the dear affec-

Mor. There, there! The affection I once bore!

Lady A. Heavens! must I ever be fated to wound, when it is most the wish of my soul to heal?

Mor. Why was the Earl of Oldcrest here this morning? Why are these family consultations held?

Lady A. They are contrary to my wish.

Mor. A separation, I hear, is the subject of them.

Lady A. But not countenanced by me.

Mor. Pretending in pity to spare me yourself, they are to be set upon me.

Lady A. Never! Heaven be my judge, never!

Mor. I am to be subjected to their imperious dictates.

Lady A. I own they have lately been very urgent with me to return to my father; but, were you only kind, their solicitations would be vain, indeed. Oh! take pity on yourself and me, and teach me to regain your lost affections! or, if that be too great a blessing to hope, there is still one evil which I would suffer any other torture to escape: think, if you can, that I no longer love; treat me with unkindness; neglect, accuse, do anything—but hate me! Let me not endure that last stage of misery! But, oh, heavens! if our former endearments must end in that, have mercy, and retard or conceal it as long as you can. [*Exit.*

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! What are barbs, and stings, and poisoned arrows? Pitiful instruments! Thou, triumphant wretchedness, usest these but on small occasions; they want pungency.—[*Enter* Lennox.]

Len. May I come in?

Mor. Ay, ay! Now am I ripe for mischief.

Len. You seem out of temper. What has happened?

Mor. Trifles, trifles! She has got the letter.

Len. From whom?

Mor. Mrs. Enfield.

Len. Zounds!

Mor. An invitation to a new sample of beauty. She has seen it; returned it; has graciously forgiven; has racked, has driven me mad!

Len. And do you mean to go?

Mor. Ay, will I! Since devil I am, devil let me be! It will be some, though but a petty vengeance [for prying.

Len. You must not.

Mor. Indeed but I will.

Len. We have long been friends, and fellow-sinners; but, in these affairs, we have always be- [haved honourably.

Mor. What then?

Len. I have seen the girl.

Mor. Where?

Len. At Enfield's.

Mor. Did she write to you, too?

Len. She did. An angel, Mordent!

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Marry her, and make wretchedness secure.

Len. No; but I am fixed for life. Such animation! such soul! The finest creature my eyes ever behold!

Mor. I'll see her.

Len. No; I cannot consent.

Mor. Why so? I'll aid you to carry her off.

Len. Are you serious?

Mor. As malice can make me. The sex have been worse to me than plague, pestilence, and famine.

Len. And what have you been to them?

Mor. No matter; I'll have my revenge.

Len. And you will aid me in this business?

Mor. I will.

Len. Solemnly? on your word and honour?

Mor. I tell you I will! [pany, observe.

Len. Why, then, see her you shall; but in my com-

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Right; anticipate your torments! [assistance and advice.

Len. On this condition, I shall thank you for your

Mor. Why, ay! Advice! I, too, fool that I am, knowing the impotence of man to avert mischief, I wish for advice! I—(*Aside.*)—There may be dan-

Len. Well? [ger in telling him.

Mor. A—a friend of mine has a child; suppose it a—a natural child, that he knows not how properly to dispose of. [perly to dispose of?

Len. A natural child, that he knows not how pro-

Mor. Yes.

Len. Could not he sell it to the kidnappers?

Mor. Psha! [fifty pounds down.

Len. There are honest overseers that will take it,

Mor. Not an infant; twenty years of age.

Len. Oh! then, indeed—there are crimp sergeants.

Mor. When I put a serious question, I expect a serions answer. [his child!

Len. Serious! And ask what a man is to do with

Mor. Suppose he should have legitimate offspring?

Len. Oh, oh! Legitimate! Ah! Made of other metal! a different manufacture!

Mor. You won't hear. He provided for her—

Len. A female, too? [rejected his assistance—

Mor. Would have continued to provide, but she

Len. How so?

Mor. Unless he would see her, embrace her; that is, whine over, acknowledge her, and bestow his

Len. And he refused? [blessing.

Mor. Why not? Of what benefit are blessings? Where all is evil, why torment conscience concern-

Len. He is a monster! [ing the mode?

Mor. But, sir, appearances—

Len. D—n appearances!

Mor. Friends—

Len. D—n his friends!

Mor. A wife—

Len. D—n his wife! He has friends, appearances, and a wife; but he has no heart.

Enter DONALD, *in great agitation.*

Don. She is gone! she is lost for aye! I'ze e'en red wude! [and mischief?

Mor. (*Aside to Don.*) How now, herald of malice

Don. I canna foregether her! Fair fa' yeer hairt! I'ze ne'er set eyes o' her mair.

Mor. Peace, hound!

Don. I tell you I wunna! Misca' me an ye wull, the de'il ma' care! A father turn his back o' his bairn!

Len. Oh, oh! What it was yourself, your own daughter, you were talking of?

Don. Gin earth haud her, I'ze ha' her yet; ay, and I'ze gar ye do her recht. She laft a massige for ye.

Mor. What message?

Don. Tell him, gin he wunna gi' his child ane kess, ane scrimpet blassing, that child wull wark, stairve, and die, ore she wull leve like a parish pauper on scraps and alms. Tell him she has a pridefoo' spirit, that wunna bag, gin she canna win: and, gif he scorn his dochtor, she scorns aksapt his chairity. (*Going.*)

Len. So, you commit crime, and then invent a system for its justification? Excellent philosopher!

Don. Why dunna ye spier a'ter her yeersal? Eh, waesucks! Ye dunna ken yeer ain bairn!

Len. How?

Don. Ye never saw the face o' her, sin she hung a wee giglet at the breast. Weel, weel! Nothing comes more surely tul licht than that which is long hidden. An ill life, an ill end! [*Exit.*

Mor. Wolves, tigers, serpents, were first created, and then man.

Len. You are, truly, a high fellow, Mordent: and you spend your fortune, wrong your wife, and disown your child: that is, you inflict misery, and then tell us all are miserable.

Mor. I act and I am acted upon: the precept and the proof go together.

Len. You are incorrigible! But come; we must about this business. My heart is deeply interested.

Mor. My affairs are at a crisis; and, if I augur rightly, it will soon be all over with me. [field's.

Len. Hope better. Come, come with me to En-

Mor. I'll meet you there in half an hour.

Len. Do not fail. I am all impatience. [*Exit.*

Mor. Just so are curs fighting, and thieves in the act of plundering. Man is ever eager on mischief. With what infernal ardour do two armies prepare in the morning to exterminate each other before noon! Are they not wise? What is it but compressing the sum of evil within an hour, which trembling cowardice would protract through an age? [*Exit.*

ACT III.—SCENE I.—*The House of Mordent.*

CHEVERIL *and* GRIME *discovered.*

Chev. You must let me have the cash directly.

Grime. That is impossible.

Chev. I say, you must. When I have wants and wishes, nothing shall be impossible.

Grime. (*Aside.*) What if I were to tell him of Joanna? He would pay well.

Chev. Twelve hours have I been free, and have not had a taste of pleasure yet. If I do not make haste, I shall grow old before I begin.

Grime. (*Aside.*) I should make him my friend: 'tis a rare thought!

Chev. Why do you ruminate? Do you doubt me?

Grime. Mr. Cheveril!

Chev. Well, sir?

Grime. Do you love innocence, youth, and beauty?

Chev. Do I! 'Sdeath! I am dying for them.

Grime. I know where they are to be found.

Chev. You?

Grime. The rarest creature!

Chev. Where, where?

Grime. Such pure white and red!

Chev. Ay!

Grime. Such moist, ripe, ruddy lips! [where?

Chev. 'Sdeath! don't drive me mad. Tell me where,

Grime. At a certain convenient— [kind.

Chev. No, no; I have no taste for beauties of that

Grime. See her, and then judge.

Chev. (*Aside.*) Besides, I'll not be unfaithful to my angelic incognita of the Green Park.

Grime. She is a young, untutored thing.

Chev. Untutored?

Grime. That I can assure you.

Chev. Then depend upon it I'll not be her instructor. How came she in such a place?

Grime. She knows nothing of the place, nor in the least suspects she is in bad company.

Chev. Poor, dear soul! What rascal sent her there?

Grime. Hem! Why, that is—it—it—it was a kind of accident.

Chev. She is not for me. I want to be a famous wicked fellow, but not by ensnaring the helpless.

Grime. Nay, if you will neither ensnare nor accept the already ensnared, you must e'en marry, or starve.

Chev. That is d—d hard!

Grime. Ensnared she will be.

Chev. Curse me, but she shall not! [cherish her.

Grime. What will you do? [her from danger; provide for her,

Chev. Snatch her from danger; provide for her,

Grime. Ay, now you say something.

Chev. Zounds! Here have I been an age in the possession of eight thousand a-year, and have not done one famous, good, wicked thing yet. It's a d—d shame!

Grime. You will fall in love with her the moment you see her.

Chev. To be sure I shall. No; on recollection, I can't love two at a time. Then, if she should tempt me to be wicked—I mean vicious? I love wickedness, but I hate vice. 'Tis a dirty whirlpool, in which, if once a man set his foot, he is soon up to his chin. [with an introduction.

Grime. 'Tis in Dover-street. I'll furnish you

Chev. You are abundantly civil. An introduction from an usurer to a—Hem! I shall come to prefer-

Grime. This is the address. (*Gives a card.*) [ment.

Chev. Dover-street?

Grime. Yes; Mrs. Enfield.

Chev. (*Reads.*) "Number"—'Sblood! Why do I stand prating here? I, who have been kept fasting from happiness and pleasure so long? Another day will be over, and I shall not get a taste of pleasure. (*Going.*)

Grime. Nay, I am telling you of a banquet.

Chev. Are you? Why, then, I have a keen appetite, and a most devouring wish to fall to: so here goes! [*Exit.*] *Enter* Mordent.

Mor. So, Mr. Grime! [good leisure.

Grime. Everything is prepared, sir: we wait your

Mor. You will find Mr. Item in his own room.

Grime. I shall attend you there: we can do no business till you come. [*Exit.*

Enter Clement.

Clem. My uncle desires me to inform you, sir, that he has examined the deed, and it is ready for

Mor. I am coming. [signing.

Clem. Had I but any influence with you, sir, I would entreat, I would conjure you not to execute

Mor. Why? [it.

Clem. A sudden demand may be made by the first mortgagee; you may be unprovided for payment; equity of redemption will be forfeited; he will foreclose, and the estate will be his, at a valuation made fifty years ago, at less than half its present worth.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! 'Twill become his incumbrance, as it has been mine.

Clem. Money-lenders neglect no advantage.

Mor. And, as for conscience or honour—

Clem. Some of them, I am afraid, sir, have very little of either.

Mor. 'Tis in the order of things. Your uncle, indeed, is a man of integrity; he knows them to be rogues, and warns me of them.

Clem. Sir, he—he may be a mistaken man, like others. I once again conjure you, sir, to re-consider the consequence. It's a very serious affair.

Mor. Mr. Clement you are young: you cherish the fond hope of alleviating misery. Ah!

Clem. Sir, I—My situation is a painful one; but every feeling of honesty and duty compel me to inform you, that when once you have signed this deed, you will be wholly in the grasp of mercenary men, who will pay no respect to former profits, the benefits they have received, or the feelings and distresses of him by whom they have acquired wealth, power, and pride. [*Exit.*

Mor. The nephew and the uncle, poor fools! have the misfortune to be honest. Grime is more cunning, and will not forfeit his hope of cutting evil short at the gallows. The deed must be signed; for the money must be had. Yet these cautionings do but strengthen an aversion, which, in spite of necessity, I have always felt against this last act of despair.—[*Enter* Item.]—Mr. Item, you are right: this mortgage is a d—d affair. Delay is dangerous; thought is vain; yet I am inclined to think again before I sign.

Item. By all means, sir. I like that; I approve of that. Act with your eyes open; take no rash step. 'Tis what I always say—But mine is a thankless office. Like other officious fools, I can give counsel, but no help. I'm sorry to tell you, the upholsterer is below, who is very insolent, and declares, if he be not paid immediately, he will have an execution in the house before night.

Mor. Could not you put him off for a week?

Item. He has been put off too often.

Mor. Are there no means by which you might advance me that sum yourself?

Item. Oh! that I could; it would make me the happiest man on earth!

Mor. Affectionate soul!

Item. Riches would now, indeed, be welcome!

Mor. Mr. Item, you make me as great a fool as yourself. [not to sign it.

Item. As to the deed, again and again I warn you

Mor. Then I will not. Ruin and wretchedness are certain; but the mode of being wretched is in my own choice, and I will not.

Item. Yet, what the devil I shall say to all your other tradesmen, I don't know: they are every man of them as clamorous as the upholsterer. I don't believe one of them will wait two days.

Mor. Was ever man so pestered!

Item. Here, too, is a long account I have just received from your groom at Newmarket; who says he shall soon want even a wisp of hay. For my part, I have not a guinea in hand: I wish I had. Then the impatience of Cheveril! and what the malignant world will say of the defalcation of a guardian, there is no foreseeing! Sign you must not!

Mor. At least I will take an hour or two to think of it. Misfortune, disgrace, and approaching infamy, sit mocking at me; and I shall soon attain the *acmé* of misery. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*The Street.*—*Enter* Cheveril.

Chev. This is the street! it must be somewhere hereabout! What a fatiguing affair pleasure-hunting is! Oh! that I could once more meet my lovely angel! my Green-park deity! This is the number.

Enter Lennox *from Mrs. Enfield's house.*

Heyday! Lennox coming from—You, who preach refinement of pursuit and delicacy of enjoyment?

Len. Oh! we preach one thing, and practice another. Beside, were you but to see her—

Chev. Her! who? [ture—

Len. The girl I told you of. The divinest crea-

Chev. What, here? In this house?

Len. Yes; but she shall not remain there half-an-hour. I am going to prepare everything. I am determined to secure her. [troduction, too.

Chev. (*Aside.*) Honest Grime has given him an in-

Len. Hush! there she is! (*Pointing to a window.*)

Chev. Where? I see nobody.

Len. Ah! she is gone again.

Chev. Oh! but I'll—(*Preparing to run.*)

Len. (*Seizing him.*) Where are you going?

Chev. To leap through the window.

Len. No, Cheveril; that must not be.

Chev. Why not?

Len. She is mine!

Chev. Your's? [a hundred pounds down.

Len. I have bought an exclusive right to her; paid

Chev. Pooh!

Len. I tell you she is, and shall be mine!

Chev. Well, well; if so—(*Going.*)

Len. (*Preventing him.*) Come with me.

Chev. No; I can't.

Len. Why not?

Chev. Good b'ye! [*Exit in haste.*

Len. Zounds! my d—d blabbing tongue—(*Looking after him.*) There he flies, the whirligig! Ah! he is out of sight, and all his safe. I must have Mordent's assistance. Where the devil does he loiter? I'll soon be back, though, for fear of accidents. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*The House of Mrs. Enfield.*

Enter Mrs. Enfield.

Mrs. E. (*Calling.*) Betty!

Betty. (*Without.*) Ma'am?

Mrs. E. Who is it that bounced through the back-door in such haste? [*Enter* Betty.]

Betty. I don't know, ma'am: a young—Hem!

Enter Cheveril. [*Exit.*

Chev. I am safe here: I have tricked him! Your humble servant, madam. Your name is—

Mrs. E. Mrs. Enfield, at your service, sir.

Chev. You keep a—modish magazine, I think?

Mrs. E. Magazine!

Chev. Of ready-made beauty?

Mrs. E. Well, sir?

Chev. Your acquaintance, honest Mr. Grime, informed me you have a sample of a fine sort.

Mrs E. Ah! you are too late.

Chev. My friend, Lenhox, has paid you one hundred pounds. Don't stare! I know the whole. Bring me to the lady, and, if I like her—

Mrs. E. I am very sorry, sir, but I cannot: my honour won't let me.

Chev. Prodigious virtue! Come, come! Lennox is cunning forty; I am foolish one and twenty. He is too old to be a lavish paymaster.

Mrs. E. Ah! sir, that is your mistake! He is too young. He will pay better as he grows older.

Chev. I have eight thousand a-year, and am determined to be a—a—a wicked dog.

Mrs. E. Ah! lord love you.

Chev. So, see her I must. This is my proof. (*Shews a bank-bill.*) [you have his permission?

Mrs. E. As Mr. Lennox is your friend, perhaps

Chev. Permission! Oh! yes—No! I'll be wicked, but not unprincipled: I won't lie; that is a paltry scoundrel vice; no soul in it. Loukye! if that sum will not content you, tell me what will?

Mrs. E. Why, sir, you are such a handsome, charming, pleasant young gentleman, that—if you could spare me another such— [there.

Chev. To settle accounts with your honour. Well,

Mrs. E. Observe, sir; it is only a short conver-

Chev. Nothing more. [sation.

Mrs. E. No injury to Mr. Lennox?

Chev. Never fear. [never saw so acute a one.

Mrs. E. But you must be wary: young as she is, I

Chev. Never fear! I tell you, I understand such affairs; or soon shall do, at least. I'm a young beginner, but a devilish apt scholar. [*Exit Mrs. E.*] Now, if she be worth carrying off, and I could out-wit Lennox—I—Oh! I should establish my character for spirit, soul, and intrepidity for ever. I'll not be out of countenance. No, d—e, I am determined! I'll—I'll speak, and to the purpose, too! I'll be a d—d forward, prating, impudent, wicked dog.

Re-enter MRS. ENFIELD, *leading* JOANNA.

Mrs. E. Ah! my lamb, pray oblige me! He is

Joanna. What then? [one of my best friends.

Mrs. E. You are so sweet a cherub, I must procure my friends the pleasure of your acquaintance. Ah! there's a dove! there's a beauty! Dear! I forgot my knotting. I'll be back in a moment. [*Exit.*

Chev. (*Calls.*) Mrs. Enfield! She is gone! I should have felt bolder, had she been present.

Joanna. It is very strange. (*Aside.*)

Chev. What does she say?

Joanna. First one man and then another—

Chev. (*Listening.*) Eh! Hem!

Joanna. Her friends, too, are all men— [flown?

Chev. Where the devil, now, is all my impudence

Joanna. But she is so kind, so winning, that I have not the power to deny.

Chev. If I could but turn round—One plunge, and it would be over! (*Turns by degrees.*) Ma—Heavens! (*Stands astonished.*)

Joanna. (*Aside.*) Mercy! It is he! [Park!

Chev. (*Aside.*) The very beauty of the Green

Joanna. (*Aside, and sighs.*) I had almost hoped never to have seen him more.

Chev. (*Aside.*) This is the luckiest—Lucky!—To find her here! [too often.

Joanna. (*Aside.*) I have thought of him much

Chev. (*Aside.*) A creature so divine! Looks of such conscious modesty! And in this place!

Joanna. Sir— [touch her lips—

Chev. Madam—(*Aside.*) Oh! that I might but

Joanna. Mrs. Enfield informs me you are one of

Chev. Me, madam? [her best friends.

Joanna. Yes, sir.

Chev. Why—That is—(*Aside.*)—No; I'll not deceive her. (*Aloud.*) I—I never saw Mrs. Enfield before in my life.

Joanna. Never? [her again.

Chev. Never: and I don't care if I never see

Joanna. Bless me!

Chev. Very true, madam. And I—

Joanna. (*Calling.*) Mrs. Enfield!

Chev. Stop, madam! Pardon my presumption, but—I—you—you have so much beauty, and modesty, and merit, and I am such a faltering, bashful booby, that, if you leave me, I shall run mad!

Joanna. Mad, sir?

Chev. Upon my soul, I shall, madam! I can't help it. I never was so enchanted, enraptured, and ravished in all my life; and I am very sorry to

Joanna. Sorry to find me? [find you—

Chev. No, no, no, madam! Glad to find you; infinitely glad; but not in this house.

Joanna. And why, sir?

Chev. I was frantic to think I had lost you.

Joanna. How so, sir? We are not acquainted.

Chev. I am sorry for it, madam; b—b—but I hope we shall be. I have been a very Bedlamite! I could neither eat, drink, nor sleep! I have dreamed of you every night! You have been in my head, in my heart, in my arms—

Joanna. Your arms, sir?

Chev. Oh, lord! no, madam; no, no; I—I am talking in my sleep now. I mean—that is—I would not offend you, madam, no, not for ten thousand thrones. Though to find you here is the great-

Joanna. Torment? [est torment—

Chev. B—b—bliss! I—I—I would say bliss, madam; bliss ineffable! And if you would but leave this wicked place—

Joanna. I do not understand you, sir.

Chev. Purity of heart is the characteristic of your countenance: I am sure your are innocent; or, if not, I would give worlds that you were.

Joanna. This, sir, is the first time we have ever spoken together: what have you heard or seen of me, that should authorize you to doubt?

Chev. Nothing, madam; on my soul, nothing! Every motion, word, and look, speak virtue void of blemish. I would lay down my life to prove it, and to rescue you from this bad woman.

Joanna. From Mrs. Enfield?

Chev. An odious, vile—

Joanna. You make me half suspect you are as frantic as you describe yourself. She is the most benevolent of women.

Chev. Forgive me if I appear intruding; indeed my intention is good; but how long have you been

Joanna. Not four hours. [in this house?

Chev. And how long acquainted with this woman?

Joanna. To-day was the first time I ever saw her.

Chev. She's innocent! she's innocent!

Mor. (*Without.*) I tell you, I will see her!

Chev. (*Alarmed.*) 'Sdeath! I hear my guardian.

Mor. (*Without.*) Lennox will be here presently.

Chev. (*Looking round.*) I must not be seen; but, for heaven's sake, let me speak to you once more! (*Retires into a closet, from which he occasionally speaks.*) *Enter* MORDENT.

Mor. (*Surveying Joanna.*) Your humble servant, madam. (*Aside.*) She is, indeed, beautiful!

Joanna. (*Aside.*) This is the man of the portrait.

Mor. You are acquainted, I believe, with my friend, Mr. Lennox?

Joanna. I, sir? Not to my knowledge.

Mor. Did he not converse with you this morning?

Joanna. I have conversed with two gentlemen this morning: you are the third.

Mor. (*Aside.*) Lovely creature! Can she, too, be an instrument of malevolence? (*Aloud.*) I mean a fair gentleman, about forty.

Joanna. Well, sir, what of him?

Mor. Did he not make proposals?

Joanna. To me? [promoting of ill?

Mor. Ay, madam; on the common subject, the

Joanna. You speak riddles. He talked idly;

and, perhaps, was more unprincipled and insulting than I supposed.

Mor. (*Aside.*) By heavens, she is an innocent! Nay, her countenance would half persuade me there are beings capable of happiness.

Chev. (*From the closet.*) Zounds! He looks as if he, too, would fall in love with her.

Mor. Pardon my intrusion, madam; I am a stran-

Joanna. Not entirely. [ger to you, but—

Mor. Not? [ing

Joanna. I have been studying you all the morn-

Mor. Me? You never saw me before?

Joanna. Yes, I have.

Mor. When? where? [figy.

Joanna. (*Pointing to the picture.*) Here! in ef-

Chev. What are they about?

Mor. My portrait! (*Aside.*) How dare the old beldam hang it up in her house? [the original.

Joanna. It speaks volumes: yet not so much as

Chev. Oh! that I could hear them!

Mor. Indeed! And what does it say, madam? If it speak good, it lies.

Joanna. Either it indicates falsely, or you have flattered, promised, deceived, and betrayed—

Mor. (*Aside.*) Astonishing! Who?

Joanna. More poor girls than one.

Mor. (*Aside.*) Her eyes penetrate to the heart. (*Aloud.*) Evil is everywhere, therefore in me.

Chev. How she gazes at him! 'Sdeath!

Joanna. There is a mixture; traits that struggle to be just and good; occasional marks of virtue, but more of moody remorse.

Mor. (*Aside.*) Is this real? You judge and speak freely, madam: I applaud your sincerity.

Joanna. What should I fear? Besides, you have not the features of revenge.

Mor. (*Aside.*) Her understanding and discernment surpass her beauty.

Chev. Will they never have done?

Joanna. This eye, how often must it have assumed the same deceiving form and meaning, to have impressed these deep lines of artful seduction! How frequently must health, wealth, and principle, have been sacrificed, to gratify dishonest passions!

Mor. (*Aside.*) Amazing! So young, too!

Joanna. You are an unhappy man: for you have not the apathy of folly; you have a sense, a feeling of what you have done.

Chev. I shall go mad! [profession?

Mor. I have never had faith in sorcery: is it your

Joanna. I have no profession. I am nobody; the child of nobody; a branch lopped off and cast away, that might have grown, but that could find no root. Misfortune and an active spirit, struggling to shake off oppression, have quickened me a little. Other than this, I am but a simple girl; and my whole art is to note what I see, and to speak what I think.

Mor. Whoever you are, come but with me; and, while I have a morsel, a home, or a heart, you shall share them!

Chev. (*Runs from the closet.*) D—e if she shall!

Mor. Why, Mr. — [my heart!

Chev. She shall have my morsel, my home, and

Mor. You in this house, sir?

Chev. Nay, sir; you in this house, sir! Madam, put no faith in him. You are very right, he is a seducer. I love you, heart, body, and soul. I'll offer you no wrong. Every proof that the most ardent, purest passion can give, feel, or imagine, shall be your's.

Joanna. This house! What is it you mean, gentlemen? Is there contamination in this house?

Chev. Vile! detestable! A place of intrigue!

Joanna. Heavens! [*Exit in haste.*

Mor. How came I, sir, to find you here?

Chev. Zounds! sir, how came I to find you here?

Enter Mrs. Enfield.

Mrs. E. What have you done, gentlemen, to alarm the young creature in this manner? A little more, and she had escaped us all.

Mor. Hark you, Mrs. Enfield! at your peril, keep her safe and free from insult till my return. [*Exit.*

Chev. Insult! If you breathe impurity in her presence, I'll make a general massacre. Let any one take her away, speak to her, or even look at her, while I am gone, and I'll grind you all to powder. (*Goes, and hastily returns.*) Here, here are all the bills I have; I'll be back in five minutes; keep her safe, and I'll give you a thousand pounds. My name is Cheveril—ten thousand! (*Returns.*) Cheveril—I say, my whole estate! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.—Scene I.—*The House of Mordent.*

Item *and* Grime *discovered.*

Grime. (*Enraged.*) Once for all, Mr. Item, it will not do; so be of a sweet temper.

Item. Why, you grumbling old blockhead, what would you have? May you not thank me for every shilling you are worth in the world?

Grime. Don't tell me, Mr. Item, I am but your scavenger, and you put me to a deal of dirty work.

Item. Here's gratitude! Why, Mr. Grime—

Grime. Well, Mr. Item?

Item. Did I not first find you in a miserable garret, in Fullwood's Rents, where you was starving in

Grime. Well! [rags and wretchedness?

Item. Did I not take you to Monmouth-street; make you cast your beggar's skin; transform you into something almost human; hire you apartments in the Temple; and pass you on my master for a rich usurer—a d—d rogue?

Grime. Very true: but you would not let me act my part. You took care to be the d—d rogue yourself.

Item. Have I not trusted you, tutored you, taught you your trade, and furnished the tools?

Grime. What then? [prescribe terms to me?

Item. And do you pretend to bargain, wrangle, and

Grime. Yes; I do.

Item. You do?

Grime. I do. Help yourself how you can.

Item. Here's a villain!

Grime. You tutored me, you know; you taught me my trade, and furnished the tools. [you?

Item. You viper! Sting the bosom that fostered

Grime. I follow your own example; Mr. Mordent fostered you! There's morality in it.

Item. Oh! d—n your morality.

Grime. Be of a sweet temper! Time was I was your slave; you now are mine.

Item. Oh! the rascal!

Grime. I am too deep in your secrets for you to dare to discard me; so, I'll have my share.

Item. Your— [tempered.

Grime. Ay, my—my full share. So, be sweet

Item. And who is to find the money?

Grime. You.

Item. And who is to run the risk?

Grime. You. [and collusion—

Item. And who is to be prosecuted for usury

Grime. Cast, perhaps, for perjury, whipped, imprisoned, and put in the pillory? You.

Item. And you to run away with half the profits?

Grime. Yes. [do we live in!

Item. Here's justice! Oh! what a d—d world

Grime. Your fortune is made; you must now help to make mine.—[*Enter* Donald, *unperceived.*]

Item. Here's a villain!

Grime. You must, or I tell.

Item. What will you tell?

Grime. All; all the usurious tricks you have practised on Mordent: the arts by which you have cheated him of his estates, pretending that I am the man; your intention to foreclose; your neglect in not paying yourself interest, purposely to rob according to law; your plots to ruin Cheveril; all,

Item. You will tell all this? [all!

Grime. I will. [you cut-throat!

Item. Why, you fiend! you superlative villain!

Grime. (*Seeing Donald.*) Hem! (*Pause.*)

Don. What the hornie de'el do ye stop at? What gars ye swither? I'ze haud my whisht! Yeer confabulation is unco entertaining.

Item. Ah! good Mr. Donald! here is my old friend, Mr. Grime, has—has—(*Aside to Grime.*)—You see what your villany has done! (*Aloud.*) He is a good-natured soul, as you know—Scoundrel! (*aside to Grime*) and he—I—I— [crackt.

Don. Ye! yas; yeer a sweet nut, gin ye war well

Item. I—I—I was bantering him: trying to—to—Villain! (*aside to Grime*) but nothing can put him in a passion—Oh! curse you! (*aside to Grime*) nothing! [ligapus!

Don. The fient! Wow! but yeer a pauky Gil-

Item. Do you want our good master, Mr. Donald?

Don. Aiblins yeer right, auld Clootie.

Item. He is gone out. Nothing but a joke, Mr. Donald: nothing else. [o' the haffet!

Don. (*Aside.*) Noo could I gi' him sic an a gowf

Item. Can I, can my dear friend, Mr. Grime—Oh, you thief! (*aside to Grime*)—do you any ser-

Don. Hand yeer blether, mon. [vice?

Item. Can we oblige you any way in the world?

Don. Yas.

Item. (*Fawning.*) How? how?

Don. Tak compaission o' the booels o' yeer brother, Jack Ketch, and be yeer ain hangman! [*Exit.*

Item. There, villain! you see what you have done.

Grime. Is it my fault? I tell you again, you had better be sweet-tempered. I shall say no more: you know my mind. (*Going.*)

Item. (*Aside.*) Oh! that I could poison him. (*Aloud.*) Mr. Grime, Mr. Grime!

Grime. Well, Mr. Item?

Item. This quarrelling is very foolish.

Grime. Oh, ho!

Item. We are necessary to each other.

Grime. I know it.

Item. Your hand?

Grime. There.

Item. We are friends?

Grime. If you please.

Item. Well, well—(*Aside.*) D—n him! How I hate the dog—Concerning this Berkshire mort-

Grime. Ay? [gage—

Item. You shall have twenty per cent. on the

Grime. That won't do. [premium.

Item. Thirty!

Grime. It won't do. Half; the full half.

Item. (*Aside.*) Hell take him! Well, my dear Grime, the half be it. [given with Joanna.

Grime. Together with my moiety of the thousand

Item. Your—Hem! (*Sighs.*) You shall, you shall! Are you satisfied?

Grime. On those conditions.

Item. Where is the deed?

Grime. In that bag.

Item. Mordent is coming. I know he will, for I know he shall, sign. But that is not all.

Grime. What more?

Item. This d—d Scotchman will assuredly betray us to him; and Lady Anne's jointure prevents his being so entirely destitute as is necessary.

Grime. But how is that to be helped?

Item. Easily enough. You must convey information to her father and relations that he has a

Grime. Nay, but— [daughter.

Item. Hush! Here he comes! I will give you my reasons and instructions when we are alone. Where is the deed?

Grime. Here, ready!—[*Enter* MORDENT.]

Mor. (*In anger.*) What is the meaning, Mr. Item, that I see that upholsterer, and two other ill-looking followers with him, below?

Item. Nay, why ask me? why knit your brows at me? Can I coin? [at friends and foes.

Mor. Excuse me; I am a hunted bull, and butt

Item. The insolent fellow insisted on taking possession; so, thinking you would not wish Lady Anne to know, I prevailed on him and the officer to remain in the hall, till I could speak to you. If I have done amiss, shew me in what.

Mor. No, no; I know your zeal. Why will you not advance two thousand pounds, for that and other immediate purposes, and delay signing, Mr. Grime? I ask only a day.

Item. Ay, Mr. Grime, why will you not?

Grime. (*With great gravity.*) Impossible!

Item. Don't tell me; impossible, indeed! You ought to consent; it is your duty; nay, you shall

Grime. I cannot. Must have security. [consent.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Villain! Where is the deed?

Item. So, you will not, Mr. Grime? you will not?

Grime. I wish I could. But I am myself a borrower: the money is not my own.

Item. Hem! [Give me the pen.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! D—n your rascally hypocrisy!

Item. (*Holding his arm.*) Why, you will not sign, sir, will you?

Mor. Peace, fool! Cannot you see a wretch on the wheel, but that your bones, too, must ache?

Item. (*Mor. signs.*) Ah! it is always thus: I may advise, but my advice is never followed.

Mor. (*Seals.*) "I deliver this as my act and deed." Here, implement of hell! I know your thirst, bloodhound! 'Tis ready mixed destruction: take, quaff, and burst! Begone!

Item. (*Seizing the deed.*) Come, sir. My good master has sufficient reason to be angry with you. It was very unfriendly, sir, to refuse. You teach Mr. Mordent what he has to expect. (*Aside.*) All is now secure. [*Exeunt Item and Grime.*

Enter DONALD, *looking earnestly after them.*

Don. Ha' ye signed? ha' ye signed?

Mor. Ask no questions; yes.

Don. Weel, weel! Stark deed has nae remeed. Twa wolves may worry ane sheep. I kam to tal ye that yeer glib gabbit steward, and his compeer, Grime, are too scoondrels.

Mor. Psha! Fool!

Don. I tal ye, they are twa d—d villains!

Mor. Grime, fellow! Grime; a paltry, gold-loving, ravenous rascal! But Item, a worthy man!

Don. He wordy! that fient! Murcy o' my soul! he is the prime cock deel o' the blackest pit o' hell! The malison curse catch 'em aw! 'Tis nae stick and stow sax minutes sin I heard aw their

Mor. Hear? [murgullied gab.

Don. Yas, hear!

Mor. What did you hear?

Don. Item himsal confess that he had flethered ye of aw yeer estates; that Grime is nae mair but his flunkie; that it is his intantion to foreclose; that he has wilfully neglacted to pay himsal interest, for that he may claw ye according tul law; that there ha' been sham deeds; and that a plot is laid to felch Maister Cheveril of aw his walth.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! You heard all this?

Don. Wi' my ain ears.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Item! Are you sure you heard this precious mischief?

Don. When did Donald tall ye a lie?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Item! I am glad on't! 'Tis right! 'tis consistent! 'tis delightful! Ha, ha, ha! Abraham's rejected prayer: not one honest man.

Don. Hoot awa! Nae onest? Nor ye nor the black clawed Lucifer himsal canna deny but that Donald is onest.

Mor. Item! Ha, ha, ha! Inestimable villain! And I, too, thought him just and good. Oh! gull, gull, gull! Ha, ha, ha! (*Recollecting.*) Tell Mr. Clement I wish to speak with him.

Don. Noo the steed is stolen, ye wad steck the door. [*Exit.*

Mor. Oh! the sharp-fanged wolf! Ha, ha, ha!

Enter LENNOX.

Len. Mordent! How now? How you look.

Mor. I am an ass; a most ineffable ass!

Len. What is the matter?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! 'Tis proved upon me!

Len. Your mirth is of a strange kind.

Mor. The man whom I have trusted through life, ha, ha, ha! he whose rigid honesty—do you mark me? Ha, ha, ha! Honesty!

Len. Well?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! whose honesty made me sometimes doubt the truth of the self-evident system of evil—ha, ha!—He's a rascal! A double-leagued

Len. Your steward? [hell dog!

Mor. Item! A deep d———e, thorough-paced villain; that can bully, cajole, and curse, fawn, flatter, and filch. Ha, ha, ha!

Len. Be patient.

Mor. Oh, I am delighted! Ha, ha, ha!

Len. Be calm. You knew yourself to be in the power of a villain, and 'tis little matter whether his name be Grime or Item.

Mor. How? Ha, ha, ha! In a world of rascality, are not two rascals better than one?

Len. Nay, but attend to me. I want your help instantly, in Dover-street.

Mor. Dover-street?

Len. Yes.

Mor. It must not be.

Len. Eh! What's the freak now?

Mor. You can have no help of mine.

Len. Indeed, but I must! [for worlds.

Mor. I would not commit an injury on that girl,

Len. Why, what conscientious mummery is this? You neglect your own child, and pretend to interest yourself for a stranger. [cent being, why not?

Mor. If the stranger be an angel of light, a benefi-

Len. Benificent! What, in this system of evil?

Mor. An exception to the rule! A rare exception.

Len. Like Item?

Mor. Psha! Hell! [equally an angel.

Len. And may not your deserted daughter be

Mor. May she? If she should—I'll have no concern in the ruin of that girl.

Len. Harkye! Mordent, you are plotting.

Mor. I?

Len. No distress can cure you of your old propensities. You mean to trick me of her.

Mor. Ha, ha!

Len. 'Tis evident. Do you not affirm she cannot remain innocent in the house into which she is de-

Mor. Granted. [coyed?

Len. Marriage excepted, which would be madness, am I a man to treat her vilely?

Mor. Not worse than the malignity of fate ordains.

Len. Pooh! Cant! Cheveril, in the fervour of youth, is lunatic enough rather to marry than lose her. [of wretchedness.

Mor. Ay, ay; he is horn-mad to begin his career

Len. And you, his guardian, from pretended pity to a stranger, will guide and spur him to the course?

Mor. Even so it is. Mischief here, mischief there; turn which way you will, mischief!

Len. Your word and honour are solemnly pledged. If you really wish the lovely creature's welfare, would preserve your ward, and prove your friendship and honest intentions, you will aid me.

Mor. Well, well, I am blind; I am but the tool of destiny; so be it. [yield her to me.

Len. Your authority will oblige Mrs. Enfield to

Mor. No; my credit there is on the decline. Strat-

Len. But how? What? [agem, stratagem!

Mor. Convey a disguise to the girl.

Len. And so she will escape us all.

Mor. Escape! No, no; malevolence is the element of man, and I have an apt alacrity: I will instruct you. Come this way. Having her safe, you may post away with her to my commodious house in Park-lane. Fear not me. When Belial is busy, shall his progeny be idle?—[*Re-enter* Donald.]

Don. Maister Clement is nae i' the hoose.

Mor. No matter!

Len. Come, come!

Mor. Oh! what an excellent gull is this image of the gods, this thing called man! [*Exit with Len.*

Don. Ah! Waes me! This poor lassy! I canna rest. I hirple here, and gang hilching there, till I'ze e'en ramfeelzed wi' the ripples. I wist nae where tul spier niest. My dool and thole wull be my deeth! I' Gode's name, and wi' aw my hairt; for I'ze recht weary o' life!

Enter Cheveril *in great haste, searching.*

Don. Hoot, man! what is the bang?

Chev. My dear Donald, can you direct me where Mr. Item or Mr. Grime may be found?

Don. Donald diract ye tul sic an a pair o' scoondrels? Father Balzebub! but I wad at anes gar ye o'er catch plague, pastilence, and famine.

Chev. 'Sdeath! they are both dead and buried, I believe; for they are neither here, nor there, nor anywhere else. Can you tell me where I can borrow a few thousands?

Don. Sir! Do ye tak me for a thief, or a steward?

Chev. I shall go mad. Oh! Donald, I left the most angelic girl your eyes ever beheld, at a wicked house. She must be friendless and fatherless, or she could not have been there.

Don. What's that ye red of angil and fatherless?

Chev. I am sure she is innocent. Vile as the house is, she is innocent.

Don. Wha? what she? what hoose?

Chev. I can't stay—I saw her first in the Green

Don. Green Pairk? [Park.

Chev. She is now at Enfield's. A divine girl!

Don. What? Hoo? A menzfoo' maikless lass?

Chev. Not twenty; yet with the penetration, wit, and understanding of the seven sages.

Don. The Green Pairk? Maircy misgi' me! En-

Chev. In Dover-street. [field's?

Don. I ken the place! A hoose o' hell! Gin it be—Quick, Donald, quick! [*Exit, hastily.*

Chev. What is the matter with the honest soul? I don't know what sum that old harridan will require, but I can do nothing without money. I must have enough, too, for I must make sure. I'll place her in safety and splendour: she shall be my queen. [*Enter* Item.] Ah! my dear, dear Item! I am the luckiest fellow on earth. I am in instant want of money. [life.

Item. So am I: I have been in want of it all my

Chev. You must furnish me with ten thousand

Item. Ah! I wish I could. [pounds.

Chev, 'Sblood! don't stand wishing, but give me the money.

Item. If my friend Grime were but here—

Chev. 'Sdeath and the devil, give me the money! I shall lose her! She'll be gone! I'll make over the seventeen thousand that is in Mordent's hands. I will, by heaven!—on the word and honour of a

Item. The seventeen thousand? [gentleman.

Chev. I will.

Item. It is true, I have cash in hand; but not my own. [have it.

Chev. Zounds! never mind whose it is: let me

Item. Why, if I could but manage the matter—I am but a poor old man, and it would be a little lift.

Chev. D—n your poverty and your cant!

Item. You are sure you understand—the seven-

Chev. I tell you, yes. [teen thousand?

Item. The risk will be very great.

Chev. Do you doubt my word?

Item. No, no; but—

Chev. But what? [a memorandum.

Item. Your hand-writing on a stamp would be

Chev. You shall have it. Write a receipt for seventeen thousand; I'll sign it.

Item. (*Takes out an account book, lays it down; then takes out another-book, finds a stamp, and writes.*) Ay, this is the thing. You remember the risk? otherwise, it might be thought—

Chev. Give it me, give it me! I have no time for thinking. (*Signs.*)

Item. I must borrow to replace it.

Chev. Will you come away, and let me have the money? Come, come, man. 'Sdeath! will you despatch. *Enter* Clement.

Clem. Do you know where Mr. Mordent is, sir?

Item. No, sir. (*Cheveril hurries Item off; who puts up his receipt in one book, but forgets the other.*)

Clem. Mr. Mordent has asked for me; and, unfortunately, I cannot find him. I fear he has signed the mortgage. Oh, this uncle! Never was.

situation so excruciating as mine. Must I cast off all ties of blood, become his accuser, and, as the world would call it, betray my benefactor? Beside, what have I to reveal? my fears and my suspicions: unconnected facts, that can alarm, but not relieve. And who is it that I should thus impotently accuse? my own uncle. (*Sees the book.*) Ah! what have we here? As I live, his private account-book! The very thing he so carefully has concealed from all inspection. What shall I do? Deliver it to Mordent? What may be the consequences? Disgrace, infamy, and—Dreadful thought! I must not be rash. Hark! he's here. I must consider well. [*Exit.*

Re-enter ITEM *and* CHEVERIL.—*Item searches every place for his account-book.*

Chev. You see there is no book here.

Item. I am certain I had it in my hand.

Chev. We have not quitted the room a minute; nobody can have been here since.

Item. We left my nephew here.

Chev. Well, if he has it, it is safe enough.

Item. I don't know that! If I have lost it, I shall never sleep again.

Chev. Come away; you have it somewhere, locked up safe. [it.

Item. No; I laid it down here: I am positive of

Chev. Nay, but you see that is impossible. Come!

Item. If it be gone, I shall go mad.

Chev. Is it so valuable? [the world.

Item. I would not lose it for all I am worth in

Chev. Come, come. What did it contain?

Item. My soul! my secrets!

Chev. Well, it certainly is not here. You must go! you shall go! I'll indemnify you.

Item. You can't.

Chev. I tell you, I will. (*Pushing him off.*) It is in your own room.

Item. (*Turning back.*) I hope so, I hope so! But my heart misgives me. Oh, lord! I'm undone!

Chev. (*Pushing him.*) Will you go?

Item. (*Turning.*) I am wretched!

Chev. (*Pushing him again.*) You won't?

Item. (*Turning.*) I'm ruined!

Chev. (*Still pushing him.*) Will you, or—

Item. (*Turning.*) I'm lost! I'm dead! I'm—

Chev. (*Pushes him with more violence.*) Furies and fire, begone. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MORDENT.

Mor. (*Calls.*) Mr. Cheveril! Mr. Cheveril! 'Tis impossible to stop him; but no matter, the plan cannot fail: Lennox, by this time, has her safe. Why, ay; I have advised, I have plotted, I have aided! And in what? why the ruin of an innocent; who, while I looked and listened to her, I would have lost my life to defend.—[*Enter* MRS. SARSNET]

Mrs. S. My lady, sir, desires to know if she may have the honour to see you?

Mor. What is the matter now?

Mrs. S. Oh! as to that, let my lady speak; I have got ill-blood enough, because I would not take somebody's part. But that is all over.

Mor. What is over?

Mrs. S. I have told my lady, often and often, how a gentleman's proud spirit might be brought down; but she would never listen to my consulta- [tion before.

Mor. Before?

Mrs. S. "For, (said I,) my lady, you would be as merry as May, if you would but pluck up a spirit to take the earl's advice, and leave all base seducers [to their own course."

Mor. You said so?

Mrs. S. Yes, I did! I should be no woman, if I would not take part with my sect! So we are all ready for moving; seeing as we are resolved. "For, (said I,) if he should fall at my feet, and cry his eyes out, I would not hear a word."

Mor. Indeed!

Mrs. S. Not but I have as tender a heart as another; but, then, I would sooner break his heart than my own.

Mor. What does this insolent gabble mean?

Mrs. S. Why, it means that my lady is coming to take her leave; and that, then, we shall be gone; and, then, it will be seen who will have most cause [to repent.

Mor. (*Aside.*) Is it possible?

Mrs. S. I am sure if I could have made folks happy, I would have done it with all my heart and soul: but the secret is out at last, and all is settled. Not but, for all I'm so glad, I can't say but I'm sorry in the main; for I'm sure some folks will be miserable enough; and, though they richly deserve it, one can't help feeling for them in ones heart. And so, sir, as, perhaps, I shall never see you no more, God bless you, and mend you. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY ANNE.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent, I am driven upon an agonizing task, which a too painful sense of duty only could oblige me to execute.

Mor. Proceed, madam; apologies for feeling, or for inflicting pain, are quite unnecessary.

Lady A. Forgive me. Would it were to be avoided—You have a daughter?

Mor. Whence gain you that intelligence?

Lady A. From the Earl of Oldcrest.

Mor. And what is his authority?

Lady A. I know not: but I, it seems, have innocently been the cause that she is disowned and abandoned. Of such an act I cannot knowingly consent to be a moment guilty. The fatal period is come; that separation which I so much have dreaded, is inevitable.

Mor. And you support your fate with patience.

Lady A. Cruel man! do I deserve this parting reproach? [it?

Mor. You deserve! Who shall dare insinuate

Lady A. Happy days and past endearments rush upon my mind with sensations unutterable!

Mor. I know, I know I am the vilest of men!

Lady A. Far from saying, far from thinking so, I take my full share of blame. How do I know that the fault is not wholly mine?

Mor. (*Agitated.*) Madam, I—I—I request I may be tortured by anything but your candour.

Lady A. I know I have lost the envied art of making myself intelligible to your feelings: and how? you once were happy, tender, and prone to smile at every look and word of mine. Of what fatal errors have I been guilty, that should have wrought this change? [strung!

Mor. Oh, exquisite! Continue! my nerves are

Lady A. To despair of recovering those inestimable blessings was quite sufficient; but to be the cause of banishing a child from a father's arms and heart? to cast it an orphan on a tempestuous world? No; whatever my other mistakes may have been, of that no tongue shall accuse me.

Mor. Right; let the guilt be all my own.

Lady A. And now, I have one last request to make, which I conjure you, by all our former affection, not to deny.

Mor. To ask favours, where there is neither the power to grant, nor the desire to be thanked, is fruitless. [state of your affairs—

Lady A. I am but too well acquainted with the

Mor. A humane motive for parting. (*Aside.*)

Lady A. The settlements you made on me, in our early days of love, were ample. In the sincerity of affection, I vowed, if ever they should be necessary to your happiness, that moment they should again be your's.

Mor. (*Greatly agitated.*) Madam!

Lady A. Pardon and endure this proof of my fidelity. The deeds are now in Mr. Clement's possession: he will restore them to you.

Mor. (*Indignantly.*) Never!

Lady A. Stop! Beware of rashness! You are a father, and have a father's sacred duties to fulfil. Take home your daughter: make her what amends you can for the desertion of a parent's love.

Mor. 'Tis too much! Scorpions could not sting like this!

Lady A. On this last occasion, suffer a gleam of

former kindness once more to warm your bosom. Money is a poor vehicle for the affections of the soul; a contemptible token of the love I have borne you; but, such as it is, for that love's sake, give it welcome. A cold adieu I cannot take. It freezes my very heart. From my soul, I ever have loved, and ever shall love. Had I a heaven of happiness to bestow, would you but deign to accept it from me, it should be your's. [*Exit.*

Mor. Why, so, so, so! It rages! it bursts! it is complete! Let fate or fiends increase the misery, if they can. *Enter* DONALD.

Don. It's past! it's aw o'er! My forebodings are foolfilled!

Mor. (*Alarmed.*) Have you not found her yet?

Don. Yes, yes; I ha' foond her.

Mor. Have you? Where? [what are ye?

Don. I'ze noo, indeed, a rasca' go-between! But

Mor. You say you have found her?

Don. She is gone! she is ruined! Ye're a wratch; the most meeserable o' wratches!

Mor. Tormenting demon! What? who? where

Don. To Dover-street! [have you been?

Mor. (*Alarmed.*) Dover—

Don. Tul the elritch limmer Enfield.

Mor. (*With terror.*) What do you say?

Don. I was too late. A maister scoondrel, e'en as wecked as her ain father, had decoyed her intul

Mor. Decoyed? [his net.

Don. Lennox! yeer friend, yeer orony!

Mor. From Enfield's?

Don. Ha' not I toud ye?

Mor. Lennox? Dover-street? Joanna?

Don. Hear it, gin ye can, and live: Joanna! yeer child! yeer guileless Joanna!

Mor. (*Distractedly.*) Misery of hell! And was that Joanna? that my child? Celestial creature! and I the pit-digger! (*Pause.*)

Don. Sir!—Sir!—Maister!

Mor. (*Starting.*) I the pander! I cast her shrieking on the bed of infamy, and chain her in the arms of lust! Her father do this? (*Pause.*)

Don. Maister!—Dear Maister!—Maister Mordent!—Dear Maister Mordent! Speak! I'ze forgi' ye! Why, maister! I'ze pray for ye! I'ze die for ye! I'ze forgi' ye!

Mor. Fly! Summon the servants! Arm yourselves! follow me to Park-lane! [*Exit.*

Don. William! Sandy! Jock! [*Exit, calling.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*The Green Park.*

Enter MORDENT *and* LENNOX.

Mor. We are now in private.

Len. I am glad we are.

Mor. And now, sir, I insist on a clear and explicit answer. Where have you lodged Joanna?

Len. Nay, sir, where have you lodged Joanna?

Mor. Mr. Lennox, I will not be trifled with: where is she?

Len. Nor will I be trifled with, Mr. Mordent: I say where is she? The contrivance was your own. I know you. The moment you set your eyes on her, you began your cursed plots to secure her for yourself; and, when you found I would not give her up at your persuasion, you put them in practice, while you treacherously pretended to secure her to me. I tell you, I know you.

Mor. This will not serve, sir; it is all evasion.

Len. Ay, sir, it is evasion! cunning, base, d—d evasion! and I affirm she is in your possession.

Mor. Mr. Lennox, I am at this moment a determined and desperate man, and must be answered. Where is she?

Len. Sir, I am as determined and as desperate as yourself, and I say where is she? For you alone

Mor. 'Tis false! [can tell.

Len. False?

Mor. Ay, false!

Len. (*Going up to him.*) He is the falsest of the false that dares whisper such a word.

Mor. Harkye, sir! I understand your meaning, and came purposely provided. (*Draws a pair of pistols.*) Take your choice: they are loaded.

Len. Oh! with all my heart! Come, sir!

Mor. (*Approaching sternly.*) Nigher!

Len. As nigh as you please.

Mor. (*Placing himself.*) Foot to foot!

Len. (*Both presenting.*) Muzzle to muzzle!

Mor. Why don't you fire?

Len. Why don't you unlock your pistol?

Mor. (*After unlocking it.*) There!

Len. Why do you turn it out of the line? (*Pause.*) I see your intention, Mordent; you are tired of life, and want me to murder you. D—n it, man, that is not treating your friend like a friend. Kill me if you will, but don't make me your assassin.

Mor. Nay, kill me, or tell me where you have lodged the wretched girl.

Len. Fiends sieze me if I have lodged her anywhere, or know what is become of her.

Mor. Your behaviour tells me you are sincere; and to convince you at once that I am no less so, know—she is my daughter!

Len. Your daughter! [her at Enfield's.

Mor. The honest, indefatigable Donald discovered

Len. Murder my friend, and debauch his daughter!

Mor. We are sad fellows. Again and again, it is a vile world! [Forgive me!

Len. I'll seek it through with you to find her.

Mor. Would I could forgive myself!

Len. But it seems, then, she has escaped, and is, perhaps, in safety.

Mor. Oh! that she were! Donald used to meet her here, in the Green Park, about this time of the evening. (*Listens.*) I hear the sound of feet. 'Tis not a woman. Let us retire among the trees, and keep on the watch. [*Enter* CHEVERIL.]

Chev. She is not here! she is gone! for ever gone! I shall never more set eyes on her! I'll fire that infernal Dover-street! I'll pistol Lennox! I may perambulate here till doomsday, and to no purpose. She would have been here, had she been free. Ay, ay; she is in thraldom; perhaps in the very gripe of vice. Furies!—Lennox is a liar! I'll cut his throat! I'll hack him piecemeal! I'll have her, or I'll have his heart! (*Walks among the trees.*)

Enter JOANNA, *in man's clothes.*

Joanna. Whither shall I run? where shall I hide? How fly the pursuits of wicked men, and women still more depraved? I have neither house, home, nor friend on earth; and the fortitude that can patiently endure is my only resource. What, then? Have I not escaped the dens of vice? Oh, happiness! I have, I have! And rather than venture in them again, welcome hunger, welcome cold, welcome the bare ground, the biting air, and the society of brute beasts.

Chev. (*Advancing.*) What can that youth want? Why is he watching here? (*Walks round Joanna.*)

Joanna. As I live, the young gentleman I saw this morning. What reason can he have for being in this place? (*Aside.*)

Chev. He eyes me with curiosity. (*Aside.*)

Joanna. His intentions seemed good, for he first warned me against that wicked woman. (*Aside.*)

Chev. Who can say, he may know her? He is a smart, handsome, dapper fellow: I don't like him.

Joanna. I am not now confined by walls and bolts; there can be no danger. I'll speak. (*Aside.*) Pray,

Chev. Well, sir? [sir—

Joanna. Have you seen a young person—

Chev. A lady?

Joanna. Yes.

Chev. With blue eyes, auburn hair, aquiline nose, ivory teeth, carnation lips, ravishing mouth, enchanting neck, a form divine, and an angel face?

Joanna. Have you seen her?

Chev. Are you acquainted with that lady?

Joanna. I am acquainted with a lady, but not an angel. [her—her lover?

Chev. Ah! then it is not her. Perhaps you are

Joanna. Humph! I—I love her.

Chev. You do? (*Aside.*) I'll be the death of him.
Joanna. Why—yes. [And she loves you?
Chev. (*Aside.*) I'll put an end to him. Are you
Joanna. No. [married?
Chev. You—you mean to marry her?
Joanna. No.
Chev. Is she, then, lost to virtue?
Joanna. Who dare suppose it?
Chev. Ay, who dare? I'll cut the villain's throat that dares. [violence; but not guilt.
Joanna. She has endured insult, constraint, and
Chev. Guilt! no; not wilful guilt. Impossible! But, then, is she safe? is she safe?
Joanna. Disowned by her family, exposed to the snares of vice, houseless, hopeless, not daring to approach the wicked haunts of men, she wanders forlorn and desolate, willing to suffer, disdaining to complain.
Chev. Tell me where! I will rescue, defend, protect, cherish, love, adore, die for her!
Joanna. Is your heart pure? Have you no selfish, dishonest purposes?
Chev. How came you to imagine, sir, that I, or any man, durst couple her and dishonesty, even in a thought?
Joanna. Meet me here to-morrow at ten.
Chev. You?
Joanna. You shall see her.
Chev. See her? Shall I?
Joanna. You shall. [At nine?
Chev. My dear friend! I'll make your fortune!
Joanna. Ten.
Chev. Could not I see her to-night?
Joanna. To-morrow Joanna will meet you.
Chev. Joanna! Is that her dear name?
Joanna. It is.
Chev. Delightful sound! The sweet Joanna! the divine Joanna! My heart's best blood is not so precious as Joanna!
Joanna. But, pray, where do you live?
Chev. Joanna—In Portland-place.
Joanna. Your name?
Chev. Joanna—Cheveril: Hans Cheveril. Joanna—Be sure you don't forget.
Joanna. I'll be punctual. Who's here? (*Hides behind a tree.*)
Chev. Joanna!—At eight did you say?—Where is he gone? Sir! Sir! [*Exit.*
Mor. (*Appearing.*) I heard the name repeated. (*Aloud.*) Who is it here that knows Joanna?
Joanna. (*Appearing.*) I do. [Is she safe?
Mor. Sir! Do you? Well, and what? where?
Joanna. I hope so.
Mor. But where, sir, where? [you inquire?
Joanna. (*Aside.*) 'Tis Mr. Mordent. Why do
Mor. For heaven's sake! sir, do not torment me by delay, but tell me where she is.
Joanna. I must not. [shall.
Mor. (*Seizes her.*) But, sir, I say you must, and
Joanna. Sir, you mistake, if you suppose menaces can prevail.
Mor. Excuse me; I would give my right hand to know what it appears you can tell.
Joanna. I can tell nothing till I am first made acquainted with your true motives.
Mor. And will you inform me, then?
Joanna. Provided I am certain of their purity.
Mor. Know, then, that I pant for a sight of her once more, to do her the little justice that is yet in my power. Know, the wrongs she has received from me are irreparable, vile; such as could not have happened but in this worst of worlds. Know that I, her natural guardian, have been her actual persecutor; that I drove her to the abode of infamy; that I became the agent of her ruin, the plotter against her chastity; and that, when I had set the engines of darkness and hell at work to ensure her everlasting wretchedness, I then discovered—she was my daughter!
Joanna. Sir!—Your daughter? You—you my
Mor. How! [father?
Joanna. (*Falling at his feet.*) Oh!
Mor. Can it be? My child? my Joanna? It
Joanna. My father! [is! it is!
Mor. My child! And innocent?
Joanna. As your own wishes; or the word father should never have escaped my lips. This dress was the disguise conveyed to me, by which I effected my escape. I can suffer anything but dishonour.
Mor. A father! Oh! I do not deserve thee! Once again let me fold thee to my heart.
Len. (*Without.*) Zounds! sir!
Chev. (*Without.*) I insist, sir!
Joanna. I hear voices. (*They retire.*)

Enter CHEVERIL *and* LENNOX.

Chev. Oh! for swords, daggers, pistols—
Mor. (*To Joanna.*) This way. [*Exit with Joanna.*
Len. Confound your impertinent freaks; they have stopped my mouth this half hour. I would have told you all I new instantly, but for your insulting passion. [where she is?
Chev. Did not you say you would not tell me
Len. I said I could not.
Chev. Why there now! [you will but hear.
Len. But I suspect I can tell more at present, if
Chev. 'Sdeath! then why don't you?
Len. Will you be silent? I had a glimpse of Mordent, this moment, in conversation with a youth.
Chev. Well? [to Joanna.
Len. It was the identical dress I sent as a disguise
Chev. How! [herself.
Len. And I suspect that very youth to be Joanna
Chev. (*Recollecting.*) By heaven, and so it is! In the possession of Mordent?
Len. Be patient; there is a secret. His claims supersede all others. [and hell—
Chev. His claims! By every power of heaven
Len. Be patient, I tell you—she is his daughter!
Chev. Jonnna! my sweet Joanna! his daughter?
Len. Even so.
Chev. His daughter! Huzza! My dear Lennox! (*In ecstacy.*) Huzza! Oh, lord! oh, lord! Huzza! His daughter! Huzza, huzza, huzza! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The House of Mordent.*

CLEMENT *and* MRS. SARSNET *discovered.*

Clem. Are you sure it was Mr. Mordent?
Mrs. S. I tell you, sir, I was on the watch, and opened the door myself. Take care, my dear, said he, to the sham gentleman-lady; and handed her in as lovingly—The monster! My lady is bewitched! she is fabricated! she can't quit the house. I am sure he must have nailed an invisible horse-shoe to the threshold.
Clem. But how do you know this pretended youth to be a woman?
Mrs. S. Did not I hear? I held the candle full flare in her face; it was a perfect picter! I never saw the like. So she is to be brought home, truly! Such magnanimous impudence! But I'll go to my
Clem. Be cautious; you may do mischief. [lady.
Mrs. S. I don't care; I am resolved to stabilate and confound facts. So, then, having a sufficient dearth of proofs, we shall sail off in the charut; and be properly received by the earl, the viscount, and the bishop; and be squired into the hall; and be kissed for joy; and shall swim up stairs into the bosom of the family. [*Exit.*

Enter CHEVERIL, *hastily.*

Chev. Dear Clement, have you seen Mr. Mordent? [the utmost importance.
Clem. No; I am in search of him, on affairs of
Chev. So am I.
Clem. No less than the recovery or total loss of
Chev. How? [his mortgaged lands.
Clem. I am in great need of advice, and should be glad to consult you.
Chev. Consult! 'Sdeath! man, I am in a hurry. I cannot rest till I have found him.
Clem. Nay, but on the decision of the moment his ruin or safety depends. [What is it?
Chev. Indeed! If so, my impatience must wait.

Clem. I hear footsteps. This way, [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mordent *and* Joanna.

Mor. Yes, dear girl, your rare endowments surpass my hopes; and, convinced as I am, that beauty is destructive, and wisdom impotent, I joy to find you thus adorned.

Joanna. Wait to know me better. I fear you should prize me above my worth.

Mor. How shall I reward it? Fool that I am, madman that I have been!

Joanna. This is my rich reward. (*Kissing him.*)

Mor. I have told you, in part, my desperate situation. If Grime would but give honest evidence—But of that there is little hope.

Joanna. My greatest fear arises from what you have said of Lady Anne. I must not, will not be the cause of separation.

Mor. Let me do her justice: she is a miracle of forbearance. I have hated and spurned at the kindness I did not deserve. Her perseverance in good has been my astonishment and my torture.

Joanna. Oh! that I could see you reconciled! Oh! that I could gain the love of such a lady.

Mor. Of that, sweet girl, you are certaio. Lennox is with her; and, by this, she knows your story; and I am sure adores your virtue.

Lady A. (*Without.*) Where is she?

Mor. I hear her.—[*Enter* Lady Anne.]

Lady A. Oh! noble girl! (*Embraces Joanna.*) Forgive this rude tumult of affection, which I can-

Joanna. Is it possible? [not restrain.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent, you are now a million fold more dear to me.

Mor. I cannot bear it!

Lady A. Will you be my daughter?

Joanna. Oh, madam!

Lady A. Will you?

Joanna. Adversity I could endure, but this unhoped-for tide of blessings overpowers me.

Mor. Oh! how I hate myself.

Lady A. And why? Can you be ignorant of the virtuous struggles which have caused the conflict you have felt? The strength of these sensations shew how fitted you are to be great and good.

Mor. To be a—I dare not think!

Lady A. Indeed you are wrong. Had I not been guilty of a thousand errors, you never would have had occasion for this self reproach. Like cowards, we both have shunned inquiry. Let us be more courageous; let us affectionately communicate our mutual mistakes, and while we examine we shall correct the mind, expand the heart, and render ourselves dear to each other, and beneficent to the whole world.

Mor. Oh! shame, shame!

Lady A. Nay, my love—

Joanna. My dear father!

Mor. Well, well, I will endure existence a little longer, if it be but to hate myself.

Enter Cheveril, *who runs to Joanna.*

Chev. My life! my soul! my precious Joanna!

Mor. They will persuade me presently that happiness is possible. (*Aside.*) You have cause, child, to thank Mr. Cheveril. [stamp.

Joanna. Oh! yes; he has a heart of the noblest

Mor. Ay, all angels except myself! I am cast into the shade; a kind of demon, grinning in the dark.

Chev. Come, guardian, dismiss those sombre familiars; they have plagued you long enough. Clement is in eager search of you, to communicate secrets of the utmost importance concerning his uncle.

Mor. The villain!

Chev. Yes; he is below, foaming with rage; and accusing every servant in the house with having stolen his book. I hear him: pray, keep back, my sweet Joanna! but for a moment. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Item.

Item. 'Tis gone! 'tis lost! I am undone! I am murdered! I am betrayed! I shall be prosecuted, pilloried, fined, cast in damages, obliged to pay all, to refund all! All, all, all! I'll hang myself! I'll drown myself! I'll cut my throat! Mordent has got it! All my secrets, all my projects, all my rogueries—past, present, and to come! Oh! that I had never been born! Oh!—[*Enter* Clement.] Have you seen my book? Give it me! Where is

Clem. What book? [my book?

Item. My account-book! my secrets! my soul! (*Feels Clement's coat pocket.*) 'Tis here! I feel it!

Clem. Yes, sir, 'tis here! Be pacified.

Item. I won't, I won't! I'll have it! Give it me! I'll swear a robbery! I'll have you hanged!

Clem. (*Shews a book.*) This book, sir, I consider as a sacred trust: part with it to you I must not.

Item. You shall part with it, villain! I'll have your soul! 'Tis mine! I'll have your heart! 'Tis mine! I will have it! (*Striking Clement.*)

Clem. You shall have heart, life, and soul, first.

Item. (*Kneels.*) My dear nephew! my kind Clement! I'll supply all your wants; I'll pay all your debts; I'll never deny anything you ask; I'll make you my heir!

Clem. You are the agent of Mr. Mordent, whom, I fear, you've deeply wronged. I've a painful duty to perform; but justice must be obeyed: nothing must or shall bribe me to betray an injured man.

Item. I'll give you ten thousand pounds! I'll give you twenty! I'll give you fifty! Would you rob and ruin your uncle? would you see him hanged? (*Seizes him.*) Villain, I will have it! 'Tis mine! I will, I will!

Enter Mordent, Lady Anne, Lennox, Clement, Grime, Donald, Cheveril *and* Joanna.

Mor. (*With the book.*) I am glad, Mr. Item, that your inattention, and your nephew's inflexible honesty have afforded me the means of doing myself justice: that is all I require. [and your agent.

Len. Here is double testimony; your hand-writing

Item. (*To Grime.*) Have you impeached, then?

Grime. I am a villain, a rascal, a cut-throat!

Mor. Mr. Clement, your worth and virtue are beyond my praise. [than I expect.

Clem. If my conduct escape censure, it is more

Mor. If it meet not retribution, all sense of justice is lost. [never-failing friend!

Joanna. (*To Donald.*) My watchful guide! my

Chev. Your hand, old boy! you and I must settle accounts. I am I know not how many score pounds

Mor. What, then, am I? [a-year in your debt.

Joanna. And I?

Don. Hoot awa! Gin ye wad pay Donald, it mun nae be wi' yeer dirty siller; it mun be wi' yeer affactions. [*hand.*)

Joanna. True, my noble protector! (*Kisses his*

Don. Why ay, noo, that's a receipt in foo! It makes my hairt gi' sic an a bang! [cile—

Mor. Honest, worthy soul! And now to recon-

Chev. Come, come; make no speeches: I'll settle the business: I am the proper person. I have eight thousand a-year, and ten thousand in my pocket—Ten!—(*to Item*) Is it ten or seventeen?

Item. Seventeen.

Chev. Joanna shall be queen of joy, pleasure, and happiness. Honesty, here, shall settle all his ill-gotten gains on his nephew; Lennox, as a bachelor's penance, shall marry his housemaid; you, guardian, shall change your system of evil for practical good; Lady Anne shall become more patient and kind—if she know how; and old Moloch (*to Grime*) shall go and hang himself.

Len. Spoken like an oracle.

Chev. Why, then, toss up your caps! farewell to folly! long life to one and twenty! and mirth, health, and happiness to all!

Lady A. How strange are the vicissitudes of fortune! How have the storms of this memorable day risen, and increased even to horror! and now how bright the prospect, and how glowing the hope that it excites! Cherish it, kind friends, with your smiles; and, in the gentle slumbers of the night, let us joyfully dream that we still merit, and still obtain, your willing favour. [*Exeunt.*

THE DOUBLE DEALER;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM CONGREVE.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

LORD TOUCHWOOD	CARELESS	LADY TOUCHWOOD
LORD FROTH	BRISK	LADY FROTH
SIR PAUL PLIANT	SAYGRACE	LADY PLIANT
MASKWELL	THOMAS	CYNTHIA
MELLEFONT	TIMOTHY	SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Gallery in Lord Touchwood's house, with chambers adjoining.*

Enter CARELESS, *crossing the stage, as just risen from table;* MELLEFONT *following him.*

Mel. Ned, Ned, whither so fast? What, turned flincher? Why, you wo' not leave us?

Care. Where are the women? I'm weary of drinking, and begin to think them the better company.

Mel. Then thy reason staggers, and thou'rt almost tipsy.

Care. No, 'faith! but your fools grow noisy; and if a man must endure the noise of words without sense, I think the women have more musical voices, and become nonsense better.

Mel. Why, they are at the end of the gallery, retired to their tea and scandal. But I made a pretence to follow you, because I had something to say to you in private, and I am not likely to have many opportunities this evening.

Brisk. (*Without.*) Careless, Careless!

Care. And here's this coxcomb, most critically come to interrupt you.

Enter BRISK.

Brisk. Boys, boys, lads, where are you? What, do you give ground? Mortgage for a bottle, eh? Careless, this is your trick; you're always spoiling company by leaving it.

Care. And thou art always spoiling company by coming into it.

Brisk. Pooh! Ha, ha, ha! I know you envy me. Spite, proud spite, by the gods, and burning envy. I'll be judged by Mellefont here, who gives and takes raillery better, you or I. Psha! man, when I say you spoil company by leaving it, I mean you leave nobody for the company to laugh at. I think there I was with you: eh! Mellefont?

Mel. O' my word, Brisk, that was a home thrust: you have silenced him.

Brisk. Oh! my dear Mellefont, let me perish, if thou art not the soul of conversation, the very essence of wit, and spirit of wine. The deuce take me, if there were three good things said, or one understood, since thy amputation from the body of our society. He, he! I think that's pretty and metaphorical enough: egad! I could not have said it out of thy company. Careless, eh!

Care. Hum! ay, what is it?

Brisk. Oh, mon cœur! What is it! Nay, 'gad! I'll punish you for want of apprehension: the deuce take me if I tell you.

Mel. No, no; hang him, he has no taste. But, dear Brisk, excuse me; I have a little business.

Care. Pr'ythee, get thee gone; thou seest we are serious.

Mel. We'll come immediately, if you'll but go in, and keep up good humour and sense in the company: pr'ythee, do; they'll fall asleep else.

Brisk. Egad! so they will. Well, I will, I will: 'gad! you shall command me from the zenith to the nadir. But, the deuce take me, if I say a good thing till you come. But, pr'ythee, dear rogue, make haste; pr'ythee, make haste, I shall burst else. And yonder your uncle, my Lord Touchwood, swears he'll disinherit you; and Sir Paul Pliant threatens to disclaim you for a son-in-law; and my Lord Froth won't dance at your wedding to-morrow; nor, the deuce take me, I won't write your epithalamium; and see what a condition you're like to be brought to.

Mel. Well, I'll speak but three words, and follow you.

Brisk. Enough, enough. Careless, bring your apprehension with you. [*Exit.*

Care. Pert coxcomb!

Mel. 'Faith! 'tis a good-natured coxcomb, and has very entertaining follies: you must be more humane to him; at this juncture it will do me service. I'll tell you, I would have mirth continued this day at any rate; though patience purchase folly, and attention be paid with noise: there are times when sense may be unseasonable, as well as truth. Pr'ythee, do thou wear none to-day; but allow Brisk to have wit, that thou may'st seem a fool.

Care. Why, how now? Why this extravagant proposition?

Mel. Oh! I would have no room for serious design, for I am jealous of a plot. I would have noise and impertinence keep my Lady Touchwood's head from working.

Care. I thought your fear of her had been over. Is not to-morrow appointed for your marriage with Cynthia? and her father, Sir Paul Pliant, come to settle the writings this day, on purpose?

Mel. True; but you shall judge whether I have not reason to be alarmed. None, besides you and Maskwell, are acquainted with the secret of my aunt Touchwood's violent passion for me. Since my first refusal of her addresses, she has endeavoured to do me all ill offices with my uncle; yet has managed them with that subtilty, that to him they have borne the face of kindness; while her malice, like a dark lanthorn, only shone upon me, where it was directed: but whether urged by her despair, and the short prospect of time she saw to accomplish her designs; whether the hopes of revenge, or of her love, terminated in the view of this my marriage with Cynthia, I know not; but this morning she surprised me in my own chamber.

Care. Was there ever such a fury! Well, bless us! proceed. What followed?

Mel. It was long before either of us spoke; passion had tied her tongue, and amazement mine. In short, the consequence was thus: she omitted nothing that the most violent love could urge, or tender words express; which when she saw had no effect, but still I pleaded honour and nearness of blood to my uncle, then came the storm I feared at first; for, starting from my bed-side, like a fury, she flew to my sword, and with much ado, I prevented her doing me or herself a mischief. Having disarmed her, in a gust of passion she left me, and in a resolution, confirmed by a thousand curses, not to close her eyes till they had seen my ruin.

Care. Exquisite woman! But, what the devil, does she think thou hast no more sense than to disinherit thyself? For, as I take it, this settlement upon you is with a proviso that your uncle have no children.

Mel. It is so. Well, the service you are to do me will be a pleasure to yourself. I must get you to engage my Lady Pliant all this evening, that my pious aunt may not work her to her interest; and if you chance to secure her to yourself, you may incline her to mine. She's handsome, and knows it; is very silly, and thinks she has sense; and has an old fond husband.

Care. I confess, a very fair foundation for a lover to build upon.

Mel. For my Lord Froth, he and his wife will be sufficiently taken up with admiring one another, and Brisk's gallantry, as they call it. I'll observe my uncle myself; and Jack Maskwell has promised me to watch my aunt narrowly, and give me notice upon any suspicion. As for Sir Paul, my wise father-in-law that is to be, my dear Cynthia has such a share in his fatherly fondness, he would scarce make her a moment uneasy to have her happy hereafter.

Care. So, you have manned your works; but I wish you may not have the weakest guard where the enemy is strongest.

Mel. Maskwell, you mean? Pr'ythee, why should you suspect him?

Care. 'Faith! I cannot help it: you know, I never liked him; I am a little superstitious in physiognomy.

Mel. He has obligations of gratitude to bind him to me; his dependence upon my uncle is through my means.

Care. Upon your aunt, you mean.

Mel. My aunt?

Care. I'm mistaken if there be not a familiarity between them you do not suspect, for all her passion for you.

Mel. Pooh, pooh! nothing in the world but his design to do me service; and he endeavours to be well in her esteem, that he may be able to effect it.

Care. Well, I shall be glad to be mistaken; but your aunt's aversion, in her revenge, cannot be any way so effectually shewn as in promoting a means to disinherit you. She is handsome and cunning, and naturally amorous; Maskwell is flesh and blood, at best, and opportunities between them are frequent. His affection to you, you have confessed, is grounded upon his interest; that you have transplanted; and should it take root in my lady, I don't see what you can expect from the fruit.

Mel. I confess the consequence is visible were your suspicions just. But see, the company is broken up: let's meet them.

Enter Lord Touchwood, Sir Paul Pliant, Lord Froth, *and* Brisk.

Lord T. Out upon it, nephew! leave your father-in-law and me to maintain our ground against young people.

Mel. I beg your lordship's pardon; we were just returning—

Sir P. Were you, son? Gadsbud! much better as it is. Good, strange! I swear I'm almost tipsy; t'other bottle would have been too powerful for me, as sure as can be, it would. We wanted your company; but Mr. Brisk, where is he? I swear and vow he's a most facetious person, and the best company; and, my Lord Froth, your lordship is so merry a man! He, he, he!

Lord F. Oh, fie! Sir Paul, what do you mean? Merry! Oh, barbarous! I'd as lieve you called me fool.

Sir P. Nay, I protest and vow, now, 'tis true; when Mr. Brisk jokes, your lordship's laugh does so become you! He, he, he!

Lord F. Ridiculous! Sir Paul, you're strangely mistaken. I find champagne is powerful. I assure you, Sir Paul, I laugh at nobody's jest but my

own, or a lady's; I assure you, Sir Paul. (*Lord T., Mellefont, and Careless talk apart.*)

Brisk. How? how, my lord? What, affront my wit? Let me perish, do I never say anything worthy to be laughed at?

Lord F. Oh, fie! don't misapprehend me: I don't say so; for I often smile at your conceptions. But there is nothing more unbecoming a man of quality than to laugh; 'tis such a vulgar expression of the passion! everybody can laugh. Then, especially, to laugh at the jest of an inferior person, or when anybody else of the same quality does not laugh with him: ridiculous! to be pleased with what pleases the crowd! Now, when I laugh, I always laugh alone.

Brisk. I suppose that's because you laugh at your own jests, egad! Ha, ha, ha!

Lord F. He, he! I swear, though, your raillery provokes me to a smile.

Brisk. Ay, my lord, it's a sign I hit you in the teeth, if you shew them.

Lord F. He, he, he! I swear, that's so very pretty, I can't forbear.

Lord T. Sir Paul, if you please, we'll retire to the ladies, and drink a dish of tea to settle our heads.

Sir P. With all my heart. Mr. Brisk, you'll come to us: or call me when you're going to joke; I'll be ready to laugh incontinently.

[*Exit with Lord T.*

Mel. But does your lordship never see comedies?

Lord F. Oh! yes, sometimes; but I never laugh.

Mel. No!

Lord F. Oh! no. Never laugh, indeed, sir.

Care. No! why, what d'ye go there for?

Lord F. To distinguish myself from the commonality, and mortify the poets; the fellows grow so conceited when any of their foolish wit prevails upon the side-boxes! I swear—he, he, he!—I have often constrained my inclinations to laugh—he, he, he!—to avoid giving them encouragemeot.

Mel. You are cruel to yourself, my lord, as well as malicious to them.

Lord F. I confess I did myself some violence at first; but now I think I have conquered it.

Brisk. Let me perish, my lord, but there is something very particular and novel in the humour; 'tis true, it makes against wit, and I'm sorry for some friends of mine that write; but, egad! I love to be malicious. Nay, deuce take me, there's wit in't, too; and wit must be foiled by wit: cut a diamond with a diamond; no other way, egad!

Lord F. Oh! I thought you would not be long before you found out the wit.

Care. Wit in what? Where the devil's the wit, in not laughing when a man has a mind to't?

Brisk. Oh Lord! why, can't you find it out? Why, there 'tis, in the not laughing. Don't you apprehend me? My lord, Careless is a very honest fellow; but, harkye!—you understand me—somewhat heavy; a little shallow, or so. Why, I'll tell you now: suppose now you come up to me—nay, pr'ythee, Careless, be instructed—suppose, as I was saying, you come up to me, holding your sides, and laughing as if you would—Well, I look grave, and ask the cause of this immoderate mirth: you laugh on still, and are not able to tell me: still I look grave; not so much as smile—

Care. Smile! no; what the devil should you smile at, when you suppose I can't tell you?

Brisk. Psha, psha! pr'ythee, don't interrupt me: but I tell you, you shall tell me at last; but it shall be a great while first.

Care. Well, but, pr'ythee, don't let it be a great while, because I long to have it over.

Brisk. Well, then, you tell me some good jest, or very witty thing, laughing all the while as if you were ready to die, and I hear it, and look thus; would not you be disappointed?

Care. No; for if it were a witty thing, I should not expect you to understand it.

Lord F. Oh, fie! Mr. Careless; all the world allow Mr. Brisk to have wit: my wife says he has a great deal; I hope you think her a judge.

Brisk. Pooh! my lord, his voice goes for nothing. I can't tell how to make him apprehend. Take it t'other way: suppose I say a witty thing to you. (*To Careless.*)

Care. Then I shall be disappointed, indeed.

Mel. Let him alone, Brisk; he is obstinately bent not to be instructed.

Brisk. I'm sorry for him, the deuce take me!

Mel. Shall we go to the ladies, my lord?

Lord F. With all my heart; methinks, we are a solitude without them.

Mel. Or, what say you to another bottle of champagne?

Lord F. Oh! for the universe, not a drop more, I beseech you. Oh, intemperate! I have a flushing in my face already. (*Takes out a pocket-glass, and looks in it.*)

Brisk. Let me see, let me see, my lord. I broke my glass that was in the lid of my snuff-box. Hum! Deuce take me, I have encouraged a pimple here, too. (*Takes the glass, and looks in it.*)

Lord F. Then you must fortify him with a patch; my wife shall supply you. Come, gentlemen, *allons!* [*Exeunt.*

Enter Maskwell *and* Lady Touchwood.

Lady T. I'll hear no more. You're false and ungrateful; come, I know you false.

Mask. I have been frail, I confess, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Lady T. That I should trust a man whom I had known betray his friend!

Mask. What friend have I betrayed? or to whom?

Lady T. Your fond friend, Mellefont, and to me; can you deny it?

Mask. I do not.

Lady T. Have you not wronged my lord, who has been a father to you in your wants, and given you being? Have you not wronged him in the highest manner?

Mask. With your ladyship's help, and for your service, as I told you before; I can't deny that neither. Anything more, madam?

Lady T. More, audacious villain! Oh! what's more is most my shame. Have you not dishonoured me?

Mask. No, that I deny; for I never told in all my life; so that accusation's answered: on to the next.

Lady T. Death! do you dally with my passion? Insolent devil! But have a care; provoke me not; you shall not escape my vengeance. Calm villain! how unconcerned he stands, confessing treachery and ingratitude! Is there a vice more black? Oh! I have excuses, thousands, for my faults: fire in my temper; passions in my soul, apt to every provocation; oppressed at once with love and with despair. But a sedate, a thinking villain, whose black blood runs temperately bad, what excuse can clear?

Mask. Will you be in temper, madam? I would not talk to be heard. I have been a very great rogue for your sake, and you reproach me with it; I am ready to be a rogue still to do you service; and you are flinging conscience and honour in my face, to rebate my inclinations. How am I to behave myself? You know I am your creature; my life and fortune in your power; to disoblige you brings me certain ruin. Allow it, I would betray

you, I would not be a traitor to myself: I don't pretend to honesty, because you know I am a rascal: but I would convince you, from the necessity of my being firm to you.

Lady T. Necessity, impudence! Can no gratitude incline you? no obligations touch you? Were you not in the nature of a servant? and have not I, in effect, made you lord of all, of me, and of my lord? Where is that humble love, the languishing, that adoration which was once paid me, and everlastingly engaged?

Mask. Fixed, rooted in my heart, whence nothing can remove them; yet you—

Lady T. Yet! what yet?

Mask. Nay, misconceive me not, madam, when I say I have had a generous and a faithful passion, which you had never favoured but through revenge and policy.

Lady T. Ha!

Mask. Look you, madam, we are alone, pray contain yourself, and hear me. You know you loved your nephew when I first sighed for you; I quickly found it: an argument that I loved; for, with that art you veiled your passion, 'twas imperceptible to all but jealous eyes. This discovery made me bold, I confess it; for by it I thought you in my power: your nephew's scorn of you added to my hopes; I watched the occasion, and took you, just repulsed by him, warm at once with love and indignation; your disposition, my arguments, and happy opportunity, accomplished my design. How I have loved you since, words have not shewn; then how should words express?

Lady T. Well, mollifying devil! and have I not met your love with forward fire?

Mask. Your zeal, I grant, was ardent, but misplaced; there was revenge in view; that woman's idol had defiled the temple of the god, and love was made a mock-worship. A son and heir would have edged young Mellefont upon the brink of ruin, and left him nought but you to catch at for prevention.

Lady T. Again provoke me! Do you wind me like a larum, only to rouse my own stilled soul for your diversion? Confusion!

Mask. Nay, madam, I'm gone, if you relapse. What needs this? I say nothing but what yourself, in open hours of love have told me. Why should you deny it? nay, how can you? Is not all this present heat owing to the same fire? Do not you love him still? How have I this day offended you, but in not breaking off his match with Cynthia? which, ere to-morrow, shall be done, had you but patience.

Lady T. How! what said you, Maskwell? Another caprice to unwind my temper?

Mask. No, by my love, I am your slave, the slave of all your pleasures; and will not rest till I have given you peace, would you suffer me.

Lady T. Oh! Maskwell, in vain do I disguise me from thee; thou knowest me; knowest the very inmost windings and recesses of my soul. Oh! Mellefont!—Married to-morrow!—Despair strikes me. Yet my soul knows I hate him, too: let him but once be mine, and next immediate ruin seize him.

Mask. Compose yourself; you shall have your wish. Will that please you?

Lady T. How, how? thou dear, thou precious villain, how?

Mask. You have already been tampering with my Lady Pliant?

Lady T. I have: she is ready for any impression I think fit.

Mask. She must be thoroughly persuaded that Mellefont loves her.

Lady T. She is so credulous that way naturally, and likes him so well, that she will believe it faster than I can persuade her. But I don't see what you can propose from such a trifling design; for her first conversing with Mellefont will convince her of the contrary.

Mask. I know it. I don't depend upon it; but it will prepare something else, and gain us leisure to lay a stronger plot: if I gain a little time, I shall not want contrivance.

One minute gives invention to destroy
What, to rebuild, will a whole age employ.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*The same.*

Enter Lady Froth *and* Cynthia.

Cyn. Indeed, madam! is it possible your ladyship could have been so much in love?

Lady F. I could not sleep; I did not sleep one wink for three weeks together.

Cyn. Prodigious! I wonder want of sleep, and so much love, and so much wit as your ladyship has, did not turn your brain.

Lady F. Oh! my dear Cynthia, you must not rally your friend. But, really, as you say, I wonder, too. But then, I had a way; for, between you and I, I had whimsies and vapours; but I gave them vent.

Cyn. How, pray, madam?

Lady F. Oh! I writ; writ abundantly. Do you never write?

Cyn. Write! what?

Lady F. Songs, elegies, satires, encomiums, panegyrics, lampoons, plays, or heroic poems.

Cyn. Oh Lord! not I, madam; I'm content to be a courteous reader.

Lady F. Oh, inconsistent! In love, and not write! If my lord and I had been both of your temper, we should never have come together. Oh! bless me! what a sad thing would that have been, if my lord and I should never have met!

Cyn. Then neither my lord nor you would ever have met with your match, on my conscience.

Lady F. On my conscience, no more we should; thou say'st right; for sure, my Lord Froth is as fine a gentleman, and as much a man of quality!—Ah! nothing at all of the common air. I think I may say he wants nothing but a blue ribbon and a star to make him shine the very phosphorous of our hemisphere. Do you understand those two hard words? If you don't, I'll explain them to you.

Cyn. Yes, yes, madam, I'm not so ignorant. At least, I won't own it, to be troubled with your instructions. (*Aside.*)

Lady F. Nay, I beg your pardon; but being derived from the Greek, I thought you might have escaped the etymology. But I'm the more amazed, to find you a woman of letters, and not write. Bless me, how can Mellefont believe you love him?

Cyn. Why, 'faith! madam, he that won't take my word shall never have it under my hand.

Lady F. I vow, Mellefont's a pretty gentleman; but methinks he wants a manner.

Cyn. A manner! what's that, madam?

Lady F. Some distinguishing quality; as, for example, the *bel air*, or brilliant, of Mr. Brisk; the solemnity, yet complaisance, of my lord; or something of his own, that he should look a little *je ne sais quoi*-ish; he is too much a mediocrity, in my mind.

Cyn. He does not, indeed, affect either pertness or formality; for which I like him: here he comes.

Lady F. And my lord with him: pray, observe the difference.

Enter LORD FROTH, MELLEFONT, *and* BRISK.

Cyn. Impertinent creature! I could almost be angry with her now. (*Aside.*)

Lady F. My lord, I have been telling Cynthia how much I have been in love with you; I swear I have; I'm not ashamed to own it now; ah! it makes my heart leap; I vow I sigh when I think on't. My dear lord—ha, ha, ha!—do you remember, my lord? (*Squeezes him by the hand, looks kindly on him, sighs, and then laughs out.*)

Lord F. Pleasant creature! Perfectly well. Ah! that look; ay, there it is; who could resist? 'Twas so my heart was made a captive first, and ever since it has been in love with happy slavery.

Lady F. Oh! that tongue, that dear deceitful tongue! that charming softness in your mien and your expression! and then your bow! Good, my lord, bow as you did when I gave you my picture. Here, suppose this my picture. (*Gives him a pocket-glass.*) Pray, mind my lord; ah! he bows charmingly. (*Lord Froth bows profoundly low, then kisses the glass.*) Nay, my lord, you sha'n't kiss it so much; I shall grow jealous, I vow now.

Lord F. I saw myself there, and kissed it for your sake.

Lady F. Ah! gallantry to the last degree. Mr. Brisk, you're a judge, was ever anything so well bred as my lord?

Brisk. Never anything—but your ladyship, let me perish.

Lady F. Oh! prettily turned again! let me die but you have a great deal of wit. Mr. Mellefont, don't you think Mr. Brisk has a world of wit?

Mel. Oh! yes, madam.

Brisk. Oh dear! madam.

Lady F. An infinite deal.

Brisk. Oh heavens! madam.

Lady F. More wit than anybody.

Brisk. I'm everlastingly your humble servant, deuce take me, madam.

Lord F. Don't you think us a happy couple? (*To Cynthia.*)

Cyn. I vow, my lord, I think you are the happiest couple in the world; for you're not only happy in one another, and when you are together, but happy in yourselves, and by yourselves.

Lord F. I hope Mellefont will make a good husband, too.

Cyn. 'Tis my interest to believe he will, my lord.

Lord F. D'ye think he'll love you as well as I do my wife? I'm afraid not.

Cyn. I believe he'll love me better.

Lord F. Heavens! that can never be: but why do you think so?

Cyn. Because he has not so much reason to be fond of himself.

Lord F. Oh! your humble servant for that, dear madam. Well, Mellefont, you'll be a happy creature.

Mel. Ay, my lord, I shall have the same reason for my happiness that your lordship has, I shall think myself happy.

Lord F. Ah! that's all.

Brisk. Your ladyship is in the right: (*to Lady F.*) but, egad! I'm wholly turned into satire. I confess I write but seldom; but when I do—keen iambics, egad! But my lord was telling me, your ladyship has made an essay toward an heroic poem.

Lady F. Did my lord tell you? Yes, I vow, and the subject is my lord's love to me. And what do you think I call it? I dare swear you won't guess—The Syllabub. Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Because my lord's title's Froth, egad! Ha, ha, ha! Deuce take me! very apropos and surprising. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Eh! ay, is not it? And then, I call my lord, Spumoso; and myself—what d'ye think I call myself?

Brisk. Lactilla, may be: 'gad! I cannot tell.

Lady F. Biddy, that's all; just my own name.

Brisk. Biddy! Egad! very pretty: deuce take me, if your ladyship has not the art of surprising the most naturally in the world. I hope you'll make me happy in communicating the poem.

Lady F. Oh! you must be my confidant. I must ask your advice.

Brisk. I'm your humble servant, let me perish. I presume your ladyship has read Bossu?

Lady F. Oh! yes; and Rapin, and Dacier upon Aristotle and Horace. My lord, you must not be jealous, I'm communicating all to Mr. Brisk.

Lord F. No, no; I'll allow Mr. Brisk. Have you nothing about you to shew him, my dear?

Lady F. Yes, I believe I have. Mr. Brisk, come, will you go into the next room? and there I'll shew you what I have. [*Exit with Brisk.*

Lord F. I'll walk a turn in the garden, and come to you. [*Exit.*

Mel. You're thoughtful, Cynthia.

Cyn. I'm thinking that though marriage makes man and wife one flesh, it leaves them still two fools; and they become more conspicuous by setting off one another.

Mel. That's only when two fools meet, and their follies are opposed.

Cyn. Nay, I have known two wits meet, and by the opposition of their wit, render themselves as ridiculous as fools. Matrimony is a hazardous game to engage in. What think you of drawing stakes, and giving over in time?

Mel. No, hang it, that's not endeavouring to win, because it's possible we may lose; since we have shuffled and cut, let's e'en turn up trump now.

Cyn. Then I find it's like cards; if either of us have a good hand, it is an accident of fortune.

Mel. No, marriage is rather like a game at bowls; fortune, indeed, makes the match, and the two nearest, and sometimes the two furthest are together; but the game depends entirely upon judgment.

Cyn. Still it is a game, and, consequently, one of us must be a loser.

Mel. Not at all; only a friendly trial of skill, and the winnings to be laid out in an entertainment.

Enter SIR PAUL *and* LADY PLIANT.

Sir P. Gadsbud! I am provoked into a fermentation, as my Lady Froth says. Was ever the like read of in story?

Lady P. Sir Paul, have patience, let me alone to rattle him up.

Sir P. Pray, your ladyship, give me leave to be angry; I'll rattle him up, I warrant you; I'll teach him, with a certiorari, to make love to my wife.

Lady P. You teach him! I'll teach him myself; so, pray, Sir Paul, hold you contented.

Sir P. Hold yourself contented, my Lady Pliant; I find passion coming upon me even to desperation, and I cannot submit as formerly, therefore give way.

Lady P. How now? will you be pleased to retire, and—

Sir P. No, marry, will I not be pleased; I am pleased to be angry, that's my pleasure at this time.

Mel. What can this mean?

Lady P. 'Gads my life! the man's distracted. Why, how now! who are you? What am I? Slidikins! can't I govern you? What did I marry you for? Am I not to be absolute and uncontrollable? Is it fit a woman of my spirit and conduct should be contradicted in a matter of this concern?

Sir P. It concerns me, and only me; besides, I'm not to be governed at all times. When I am in tranquillity, my Lady Pliant shall command Sir Paul; but when I'm provoked to fury, I cannot incorporate with patience and reason; as soon may

tigers match with tigers, lambs with lambs, and every creature couple with its foe, as the poet says.

Lady P. He's hot-headed still! 'Tis in vain to talk to you; but remember I have a curtain-lecture for you, you disobedient, headstrong brute.

Sir P. No, 'tis because I won't be headstrong; because I won't be a brute, and have my head fortified, that I am thus exasperated. But I will protect my honour: and yonder is the violater of my fame.

Lady P. 'Tis my honour that is concerned, and the violation was intended to me. Your honour! you have none, but what is in my keeping, and I can dispose of it when I please; therefore, don't provoke me.

Sir P. Hum! gadsbud! she says true. (*Aside.*) Well, my lady, march on; I will fight under you, then: I am convinced, as far as passion will permit. (*Sir P. and Lady P. come up to Mellefont.*)

Lady P. Inhuman and treacherous—

Sir P. Thou serpent and first tempter of womankind—

Cyn. Bless me! sir—madam—what mean you?

Sir P. Thy, Thy, come away, Thy; touch him not; come hither, girl: go not near him, there's nothing but deceit about him; snakes are in his looks, and the crocodile of Nilus in his wicked appetite; he would devour thy fortune, and starve thee alive.

Lady P. Dishonourable, impudent creature!

Mel. For heaven's sake, madam, to whom do you direct this language?

Lady P. Have I behaved myself with all the decorum and nicety befitting the person of Sir Paul's wife; have I preserved my honour as it were in a snow-house; have I, I say, preserved myself like a fair sheet of paper, for you to make a blot upon?

Sir P. And she shall make a simile with any woman in England.

Mel. I am so amazed, I know not what to say.

Sir P. Do you think my daughter—this pretty creature—Gadsbud! she's a wife for a cherubim—Do you think her fit for nothing but to be a stalking-horse, to stand before you while you take aim at my wife? Gadsbud! I was never angry before in my life, and I'll never be appeased again.

Mel. Confusion! this is my aunt; such malice can be engendered no where else. (*Aside.*)

Lady P. Sir Paul, take Cynthia from his sight; leave me to strike him with the remorse of his intended crime.

Cyn. Pray, sir, stay; hear him; I dare affirm he's innocent.

Sir P. Innocent! why, harkye! come hither, Thy; harkye! I had it from his aunt, my sister Touchwood. Gadsbud! he does not care a farthing for anything of thee, but thy portion: why, he's in love with my wife; he would have tantalized thee, and dishonoured thy poor father, and that would certainly have broken my heart. I'm sure, if ever I should have horns, they would kill me; they would never come kindly; I should die of 'em, like any child that was cutting his teeth; I should, indeed, Thy; therefore, come away; but Providence has prevented all, therefore, come away when I bid you.

Cyn. I must obey. [*Exit with Sir P.*

Lady P. Oh! such a thing! the impiety of it startles me; to wrong so good, so fair a creature, and one that loves you tenderly: 'tis a barbarity of barbarities, and nothing could be guilty of it—

Mel. But the greatest villain imagination can form, I grant it; and next to the villany of such a fact, is the villany of aspersing me with the guilt. How? which way was I to wrong her? for yet I understand you not.

Lady P. Why, gads my life! cousin Mellefont, you cannot he so peremptory as to deny it, when I tax you with it to your face; for, now Sir Paul's gone, you are *corum nobus.*

Mel. By heaven, I love her more than life, or—

Lady P. Fiddle, faddle! don't tell me of this and that, and everything in the world; but give me mathemacular demonstration, answer me directly. But I have not patience. Oh! the impiety of it, as I was saying, and the unparalleled wickedness! Oh, merciful father! how could you think to reverse nature so, to make the daughter the means of procuring the mother!

Mel. The daughter procure the mother!

Lady P. Ay; for though I am not Cynthia's own mother, I am her father's wife; and that's near enough to make it incest.

Mel. Oh! my precious aont, and the devil in conjunction! (*Aside.*)

Lady P. Oh! reflect upon the horror of that, and then the guilt of deceiving everybody; marrying the daughter, only to dishonour the father; and then seducing me—

Mel. Where am I? is it day? and am I awake? Madam—

Lady P. And nobody knows how circumstances may happen together. To my thinking now, I could resist the strongest temptation; but yet, I know 'tis impossible for me to know whether I could or no; there's no certainty in the things of this life.

Mel. Madam, pray give me leave to ask you one question.

Lady P. Oh Lord! ask me the question! I'll swear, I'll refuse it; I swear I'll deny it, therefore, don't ask me; nay, you sha'n't ask me; I swear I'll deny it. Oh gemini! you have brought all the blood into my face; I warrant, I am as red as a turkey-cock. Oh fie! cousin Mellefont.

Mel. Nay, madam, hear me—

Lady P. Hear you? No, no; I'll deny you first, and hear you afterwards; for one does not know how one's mind may change upon hearing. Hearing is one of the senses, and all the senses are fallible; I won't trust my honour, I assure you; my honour is infallible and un-come-at-able.

Mel. For heaven's sake, madam—

Lady P. Oh! name it no more. Bless me, how can you talk of heaven, and have so much wickedness in your heart? May be, you don't think it a sin; they say, some of you gentlemen don't think it a sin. Indeed, if I did not think it a sin—But still, my honour, if it were no sin—But then, to marry my daughter, for the conveniency of frequent opportunities: I'll never consent to that; as sure as can be, I'll break the match.

Mel. Death and amazement! Madam, upon my knees—

Lady P. Nay, nay, rise up: come, you shall see my good-nature. I know love is powerful, and nobody can help his passion: 'tis not your fault, nor I swear it is not mine. How can I help it, if I have charms? And how can you help it, if you are made a captive? Oh Lord! here's somebody coming; I dare not stay. Well, you must consider of your crime, and strive as much as can be against it: strive, be sure; but don't be melancholy, don't despair; but never think that I'll grant you anything—Oh Lord! no: but be sure you lay aside all thoughts of the marriage; for though I know you don't love Cynthia, only as a blind for your passion to me, yet it will make me jealous—Oh Lord! what did I say? Jealous! no, no, I can't be jealous; for I must not love you; therefore, don't hope—but don't despair neither. Oh! they're coming, I must fly. [*Exit.*

Mel. So, then, in spite of my care and foresight, I am caught—caught in my security: yet this was but a shallow artifice, unworthy of my Machiavilian

aunt; there must be more behind: destruction follows hard, if not presently prevented.

Enter MASKWELL.

Maskwell, welcome! Thy presence is a view of land appearing to my shipwrecked hopes: the witch has raised the storm, and her ministers have done their work; you see the vessels are parted.

Mask. I know it: I met Sir Paul towing away Cynthia. Come, trouble not your head, I'll join you together ere to-morrow morning, or drown between you in the attempt.

Mel. There's comfort in a hand stretched out to one that's sinking, though never so far off.

Mask. No sinking, nor no danger. Come, cheer up; why, you don't know that, while I plead for you, your aunt has given me a retaining fee; nay, I am your greatest enemy, and she does but journey-work under me.

Mel. Ha! how's this?

Mask. What d'ye think of my being employed in the execution of all her plots? Ha, ha, ha! Nay, it's true: I have undertaken to break the match; I have undertaken to make your uncle disinherit you; to get you turned out of doors, and to—Ha, ha, ha! I can't tell you for laughing. Oh! she has opened her heart to me—I'm to turn you a grazing, and to—ha, ha, ha!—marry Cynthia myself: there's a plot for you.

Mel. Ha! Oh! see; I see my rising sun! Light breaks through clouds upon me, and I shall live in day. Oh! my Maskwell, how shall I thank or praise thee? thou hast outwitted woman. But tell me, how couldst thou thus get into her confidence, eh! how? But was it her contrivance to persuade my Lady Pliant to this extravagant belief?

Mask. It was; and, to tell you the truth, I encouraged it for your diversion: though it made you a little uneasy for the present, yet the reflection of it must needs be entertaining. I warrant, she was very violent at first.

Mel. Ha, ha, ha! Ay, a very fury.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha! I know her temper. Well, you must know, then, that all my contrivances were but bubbles; till at last I pretended to have been long secretly in love with Cynthia; that did my business; that convinced your aunt I might be trusted; since it was as much my interest as hers to break the match: then she thought my jealousy might qualify me to assist her in her revenge; and, in short, in that belief, told me the secrets of her heart. At length, we made this agreement: if I accomplish her designs, (as I told you before,) she has engaged to put Cynthia, with all her fortune, into my power.

Mel. She is most gracious in her favour. Well, and, dear Jack, how hast thou contrived?

Mask. I would not have you stay to hear it now; for I don't know but she may come this way. I am to meet her anon; after that, I'll tell you the whole matter. Be here in this gallery an hour hence: by that time, I imagine, our consultation may be over.

Mel. I will. Till then, success attend thee. [*Exit.*

Mask. Till then, success will attend me; for when I meet you, I meet the only obstacle to my fortune. Cynthia, let thy beauty gild my crimes; and whatsoever I commit of treachery or deceit shall be imputed to me as a merit. Treachery! what treachery? Love cancels all the bonds of friendship, and sets men right upon their first foundations. Duty to kings, piety to parents, gratitude to benefactors, and fidelity to friends, are different and particular ties; but the name of rival cuts 'em all asunder, and is a general acquittance. Rival is equal; and love, like death, an universal leveller of mankind. Ha! but is there not such a thing as honesty? Yes, and whosoever has it about him bears an enemy in his breast; for your honest man, as I take it, is that nice, scrupulous, conscientious person, who will cheat nobody but himself: such another coxcomb as your wise man, who is too hard for all the world, and will be made a fool of by nobody but himself. Ha, ha, ha! Well, for wisdom and honesty, give me cunning and hypocrisy. Oh! 'tis such a pleasure to angle for fair-faced fools! Then that hungry gudgeon, credulity, will bite at anything. Why, let me see: I have the same face, the same words and accents, when I speak what I do think, and when I speak what I do not think; the very same: and dear dissimulation is the only art not to be known from nature.

Why will mankind be fools, and be deceiv'd?
And why are friends and lovers' oaths believ'd?
When each, who searches strictly his own mind,
May so much fraud and power of baseness find.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter LORD *and* LADY TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. My lord, can you blame my brother Pliant, if he refuse his daughter upon this provocation? The contract's void by this unheard-of impiety.

Lord T. I don't believe it true; he has better principles: pho! 'tis nonsense. Come, come, I know my Lady Pliant; 'tis not the first time she has mistaken respect for love, and made Sir Paul jealous of the civility of an undesigning person, the better to bespeak his security in her unfeigned pleasures.

Lady T. You censure hardly, my lord: my sister's honour is very well known.

Lord T. Yes, I believe I know some that have been familiarly acquainted with it. This is a little trick wrought by some pitiful contriver, envious of my nephew's merit.

Lady T. Nay, my lord, it may be so, and I hope it will be found so; but that will require some time; for, in such a case as this, demonstration is necessary.

Lord T. There should have been demonstration of the contrary, too, before it had been believed.

Lady T. So, I suppose, there was.

Lord T. How? where? when?

Lady T. That I can't tell; nay, I don't say there was; I am willing to believe as favourably of my nephew as I can.

Lord T. I don't know that.

Lady T. How? Don't you believe that, say you, my lord?

Lord T. No, I don't say so. I confess I am troubled to find you so cold in his defence.

Lady T. His defence! Bless me! would you have me defend an ill thing?

Lord T. You believe it, then?

Lady T. I don't know; I am very unwilling to speak my thoughts in anything that may be to my cousin's disadvantage; besides, I find, my lord, you are prepared to receive an ill impression from any opinion of mine, which is not consenting with your own; but since I am like to be suspected in the end, and 'tis a pain any longer to dissemble, I own it to you: in short, I do believe it; nay, and can believe anything worse, if it were laid to his charge. Don't ask me my reasons, my lord; for they are not fit to be told you.

Lord T. I'm amazed! Here must be something more than ordinary in this. (*Aside.*) Not fit to be told me, madam? You can have no interests

wherein I am not concerned; and, consequently, the same reasons ought to be convincing to me, which create your satisfaction or disquiet.

Lady T. But those which cause my disquiet, I am willing to have remote from your hearing. Good, my lord, don't press me.

Lord T. Don't oblige me to press you.

Lady T. Whatever it was, 'tis past; and that is better to be unknown, which cannot be prevented; therefore, let me beg of you to rest satisfied.

Lord T. When you have told me I will.

Lady T. You won't.

Lord T. By my life, my dear, I will.

Lady T. What if you can't?

Lord T. How? Then I must know; nay, I will: no more trifling; I charge you tell me—by all our mutual peace to come, upon your duty—

Lady T. Nay, my lord, you need say no more, to make me lay my heart before you; but don't be thus transported; compose yourself; it is not of concern, to make you lose one minute's temper: 'tis not, indeed, my dear. Oh Lord! I wish I had not told you anything. Indeed, my lord, you have frightened me. Nay, look pleased, I'll tell you.

Lord T. Well, well.

Lady T. Nay, but will you be calm? Indeed, it's nothing but—

Lord T. But what?

Lady T. But will you promise not to be angry? nay, you must not be angry with Mellefont. I dare swear he's sorry; and, were it to do again, would not—

Lord T. Sorry for what? Death! you rack me with delay.

Lady T. Nay, no great matter, only—well, I have your promise—pho! why, nothing, only your nephew had a mind to amuse himself sometimes with a little gallantry towards me. Nay, I can't think he meant anything seriously; but methought it looked oddly.

Lord T. Confusion! what do I hear?

Lady T. Or, may be, he thought he was not enough akin to me upon your account, and had a mind to create a nearer relation on his own; a lover, you know, my lord—Ha, ha, ha! Well, but that's all. Now you have it. Well, remember your promise, my lord; and don't take any notice of it to him.

Lord T. No, no, no.

Lady T. Nay, I swear you must not; a little harmless mirth—only misplaced, that's all. But if it were more, 'tis over now, and all's well. For my part, I have forgotten it; and so has he, I hope; for I have not heard anything from him these two days.

Lord T. These two days! Is it so fresh? Unnatural villain! I'll have him stripped, and turned naked out of my doors this moment, and let him rot and perish.

Lady T. Oh! my lord, you'll ruin me, if you take such public notice of it; it will be a town-talk: consider your own and my honour. Stay, I told you you would not be satisfied when you knew it.

Lord T. Before I've done, I will be satisfied. Ungrateful monster! How long—

Lady T. Lord! I don't know: I wish my lips had grown together when I told you. Almost a twelvemonth—nay, I won't tell you any more, till you are yourself. Pray, my lord, don't let the company see you in this disorder: yet, I confess, I can't blame you; for I think I was never so surprised in my life. Who would have thought my nephew could have so misconstrued my kindness? But will you go into your closet, and recover your temper? I'll make an excuse of sudden business to the company, and come to you. Pray, good, dear my lord, let me beg you do now: I'll come immediately, and tell you all. Will you, my lord?

Lord T. I will. I am mute with wonder.

Lady T. Well, but go now; here's somebody coming.

Lord T. Well, I go. You won't stay; for I would hear more of this.

Lady T. I'll follow instantly. [*Exit Lord T.*

Enter Maskwell.

So!

Mask. This was a master-piece, and did not need my help; though I stood ready for a cue to come in, and confirm all, had there been occasion.

Lady T. Have you seen Mellefont?

Mask. I have; and am to meet him here about this time.

Lady T. How does he bear his disappointment?

Mask. Secure in my assistance, he seemed not much afflicted, but rather laughed at the shallow artifice, which so little time must of necessity discover: yet he is apprehensive of some further design of your's, and has engaged me to watch you. I believe he will hardly be able to prevent your plot; yet I would have you use caution and expedition.

Lady T. Expedition, indeed; for all we do must be performed in the remaining part of this evening, and before the company break up, lest my lord should cool, and have an opportunity to talk with him privately: my lord must not see him again.

Mask. By no means; therefore, you must aggravate my lord's displeasure to a degree that will admit of no conference with him. What think you of mentioning me?

Lady T. How?

Mask. To my lord, as having been privy to Mellefont's design upon you, but still using my utmost endeavours to dissuade him: though my friendship and love to him has made me conceal it, yet, you may say, I threatened the next time he attempted anything of that kind, to discover it to my lord.

Lady T. To what end is this?

Mask. It will confirm my lord's opinion of my honour and honesty, and create in him a new confidence in me, which (should this design miscarry) will be necessary to the forming of another plot that I have in my head—to cheat you, as well as the rest. (*Aside.*)

Lady T. I'll do it.

Mask. You had best go to my lord, keep him as long as you can in his closet, and I doubt not but you will mould him to what you please: your guests are so engaged in their own follies and intrigues, they'll miss neither of you.

Lady T. When shall we meet? At eight this evening, in my chamber; there rejoice at our success, and toy away an hour in mirth.

Mask. I will not fail. [*Exit Lady T.*] I know what she means well enough. I have lost all appetite to her; yet she's a fine woman, and I loved her once; but I don't know, the case is altered; what was my pleasure is become my duty; and I am as indifferent to her now, as if I were her husband. Should she smoke my design upon Cynthia, I were in a fine pickle. She has a penetrating head, and knows how to interpret a coldness the right way; therefore, I must dissemble ardour and ecstacy, that's resolved. How easily and pleasantly is that dissembled before fruition! Plague on't! that a man can't drink without quenching his thirst. Ha! yonder comes Mellefont, thoughtful. Let me think: meet her at eight—hum—ha! I have it. If I can speak to my lord before, I will deceive them all, and yet secure myself. 'Twas a lucky thought!

Well, this double-dealing is a jewel. Here he comes: now for me.

Enter Mellefont, *musing. Maskwell, pretending not to see him, walks by him, and speaks, as it were, to himself.*

Mercy on us! what will the wickedness of this world come to!

Mel. How now, Jack? What, so full of contemplation that you run over?

Mask. I'm glad you're come, for I could not contain myself any longer; and was just going to give vent to a secret, which nobody but you ought to drink down. Your aunt's just gone from thence.

Mel. And having trusted thee with the secrets of her soul, thou art villanously bent to discover 'em all to me? eh!

Mask. I'm afraid my frailty leans that way; but I don't know whether I can in honour discover all.

Mel. All, all, man. What, you may in honour betray her as far as she betrays herself. No tragical design upon my person, I hope?

Mask. No, but it's a comical design upon mine.

Mel. What dost thou mean?

Mask. Listen, and be dumb: we have been bargaining about the rate of your ruin—

Mel. Like any two guardians to an orphan heiress. Well.

Mask. And whereas pleasure is generally paid with mischief, what mischief I shall do is to be paid with pleasure.

Mel. So, when you've swallowed the potion, you sweeten your mouth with a plum?

Mask. You are merry, sir; but I shall probe your constitution: in short, the price of your banishment is to be paid with the person of—

Mel. Of Cynthia, and her fortune. Why, you forget, you told me this before.

Mask. No, no; so far you are right; and I am, as an earnest of that bargain, to have full and free possession of the person of your aunt.

Mel. Ha! Pho! you trifle.

Mask. By this light, I'm serious, all raillery apart. I knew 'twould stun you. This evening, at eight, she will receive me in her bed-chamber.

Mel. Hell and the devil! is she abandoned of all grace? Why, the woman is possessed.

Mask. Well, will you go in my stead?

Mel. Into a hot furnace sooner.

Mask. No you would not; it would not be so convenient, as I can order matters.

Mel. What d'ye mean?

Mask. Mean! not to disappoint the lady, I assure you. Ha, ha, ha! How gravely he looks. Come, come, I won't perplex you. 'Tis the only thing that Providence could have contrived to make me capable of serving you, either to my inclination or your own necessity.

Mel. How, how, for heaven's sake, dear Maskwell?

Mask. Why, thus: I'll go according to my appointment; you shall have notice, at the critical minute, to come and surprise your aunt and me together. Counterfeit a rage against me, and I'll make my escape through the private passage from her chamber, which I'll take care to leave open. 'Twill be hard if then you can't bring her to any conditions; for this discovery will disarm her of all defence, and leave her entirely at your mercy: nay, she must ever after be in awe of you.

Mel. Let me adore thee, my better genius! I think it is not in the power of fate now to disappoint my hopes—my hopes! my certainty!

Mask. Well, I'll meet you here, within a quarter of eight, and give you notice.

Mel. Good fortune ever go with thee!

[*Exit Maskwell.*

Enter Careless.

Care. Mellefont, get out o'the way. My Lady Pliant's coming, and I shall never succeed while thou art in sight, though she begins to tack about; but I made love a great while to no purpose.

Mel. Why, what's the matter? She's convinced that I don't care for her.

Care. I can't get an answer from her, that does not begin with her honour, or her virtue, or some such cant. Then she has told me the whole history of Sir Paul's nine years' courtship; how he has lain for whole nights together upon the stairs, before her chamber-door; and the first favour he received from her was a piece of an old scarlet petticoat for a stomacher; which, since the day of his marriage, he has, out of a piece of gallantry, converted into a night-cap; and wears it still, with much solemnity, on his anniversary wedding-night.

Mel. You are very great with him. I wonder he never told you his grievances: he will, I warrant you.

Care. Excessively foolish! But that which gives me most hopes of her is her telling me of the many temptations she has resisted.

Mel. Nay, then, you have her; for a woman's bragging to a man that she has overcome temptation, is an argument that they were weakly offered, and a challenge to him to engage her more irresistibly. Here she comes with Sir Paul. I'll leave you. Ply her close; and, by-and-by, clap a billet-doux into her hand; for a woman never thinks a man truly in love with her, till he has been fool enough to think of her out of her sight, and to lose so much time as to write to her. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Paul *and* Lady Pliant.

Sir P. Sha'n't we disturb your meditations, Mr. Careless? you would be private?

Care. You bring that along with you, Sir Paul, that shall be always welcome to my privacy.

Sir P. Oh! sweet sir, you load your humble servants, both me and my wife, with continual favours.

Lady P. Sir Paul, what a phrase was there! You will be making answers, and taking that upon you which ought to lie upon me: that you should have so little breeding, to think Mr. Careless did not apply himself to me. Pray, what have you to entertain anybody's privacy? I swear and declare, in the face of the whole world, I'm ready to blush for your ignorance.

Sir P. I acquiesce, my lady; but don't snub so loud. (*Apart.*)

Lady P. Mr. Careless, if a person that is wholly illiterate might be supposed to be capable of being qualified to make a suitable return to those obligations, which you are pleased to confer upon one that is wholly incapable of being qualified in all those circumstances, I'm sure I should rather attempt it than anything in the world; (*courtesies*) for, I'm sure, there's nothing in the world that I would rather. (*Courtesies.*) But I know Mr. Careless is so great a critic, and so fine a gentleman, that it is impossible for me—

Care. Oh, heavens! madam, you confound me.

Sir P. Gadsbud! she's a fine person.

Lady P. Oh, Lord! sir, pardon me, we women have not those advantages: I know my own imperfections; but, at the same time, you must give me leave to declare in the face of the world, that nobody is more sensible of favours and things; for with the reserve of my honour, I assure you, Mr. Careless, I don't know anything in the world I would refuse to a person so meritorious. You'll pardon my want of expression.

Care. Oh! your ladyship is abounding in all excellence, particularly that of phrase.

Lady P. You are so obliging, sir.

Care. Your ladyship is so charming.

Sir P. So, now, now; now, my lady.

Lady P. So well bred.

Care. So surprising.

Lady P. So well-dressed, so *bonne mienne*, so eloquent, so unaffected, so easy, so free, so particular, so agreeable—

Sir P. Ay, so, so, there.

Care. Oh Lord! I beseech you, madam, don't—

Lady P. So gay, so graceful, so good teeth, so fine shape, so fine limbs, so fine linen; and I don't doubt but you have a very good skin, sir.

Care. For heaven's sake, madam—I'm quite out of countenance.

Sir P. And my lady's quite out of breath, or else you should hear. Gadsbud! you may talk of my Lady Froth—

Care. Oh! fie, fie! not to be named of a day. My Lady Froth is very well in her accomplishments, but it is when my Lady Pliant is not thought of; if that can ever be.

Lady P. Oh! you overcome me—that is so excessive.

Sir P. Nay, I swear and vow, that was pretty.

Care. Oh! Sir Paul, you are the happiest man alive. Such a lady! that is the envy of her sex, and the admiration of ours.

Sir P. Your humble servant. I am, I thank heaven, in a fine way of living, as I may say, peacefully and happily; and, I think, need not envy any of my neighbours, blessed be Providence! Ay, truly, Mr. Careless, my lady is a great blessing; a fine, discreet, well-spoken woman, as you shall see, if it become me to say so; and we live very comfortably together: she is a little hasty sometimes, and so am I; but mine is soon over; and then I'm so sorry. Oh! Mr. Careless, if it were not for one thing—

Enter Timothy, *with a letter, and offers it to Sir Paul Pliant.*

Gadso! gadsbud! Tim, carry it to my lady; you should have carried it to my lady first.

Tim. 'Tis directed to your worship.

Sir P. Well, well, my lady reads all letters first.

Lady P. How often have you been told of that, you jackanapes?

Sir P. Child, do so no more; d'ye hear, Tim?

Tim. No, and please you. [*Exit.*

Sir P. A humour of my wife's—you know, women have little fancies. But, as I was telling you, Mr. Careless, if it were not for one thing, I should think myself the happiest man in the world; indeed, that touches me near, very near.

Care. What can that be, Sir Paul?

Sir P. Why, I have, I thank heaven, a very plentiful fortune, a good estate in the country, some houses in town, and some money, a pretty tolerable personal estate; and it is a great grief to me, indeed it is, Mr. Careless, that I have not a son to inherit this. 'Tis true, I have a daughter; and a fine dutiful child she is, though I say it; blessed be Providence, I may say; for, indeed, Mr. Careless, I am mightily beholden to Providence—a poor, unworthy sinner! But if I had a son—ah! that's my affliction, and my only affliction; indeed, I cannot refrain from tears when it comes in my mind. (*Cries.*)

Care. Why, methinks, that might be easily remedied; my lady's a fine likely woman.

Sir P. Oh! a fine likely woman as you shall see in a summer's day; indeed she is, Mr. Careless, in all respects.

Care. And I should not have taken you to have been so old—

Sir P. Alas! that's not it, Mr. Careless; ah! that's not it; no, no, you shoot wide of the mark a mile, indeed you do; that's not it, Mr. Careless; no, no, that's not it.

Care. No! what can be the matter, then?

Sir P. You'll scarcely believe me, when I shall tell you. Why, my lady is so nice. I am her husband, as I may say, though far unworthy of that honour; yet, I am her husband; but, alas-a-day! I have no more familiarity with her person, as to that matter, than with my own mother; no, indeed.

Care. Alas-a-day! this is a lamentable story; 'tis an injury to the world; my lady must be told on't; she must, i'faith! Sir Paul.

Sir P. Ah! would to heaven you would, Mr. Careless; you are mightily in her favour.

Care. I warrant you; what! we must have a son some way or other.

Sir P. Indeed I should be mightily bound to you if you could bring it about, Mr. Careless.

Lady P. Sir Paul, it's from your steward; here's a return of six hundred pounds; you may take fifty of it for your next half-year. (*Gives him the letter.*)

Enter Lord Froth *and* Cynthia.

Sir P. How does my girl? Come hither to thy father; poor lamb, thou'rt melancholy.

Lord F. Heavens! Sir Paul, you amaze me of all things in the world. You are never pleased but when we are all upon the broad grin; all laugh, and no company: ah! then, 'tis such a sight to see some teeth. Sure, you're a great admirer of my Lady Whifler, Mr. Sneer, and Sir Lawrence Loud, and that gang.

Sir P. I vow and swear she's a very merry woman; but I think she laughs a little too much.

Lord F. Merry! Oh Lord! what a character that is of a woman of quality! You have been at my Lady Whifler's upon her day, madam? (*To Cyn.*)

Cyn. Yes, my lord. I must humour this fool. (*Aside.*)

Lord F. Well, and how, eh? What is your sense of the conversation there?

Cyn. Oh! most ridiculous! a perpetual concert of laughing without any harmony; for sure, my lord, to laugh out of time is as disagreeable as to sing out of time, or out of tune.

Lord F. He, he, he! right; and then, my Lady Whifler is so ready, she always comes in three bars too soon: and then, what do they laugh at? For, you know, laughing without a jest, is as impertinent—he! as, as—

Cyn. As dancing without a fiddle.

Lord F. Just, i'faith! that was at my tongue's end.

Cyn. But that cannot be properly said of them; for, I think, they are all in good nature with the world, and only laugh at one another; and, you must allow, they have all jests in their persons, though they have none in their conversation.

Lord F. True, as I'm a person of honour: for heaven's sake, let us sacrifice 'em to mirth a little.

Re-enter Timothy, *and whispers Sir Paul Pliant.*

Sir P. Gadso! Wife, wife; my Lady Pliant, I have a word—

Lady P. I'm busy, Sir Paul; I wonder at your impertinence.

Care. Sir Paul, harkye! I'm reasoning the matter, you know. Madam, if your ladyship pleases, we'll discourse of this in the next room.

[*Exit with Lady P.*

Sir P. Oh, ho! I wish you good success; I wish you good success. Boy, tell my lady, when she has done, I would speak with her below. [*Exit with Tim.*

Enter Lady Froth *and* Brisk.

Lady F. Then you think that episode between

Susan the dairy-maid and our coachman, is not amiss? you know, I may suppose the dairy in town, as well as in the country.

Brisk. Incomparable, let me perish! But, then, being an heroic poem, had not you better call him a charioteer? Charioteer sounds great; besides, your ladyship's coachman having a red face, and you comparing him to the sun—and, you know, the sun is called heaven's charioteer.

Lady F. Oh! infinitely better; I'm extremely beholding to you for the hint. Stay, we'll read over those half-a-score lines again. (*Pulls out a paper.*) Let me see here: you know what goes before; the comparison, you know. (*Reads.*)

"For as the sun shines ev'ry day,
So of our coachman I may say"—

Brisk. I'm afraid that simile won't do in wet weather, because you say the sun shines every day.

Lady F. No, for the sun it won't; but it will do for the coachman; for, you know, there's most occasion for a coach in wet weather.

Brisk. Right, right, that saves all.

Lady F. Then, I don't say the sun shines all the day; but, that he peeps now and then: yet he does shine all the day, too, you know, though we don't see him.

Brisk. Right; but the vulgar will never comprehend that.

Lady F. Well, you shall hear. Let me see. (*Reads.*)

"For as the sun shines every day,
So of our coachman I may say,
He shews his drunken fiery face,
Just as the sun does, more or less."

Brisk. That's right; all's well, all's well: more or less.

Lady F. (*Reads.*)

"And when, at night, his labour's done,
Then, too, like heaven's charioteer, the sun"—

Ay, charioteer does better.

"Into the dairy he descends,
And there his whipping and his driving ends;
There he's secure from danger of a bilk,
His fare is paid him, and he sets in milk."

For Susan, you know, is Thetis, and so—

Brisk. Incomparably well and proper, egad! but I have one exception to make: don't you think bilk—I know it's good rhyme—but don't you think bilk and fare too like a hackney-coachman?

Lady F. I swear and vow I'm afraid so; and yet our Jehu was a hackney-coachman when my lord took him.

Brisk. Was he? I'm answered, if Jehu was a hackney-coachman. You may put that into the marginal notes, though, to prevent criticism: only mark it with a small asterism, and say, Jehu was formerly a hackney-coachman.

Lady F. I will. You'd oblige me extremely to write notes to the whole poem.

Brisk. With all my heart and soul; and proud of the vast honour, let me perish.

Lord F. He, he he! My dear, have you done? Won't you join with us? we were laughing at my Lady Whifler and Mr. Sneer.

Lady F. Ay, my dear, were you? Oh! filthy Mr. Sneer! he's a nauseous figure, a most fulsamic fop, pho! He spent two days together in going about Covent-garden to suit the lining of his coach with his complexion.

Lord F. Oh, silly! yet his aunt is as fond of him, as if she had brought the ape into the world herself.

Brisk. Who, my Lady Toothless? Oh! she's a mortifying spectacle; she's always chewing the cud, like an old ewe.

Cyn. Fie! Mr. Brisk, 'tis eringoes for her cough.

Lady F. Then she's always ready to laugh when Sneer offers to speak; and sits in expectation of his no jest, with her mouth open.

Brisk. Like an oyster at low ebb, egad! Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Then that t'other great strapping lady; I can't hit of her name; the old fat fool that paints so exorbitantly.

Brisk. I know whom you mean; but deuce take me, I can't hit of her name neither. Paints, d'ye say? why, she lays it on with a trowel; then she has a great beard that bristles through it, and makes her look as if she were plastered with lime and hair, let me perish.

Lady F. Oh! you made a song upon her, Mr. Brisk.

Brisk. Eh! egad! so I did. My lord can sing it. 'Tis not a song, neither: it's a sort of an epigram, or rather, an epigrammatic sonnet; I don't know what to call it, but it's satire. Sing it, my lord.

SONG.—LORD FROTH.

Ancient Phillis has young graces,
'Tis a strange thing, but a true one;
Shall I tell you how?
She herself makes her own faces,
And each morning wears a new one;
Where's the wonder now?

Brisk. Short, but there's salt in it; my way of writing, egad!

Enter THOMAS.

Lady F. How now?

Tho. Your ladyship's chair is come.

Lady F. Is nurse and the child in it?

Tho. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Lady F. Oh! the dear creature! let's go see it.

Lord F. I swear, my dear, you spoil that child with sending it to and again so often; this is the seventh time the chair has gone for her to-day.

Lady F. Oh la! I swear it's but the sixth, and I haven't seen her these two honrs. The poor dear creature! I swear, my lord, you don't love poor dear little Sapho. Come, my dear Cynthia; Mr. Brisk, we'll go see Sapho, though my lord won't.

Cyn. I'll wait upon your ladyship.

Brisk. Pray, madam, how old is Lady Sapho?

Lady F. Three quarters; but I swear she has a world of wit, and can sing a tune already. My lord, won't you go? won't you? what, not to see Saph? Pray, my lord, come see little Saph. I knew you could not stay. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter MELLEFONT *and* CYNTHIA.

Cyn. I heard him loud as I came by the closet-door, and my lady with him: but she seemed to moderate his passion.

Mel. Ay, as gentle breezes moderate a fire; but I shall counterwork her spells.

Cyn. It's impossible; she'll cast beyond you still. I'll lay my life it will never be a match.

Mel. What?

Cyn. Between you and I.

Mel. Why so? I don't know why we should not steal out of the house this moment, and marry one another without consideration or the fear of repentance. Hang fortune, portion, settlements, and jointures.

Cyn. Ay, ay, what have we to do with them? You know we marry for love.

Mel. Love, love, downright, very villanous love.

Cyn. Here, then, I give you my promise, in spite of my duty, any temptation of wealth, your inconstancy, or my own inclination to change—

Mel. To run most wilfully and unreasonably away with me this moment, and be married.

Cyn. Hold—never to marry anybody else.

Mel. That's but a kind of negative consent. Why, you won't balk the frolic?

Cyn. If you had not been so assured of your own conduct, I would not. But 'tis but reasonable that, since I consent to like a man without the vile consideration of money, he should give me a very evident demonstration of his wit; therefore let me see you undermine my Lady Touchwood, as you boasted, and force her to give her consent, and then—

Mel. I'll do't.

Cyn. And I'll do't.

Mel. This very next ensuing hour of eight o'clock is the last minute of her reign, unless the devil assist her in *propria persona*.

Cyn. Well, if the devil should assist her, and your plot miscarry—

Mel. Ay, what am I to trust to, then?

Cyn. Why, if you give me very clear demonstration that it was the devil, I'll allow for irresistible odds. Here's my mother-in-law, and your friend Careless; I would not have 'em see us together, yet. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CARELESS *and* LADY PLIANT.

Lady P. I swear, Mr. Careless, you are very alluring, and say so many fine things, and nothing is so moving to me as a fine thing. Well, I must do you this justice, and declare in the face of the world, never anybody gained so far upon me as yourself; with blushes I must own it, you have shaken, as I may say, the very foundation of my honour. Well, sure if I escape your importunities, I shall value myself as long as I live, I swear.

Care. And despise me. (*Sighing.*)

Lady P. The last of any man in the world, by my purity; now you make me swear. Oh! gratitude, forbid that I should ever be wanting in a respectful acknowledgment of an entire resignation of all my best wishes, for the person and parts of so accomplished a person, whose merit challenges much more, I'm sure, than my illiterate praises can description.

Care. Ah! heavens, madam, you ruin me with kindness. Your charming tongue pursues the victory of your eyes, while at your feet your poor adorer dies. (*In a whining tone.*)

Lady P. Ah! very fine.

Care. Ah! why are you so fair, so bewitchingly fair? Oh, let me grow to the ground here, and feast upon that hand! Oh, let me press it to my heart, my trembling heart! the nimble movement shall instruct your pulse, and teach it to alarm desire. (*Still whining.*) I'm almost at the end of my cant, if she does not yield quickly. (*Aside.*)

Lady P. Oh! that's so passionate and fine, I cannot bear it. I am not safe if I stay, and must leave you.

Care. And must you leave me? Rather let me languish out a wretched life, and breathe my soul beneath your feet. I must say the same thing over again, and can't help it. (*Aside.*)

Lady P. I swear, I'm ready to languish, too. Oh, my honour! whither is it going? I protest you have given me the palpitation of the heart.

Care. Can you be so cruel?

Lady P. Oh! rise, I beseech you; say no more till you rise. Why did you kneel so long? I swear I was so transported, I did not see it. Well, to shew you how far you have gained upon me, I assure you, if Sir Paul should die, of all mankind there's none I'd sooner make my second choice.

Care. Oh, heaven! I can't outlive this night without your favour. I feel my spirits faint, a general dampness overspreads my face, a cold deadly dew already vents through all my pores, and will, to-morrow, wash me for ever from your sight, and drown me in my tomb.

Lady P. Oh! you have conquered; sweet, melting, moving sir, you have conquered. What heart of marble can refrain to weep, and yield to such sad sayings? (*Cries.*)

Care. I thank heaven they are the saddest that I ever said. (*Aside.*) Oh!

Lady P. Oh! I yield myself all up to your uncontrolable embraces. Say, thou dear dying man, when, where, and how? Ah! there's Sir Paul.

Care. 'Slife! yonder's Sir Paul; but if he were not come, I'm so transported I cannot speak. This note will inform you.

[*Gives her a note, and exit.*

Re-enter CYNTHIA, *with* SIR PAUL PLIANT.

Sir P. Thou art my tender lambkin, and shalt do what thou wilt; but endeavour to forget this Mellefont.

Cyn. I would obey you to my power, sir; but, if I have not him, I have sworn never to marry.

Sir P. Never to marry! Heavens forbid! must I neither have sons nor grandsons? must the family of the Pliants be utterly extinct for want of issue male? Oh, impiety! but did you swear? did that sweet creature swear, eh? How durst you swear without my consent, eh? Gadsbud! who am I?

Cyn. Pray, don't be angry, sir; when I swore I had your consent; and, therefore, I swore.

Sir P. Why, then, the revoking my consent does annul or make of non effect your oath; so you may unswear it again; the law will allow it.

Cyn. Ay, but my conscience never will.

Sir P. Gadsbud! no matter for that; conscience and law never go together; you must not expect that.

Lady P. Ay, but Sir Paul, I conceive, if she has sworn—d'ye mark me? if she has once sworn, it is most unchristian, inhuman, and obscene, that she should break it. I'll make up the match again, because Mr. Careless said it would oblige him. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. Does your ladyship conceive so? Why, I was of that opinion once, too. Nay, if your ladyship conceives so, I'm of that opinion again; but I can neither find my lord nor my lady, to know what they intend.

Lady P. I am satisfied that my cousin Mellefont has been much wronged.

Cyn. I'm amazed to find her of our side, for I'm sure she loved him. (*Aside.*)

Lady P. I know my Lady Touchwood has no kindness for him; and, besides, I have been informed by Mr. Careless, that Mellefont had never anything more than a profound respect. That he has owned himself to be my admirer, 'tis true, but he was never so presumptuous to entertain any dishonourable notions of things; so that if this be made plain, I don't see how my daughter can, in conscience or honour, or anything in the world—

Sir P. Indeed, if this be made plain, as my lady your mother says, child—

Lady P. Plain! I was informed of it by Mr. Careless, and I assure you Mr. Careless is a person—that has a most extraordinary respect and honour for you, Sir Paul.

Cyn. And for your ladyship too, I believe, or else you had not changed sides so soon. (*Aside.*) Now I begin to find it.

Sir P. I am much obliged to Mr. Careless, really; he is a person that I have a great value for, not only for that, but because he has a great veneration for your ladyship.

Lady P. Oh, law! no, indeed, Sir Paul; 'tis upon your account.

Sir P. No, I protest and vow I have no title to his esteem, but in having the honour to appertain, in some measure, to your ladyship, that's all.

Lady P. Oh, law! now, I swear and declare, it sha'n't be so; you're too modest, Sir Paul.

Sir P. It becomes me, when there is any comparison made between—

Lady P. Oh, fie, fie! Sir Paul, you'll put me out of countenance. Your very obedient and affectionate wife, that's all, and highly honoured in that title.

Sir P. Gadsbud! I am transported. Give me leave to kiss your ladyship's little finger.

Lady P. My lip, indeed, Sir Paul; I swear you shall. (*He kisses her, and bows very low.*)

Sir P. I humbly thank your ladyship; I don't know whether I fly on ground, or walk in air. Gadsbud! she was never thus before. Well, I must own myself the most beholden to Mr. Careless; as sure as can be this is all his doing, something that he has said; well, 'tis a rare thing to have an ingenious friend. Well, your ladyship is of opinion that the match may go forward?

Lady P. By all means. Mr. Careless has satisfied me of the matter.

Sir P. Well, why then, lamb, you may keep your oath; but have a care of making rash vows. Come hither to me, and kiss papa.

Lady P. I swear and declare, I am in such a twitter to read Mr. Careless's letter, that I can't forbear any longer; but though I may read all letters first by prerogative, yet I'll be sure to be unsuspected this time. (*Aside.*) Sir Paul.

Sir P. Did your ladyship call?

Lady P. Nay, not to interrupt you, my dear. Only lend me your letter which you had from your steward to-day; I would look upon the account again, and may be, increase your allowance.

Sir P. There it is, madam. Do you want a pen and ink? (*Bows, and gives the letter.*)

Lady P. No, no, nothing else, I thank you Sir Paul. So, now I can read my own letter under the cover of his. (*Aside.*)

Sir P. Eh! and shall I have a grandson, a brave chopping boy, to perpetuate the line of the Pliants? I'll settle a thousand pounds a year upon the rogue as soon as ever he looks me in the face, I will. Gadsbud! I hope the young cherub will be like me; I would fain have some resemblance of myself in my posterity. Ha, Thy, shouldn't you wish he was like his grand-papa?

Cyn. I'm glad to see you so merry, sir.

Sir P. Merry! Gadsbud! I'm serious. I'll give thee five hundred pounds for every feature of him that resembles me. Ah! this eye, this left eye; a thousand pounds for this left eye; this has done execution in its time, girl. Why, thou hast my leer, hussy; just thy father's leer; let it be transmitted to the young rogue by the help of imagination. Why, 'tis the mark of our family, Thy. Our house is distinguished by a languishing eye, as the house of Austria is by a thick lip.

Lady P. Oh, dear, Mr. Careless! I swear he writes charmingly, and he looks charmingly, and he has charmed me as much as I have charmed him; and so I'll tell him in the wardrobe, when 'tis dark. Oh, crimine! I hope Sir Paul has not seen both letters. (*Aside. Puts up the wrong letter, and gives him her own.*) Sir Paul, here's your letter; to-morrow morning I'll settle accounts to your advantage.

Sir P. I humbly thank your ladyship.

Lady P. So, now I'll retire, and study a complimentary rebuke to Mr. Careless, for the pathetic tender of his regards; but it shall not be too severe neither. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Enter BRISK.

Brisk. Sir Paul, gadsbud! you're an uncivil person, let me tell you, and all that; and I did not think it had been in you.

Sir P. Oh, law! what's the matter now? I hope you are not angry, Mr. Brisk?

Brisk. Deuce take me, I believe you intend to marry your daughter yourself; you're always brooding over her like an old hen, as if she were not well hatched, egad, eh!

Sir P. Good, strange! Mr. Brisk is such a merry facetious person. Ha, ha, ha! No, no, I have done with her, I have done with her now.

Brisk. The fiddles have stayed this hour in the hall, and my Lord Froth wants a partner; we can never begin without her.

Sir P. Go, go, child; go, get you gone, and dance and be merry; I'll come and look at you by-and-by. [*Exit Cynthia.*] Where's my son Mellefont?

Brisk. I'll send him to them; I know where he is; and, Sir Paul, will you send Careless into the hall, if you meet him?

Sir P. I will, I will; I'll go and look for him on purpose. [*Exit.*

Brisk. So, now they are all gone, and I have an opportunity to practise. Ah! my dear Lady Froth! she's a most engaging creature, if she were not so fond of that d—d coxcombly lord of hers; and yet I am forced to allow him wit, too, to keep in with him. No matter, she's a woman of parts, and, egad, parts will carry her. She said she would follow me into the gallery. Now, to make my approaches:—Hem, hem! Ah! ma—(*Bows.*)—dam! Plague on't, why should I disparage my parts by thinking what to say? None but dull rogues think; witty men, like rich fellows, are always ready for all expenses; while your blockheads, like poor needy scoundrels, are forced to examine their stock, and forecast the charges of the day. Here she comes; I'll seem not to see her, and try to win her with a new airy invention of my own. Hem! (*Sings, walking about.*)

Enter LADY FROTH.

I'm sick with love, ha, ha, ha! pr'ythee, come and cure me—I'm sick with—Oh, ye powers! Oh! my Lady Froth, my Lady Froth, my Lady Froth! Heigho, break heart! Gods, I thank you. (*Stands musing with his arms across.*)

Lady F. Oh, heavens! Mr. Brisk, what's the matter?

Brisk. My Lady Froth! your ladyship's most humble servant. The matter, madam?—nothing, madam; nothing at all, egad! I was fallen into the most agreeable amusement in the whole province of contemplation, that's all. I'll seem to conceal my passion, and that will look like respect. (*Aside.*)

Lady F. Bless me, why did you call out upon me so loud?

Brisk. Oh, lord! I, madam? I beseech your ladyship, when?

Lady F. Just now, as I came in. Bless me, why, don't you know it?

Brisk. Not I, let me perish; but did I? Strange! I confess your ladyship was in my thoughts; and I was in a sort of dream, that did, in a manner, represent a very pleasing object to my imagination; but—but did I, indeed? To see how love and murder will out! But did I really name my Lady Froth?

Lady F. Three times aloud, as I love letters. But did you talk of love? Oh, Parnassus! who would have thought Mr. Brisk could have been in love? Ha, ha, ha! Oh, heavens! I thought you could have no mistress but the nine muses.

Brisk. No more I have, egad! for I adore 'em all in your ladyship. Let me perish, I don't know whether to be splenetic or airy upon't; the deuce take me, if I can tell whether I am glad or sorry, that your ladyship has made the discovery.

Lady F. Oh! be merry, by all means. Prince Volscius in love! Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Oh, barbarous, to turn me into ridicule! yet, ha, ha, ha! the deuce take me, I can't help laughing myself, ha, ha, ha! yet, by heavens! I have a violent passion for your ladyship, seriously.

Lady F. Seriously! ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Seriously, ha, ha, ha! 'Gad! I have, for all I laugh.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! What d'ye think I laugh at? Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Me, egad! Ha, ha!

Lady F. No; the deuce take me if I don't laugh at myself; for, hang me, if I have not a violent passion for Mr. Brisk. Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Seriously?

Lady F. Seriously. Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. That's well enough, let me perish. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! miraculous! what a happy discovery! Ah! my dear charming Lady Froth.

Lady F. Oh, my adored Mr. Brisk. (*They embrace.*)

Enter Lord Froth.

Lord F. The company are all ready. How now?

Brisk. Zoons, madam, there's my lord. (*Apart to Lady F.*)

Lady F. Take no notice, but observe me. (*Aside.*) Now cast off, and meet me at the lower end of the room, and then join hands again. I could teach my lord this dance purely; but I vow, Mr. Brisk, I can't tell how to come so near any other man. Oh! here's my lord; now you shall see me do it with him. (*They pretend to practise part of a country dance.*)

Lord F. Oh! I see there's no harm yet; but I don't like this familiarity. (*Aside.*)

Lady F. Shall you and I do our close dance, to shew Mr. Brisk? (*To Lord F.*)

Lord F. No, my dear, do it with him.

Lady F. I'll do it with him, my lord, when you are out of the way.

Brisk. That's good, egad! that's good; deuce take me, I can hardly hold laughing in his face. (*Aside.*)

Lord F. Any other time, my dear, or we'll dance it below.

Lady F. With all my heart.

Brisk. Come, my lord, I'll wait on you. My charming witty angel. (*Apart to Lady F.*)

Lady F. We shall have whispering time enough, you know, since we are partners. (*Apart to Brisk.*)

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Lady Pliant *and* Careless.

Lady P. Oh! Mr. Careless, Mr. Careless! I'm ruined, I'm undone!

Care. What's the matter, madam?

Lady P. Oh, the unluckiest accident! I'm afraid I sha'n't live to tell it you.

Care. Heaven forbid! What is it?

Lady P. I'm in such a fright; the strangest quandary and premunire! I'm all over in an universal agitation. Oh, your letter, your letter! By an unfortunate mistake, I have given Sir Paul your letter instead of his own.

Care. That was unlucky.

Lady P. Oh! yonder he comes reading of it; step in here, and advise me quickly, before he sees.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Sir Paul Pliant, *with the letter.*

Sir P. Oh, Providence! what a conspiracy have I discovered; but let me see to make an end on't. Hum! (*Reads.*) "*After supper, in the wardrobe by the gallery. If Sir Paul should surprise us, I have a commission from him, to treat with you about the very matter of fact.*" Matter of fact! very pretty. It seems, then, I'm conducing to my own dishonour; why, this is the very traitorous position of taking up arms by my authority against my person! Well, let me see. (*Reads.*) "*Till then I languish in expectation of my adored charmer.—Dying* Ned Careless." Gadsbud! would that were matter of fact, too! Die and be d—d, for a Judas Maccabeus, and Iscariot both. Oh, friendship! what art thou but a name! Henceforward let no man take a friend into the bosom of his family; for if he does, oh! we know not what will follow, from the example of Sir Paul Pliant, and his bosom friend, Ned Careless. Have I, for this, been pinioned, night after night, for three years past? Have I approached the marriage bed with reverence, as to a sacred shrine, and must I now find it polluted by foreign iniquity? Oh! my Lady Pliant, you were chaste as ice, but you are melted now, and false as water. But Providence has been constant to me in discovering this conspiracy; still I am beholden to Providence; if it were not for Providence, sure, poor Sir Paul, thy heart would break.

Re-enter Lady Pliant.

Lady P. So, sir, I see you have read the letter. Well, now, Sir Paul, what do you think of your friend Careless? Has he been treacherous? or did you give his insolence a license to make trial of your wife's suspected virtue? D'ye see here? (*Snatches the letter as in anger.*) Look, read it? 'Gad's my life! if I thought it were so, I would, this moment, renounce all communication with you. Ungrateful monster! Eh! is it so? Ay, I see it; a plot upon my honour; your guilty cheeks confess it. Oh! where shall wronged virtue fly for reparation? I'll be divorced this instant.

Sir P. Gadsbud! what shall I say? this is the strangest surprise. (*Aside.*) Why, I don't know anything at all; nor I don't know whether there be anything at all in the world or no.

Lady P. I thought I should try you, false man. I, that never dissembled in my life; yet, to make trial of you, pretended to like that monster of iniquity, Careless; and found out that contrivance to let you see this letter, which now I find was of your own inditing, I do, heathen, I do! See my face no more; I'll be divorced presently.

Sir P. Oh, strange! what will become of me? I'm so amazed, and so overjoyed, so afraid, and so sorry. But did you give me this letter on purpose, eh? Did you?

Lady P. Did I? Do you doubt me, Turk, Saracen? I have a cousin that's a proctor in the Commons; I'll go to him, instantly. (*Going.*)

Sir P. Hold, stay! I beseech your ladyship! I'm so overjoyed—stay, I'll confess all.

Lady P. What will you confess, Jew?

Sir P. Why now, as I hope to be saved, I had no hand in this letter. Nay, hear me, I beseech your ladyship, the devil take me now, if he did not go beyond my commission. If I desired him to do any more than speak a good word only just for me, gadsbud! only for poor Sir Paul, I'm an Anabaptist, or a Jew, or what you please to call me.

Lady P. Why, is not here matter of fact?

Sir P. Ay, but by your own virtue and continency, that matter of fact is all his own doing. I confess I had a great desire to have some honours conferred upon me, which lay all in your ladyship's breast; and he being a well-spoken man, I desired him to intercede for me.

Lady P. Did you so, presumption? Oh! he comes, he comes; I cannot bear his sight. [*Exit.*

Re-enter CARELESS.

Care. Sir Paul, I'm glad I've met with you. 'Gad! I have said all I could, but can't prevail. Then my friendship to you has carried me a little further in this matter—

Sir P. Indeed! Well, sir. I'll dissemble with him a little. (*Aside.*)

Care. Why, 'faith! I have, in my time, known honest gentlemen abused by a pretended coyness in their wives, and I had a mind to try my lady's virtue; and when I could not prevail for you, 'gad! I pretended to be in love myself; but all in vain, she would not hear a word upon that subject; then I writ a letter to her; I don't know what effect that will have, but I'll be sure to tell you when I do; though, by this light, I believe her virtue is impregnable.

Sir P. Oh, Providence, Providence! what discoveries are here made! Why, this is better, and more miraculous than the rest.

Care. What do you mean?

Sir P. I can't tell you, I'm so overjoyed; come along with me to my lady; I can't contain myself; come, my dear friend.

Care. So, so, so! this difficulty's over. (*Aside.*) [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter MELLEFONT, *with* MASKWELL.

Mel. Maskwell, I have been looking for you; 'tis within a quarter of eight.

Mask. My lady is just gone into my lord's closet; you had best steal into her chamber before she comes, and lie concealed there; otherwise, she may lock the door when we are together, and you not easily get in to surprise us.

Mel. Eh! you say true.

Mask. You had best make haste; for, after she has made some apology to the company for her own and my lord's absence all this while, she'll retire to her chamber instantly.

Mel. I go this moment. Now, fortune, I defy thee. [*Exit.*

Mask. I confess you may be allowed to be secure in your own opinion; the appearance is very fair; but I have an after-game to play that shall turn the tables; and here comes the man that I must manage.

Enter LORD TOUCHWOOD.

Lord T. Maskwell, you are the man I wished to meet.

Mask. I am happy to be in the way of your lordship's commands.

Lord T. I have always found you prudent and careful in anything that has concerned me, or my family.

Mask. I were a villain else. I am bound by duty and gratitude, and my own inclination, to be ever your lordship's servant.

Lord T. Enough; you are my friend; I know it; yet there has been a thing in your knowledge, which has concerned me nearly, that you have concealed from me.

Mask. My lord!—

Lord T. Nay, I excuse your friendship to my unnatural nephew thus far; but I know you have been privy to his impious designs upon my wife. This evening she has told me all; her good nature concealed it as long as it was possible; but he perseveres so in villany, that she has told me, even you were weary of dissuading him.

Mask. I am sorry, my lord, I can't make you an answer; this is an occasion in which I would not willingly be silent.

Lord T. I know you would excuse him; and I know as well that you can't.

Mask. Indeed I was in hopes it had been a youthful heat, that might have soon boiled over, but—

Lord T. Say on.

Mask. I have nothing more to say, my lord, but to express my concern; for I think his frenzy increases daily.

Lord T. How? Give me but proof of it, ocular proof, that I may justify my dealing with him to the world, and share my fortunes.

Mask. Oh! my lord, consider that is hard; besides, time may work upon him. Then for me to do it! I have professed an everlasting friendship to him.

Lord T. He is your friend—and what am I?

Mask. I am answered.

Lord T. Fear not his displeasure; I will put you out of his, and fortune's power; and, for that thou art scrupulously honest, I will secure thy fidelity to him, and give my honour never to own any discovery that you shall make me. Can you give me a demonstrative proof? speak.

Mask. I wish I could not. To be plain, my lord, I intended this evening to have tried all arguments to dissuade him from a design, which I suspect; and if I had not succeeded, to have informed your lordship of what I knew.

Lord T. I thank you. What is the villain's purpose?

Mask. He has owned nothing to me of late; and what I mean now is only a bare suspicion of my own. If your lordship will meet me a quarter of an hour hence—there—in that lobby by my lady's bed-chamber, I shall be able to tell you more.

Lord T. I will.

Mask. My duty to your lordship makes me do a severe piece of justice.

Lord T. I will be secret, and reward your honesty beyond your hopes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Lady Touchwood's Bed-chamber.*

Enter MELLEFONT.

Mel. Pray heaven, my aunt keep touch with her assignation. Oh! that her lord were but sweating behind this hanging, with the expectation of what I shall see!—Hist! she comes. Little does she think what a mine is just ready to spring under her feet.—But to my post. (*Retires.*)

Enter LADY TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. 'Tis eight o'clock; methinks I should have found him here. Who does not prevent the hour of love, outstays the time; for, to be duly punctual, is too slow.

Enter MASKWELL.

I was accusing you of neglect.

Mask. I confess you do reproach me when I see you here before me; but 'tis fit I should be still behind-hand, still to be more and more indebted to your goodness.

Lady T. You can excuse a fault too well not to have been to blame; a ready answer shews you were prepared.

Mask. Guilt is ever at a loss, and confusion waits upon it; when innocence and bold truth are always ready for expression.

Lady T. Not in love; words are the weak sup-

port of cold indifference; love has no language to be heard.

Mask. Excess of joy has made me stupid. Thus—

Lady T. Hold! let me lock the door first. (*Goes to the door.*)

Mask. That I did suppose. 'Twas well I left the private passage open. (*Aside.*)

Lady T. So, that's safe.

Mask. And so may all your pleasures be, and secret as this kiss.

Mel. (*Leaps out.*) And may all treachery be thus discovered.

Lady T. Ah! (*Shrieks.*)

Mel. Villain! (*Offers to draw.*)

Mask. Nay, then there's but one way. (*Runs out.*)

Mel. Say you so? Were you provided for an escape? Hold! madam, you have no more holes to your burrow. I'll stand between you and this sally-port.

Lady T. Shame, grief, and ruin haunt thee for this deceit! Oh! I could rack myself, play the vulture to my own heart, and gnaw it piecemeal, for not boding to me this misfortune.

Mel. Be patient.

Lady T. Patient!

Mel. Consider, I have you on the hook; you will but flounder yourself a-weary, and be, nevertheless, my prisoner.

Lady T. I'll hold my breath and die, but I'll be free.

Mel. Oh, madam! have a care of dying unprepared. I doubt you have some unrepented sins that may hang heavy and retard your flight.

Lady T. What shall I do? whither shall I turn? Hold in, my passion, and fall, fall a little, thou swelling heart! Let me have some intermission of this rage, and one minute's coolness to dissemble. (*Aside. Weeps.*)

Mel. You have been to blame. I like those tears, and hope they are of the purest kind—penitential tears.

Lady T. Oh! the scene was shifted quick before me; I had not time to think; I was surprised to see a monster in the glass, and now I find 'tis myself. Can you have mercy to forgive the faults I have imagined, but never put in practice? Oh! consider, consider how fatal you have been to me, you have already killed the quiet of this life. The love of you was the first wandering fire that e'er misled my steps; and while I had only that in view, I was betrayed into unthought-of ways of ruin.

Mel. May I believe this true?

Lady T. Oh! be not cruelly incredulous. How can you doubt these streaming eyes? Keep the severest eye o'er all my future conduct; and if I once relapse, let me not hope forgiveness; 'twill ever be in your power to ruin me. My lord shall sign to your desires; I will myself create your happiness, and Cynthia shall this night be your bride; do but conceal my failings, and forgive. (*Kneels.*)

Mel. Upon such terms, I will be ever yours in every honest way.

Lady T. Eternal blessings thank you!

Re-enter Maskwell, *with* Lord Touchwood.

Mask. I have kept my word. He's here; but I must not be seen. (*Apart to Lord T.*) [*Exit.*

Lady T. Ha! my lord listening; then all's my own. (*Aside.*)

Mel. Nay, I beseech you, rise.

Lady T. Never, never! I'll grow to the ground, be buried quick beneath it, e'er I'll be consenting to such a sin as incest! unnatural incest! (*Aloud.*)

Mel. Ha!

Lady T. Oh, cruel man! will you not let me go? I'll forgive all that's past. Oh, heaven! you will not force me!

Lord T. Monster! dog! your life shall answer this. (*Draws, and runs at Mellefont; is held by Lady T.*)

Lady T. Oh, my lord! hold, hold! for mercy's sake!

Mel. Confusion! my uncle! Oh, the cursed sorceress!

Lady T. Moderate your rage, good my lord; he's mad, alas! he's mad; indeed he is, my lord, and knows not what he does. See how wild he looks!

Mel. By heaven, 'twere senseless not to be mad, and see such witchcraft.

Lady T. My lord, you hear him; he talks idly.

Lord T. Hence from my sight, thou living infamy to my name! When next I see that face, I'll write villain in't with my sword's point.

Mel. Now, by my soul, I will not go till I have made known my wrongs; nay, till I have made known yours, which, if possible, are greater; though she has all the host of hell her servants.

Lady T. Alas! he raves, talks very poetry! For heaven's sake, away, my lord; he'll either tempt you to extravagance, or commit some himself.

Mel. Death and furies! will you not hear me? Why, she laughs, grins, points at you, makes you her mark of insult and derision. (*As Lady T. is going, she turns back and smiles at him.*)

Lord T. I fear he's mad, indeed. Let's send Maskwell to him.

Mel. Send him to her.

Lady T. Come, come, good my lord; my heart aches so, I shall faint if I stay.

[*Exeunt Lord and Lady T.*

Mel. Oh! I could curse my stars, fate, and chance; all causes and accidents of fortune in this life! But to what purpose? They talk of sending Maskwell to me; I never had more need of him. But what can he do? Imagination cannot form a fairer or more plausible design than this of his, which has miscarried. Oh, my precious aunt! I shall never thrive, without I deal with the devil or another woman.

Women, like flames, have a destroying power,
Ne'er to be quench'd, till they themselves devour.

[*Exit.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*The Gallery in Lord Touchwood's house.*

Enter Lady Touchwood *and* Maskwell.

Lady T. Was't not lucky?

Mask. Lucky! fortune is your own, and 'tis her interest so to be; I believe you can control her power, and she fears it; though chance brought my lord, 'twas your own art that turned it to advantage.

Lady T. 'Tis true, it might have been my ruin; but yonder's my lord; I believe he's coming to find you; I'll not be seen. [*Exit.*

Mask. So! I durst not own my introducing my lord, though it succeeded well for her; for she would have suspected a design, which I should have been puzzled to excuse. My lord is thoughtful; I'll be so too; yet he shall know my thoughts, or think he does.

Enter Lord Touchwood.

What have I done?

Lord T. Talking to himself! (*Aside.*)

Mask. 'Twas honest; and shall I be rewarded for it? No, 'twas honest, therefore I shan't.

Nay, rather, therefore I ought not; for it rewards itself.

Lord T. Unequalled virtue! (*Aside.*)

Mask. But should it be known, then I have lost a friend. He was an ill man, and I have gained; for half myself I lent him, and that I have recalled; so I have served myself; and what is better, I have served a worthy lord, to whom I owe myself.

Lord T. Excellent man! (*Aside.*)

Mask. Yet I am wretched. Oh! there is a secret burns within this breast, which, should it once blaze forth, would ruin all, consume my honest character, and brand me with the name of villain.

Lord T. Ha! (*Aside.*)

Mask. Oh! should it once be known I love fair Cynthia, all this that I have done would look like a rival's malice, false friendship to my lord, and base self-interest. Let me perish first, and from this hour avoid all sight and speech; and, if I can, all thought of that pernicious beauty. (*Seems to start at seeing Lord T.*)

Lord T. Start not; let guilty and dishonest souls start at the revelation of their thoughts; but be thou fixed, as is thy virtue. Honest Maskwell, thy and my good genius led me hither; mine, in that I have discovered so much manly virtue; thine in that thou shalt have due reward of all thy worth. Give me thy hand; my nephew is the alone remaining branch of all our ancient family; him I thus blow away, and constitute thee in his room, to be my heir.

Mask. Now fate forbid—

Lord T. No more; I have resolved. The writings are ready drawn, and wanted nothing but to be signed, and have his name inserted; yours will fill the blank as well—I will have no reply. Let me command this time, for 'tis the last in which I will assume authority; hereafter, you shall rule where I have power.

Mask. I humbly would petition—

Lord T. Is't for yourself? (*Maskwell pauses.*) I'll hear of nought for anybody else.

Mask. Then witness, heaven, for me, this wealth and honour was not of my seeking; nor would I build my fortune on another's ruin; I had but one desire.

Lord T. Thou shalt enjoy it. If all I'm worth in wealth or interest can purchase Cynthia, she is thine. I'm sure Sir Paul's consent will follow fortune; I'll quickly shew him which way that is going.

Mask. You oppress me with bounty.

Lord T. I will confirm it, and rejoice with thee. [*Exit.*

Mask. This is prosperous, indeed! Why, let him find me out a villain; settled in possession of a fair estate, and full fruition of my love, I'll bear the railings of a losing gamester. But should he find me out before! 'tis dangerous to delay. Let me think—Should my lord proceed to treat openly of my marriage with Cynthia, all will be discovered, and Mellefont can be no longer blinded. It must not be. Nay, should my lady know it—ay, then were fine work, indeed! her fury would spare nothing, though she involved herself in ruin. No, it must be by stratagem; I must deceive Mellefont once more, and get my lord to consent to my private management. He comes opportunely. Now will I, in my old way, discover the whole and real truth of the matter to him, that he may not suspect one word on't.

No mask, like open truth, to cover lies;
As to go naked is the best disguise.

Enter Mellefont.

Mel. Oh! Maskwell, what hopes? I am confounded in a maze of thoughts, each leading into one another, and all ending in perplexity. My uncle will not see nor hear me.

Mask. No matter, sir; don't trouble your head; all's in my power.

Mel. How, for heaven's sake?

Mask. Little do you think that your aunt has kept her word. How she wrought my lord into the dotage I know not; but he's gone to Sir Paul about my marriage with Cynthia, and has appointed me his heir.

Mel. The devil he has! What's to be done?

Mask. I have it: it must be by stratagem; for it's in vain to make application to him. I think I have that in my head that cannot fail. Where's Cynthia?

Mel. In the garden.

Mask. Let us go and consult her. My life for yours I cheat my lord. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Lord *and* Lady Touchwood.

Lady T. Maskwell your heir, and marry Cynthia!

Lord T. I cannot do too much for so much merit.

Lady T. But this is a thing of too great moment to be suddenly resolved. Why Cynthia? Why must he be married? Is there not reward enough in raising his low fortune, but he must mix his blood with mine, and wed my niece? How know you that my brother will consent, or she? Nay, he himself, perhaps, may have affections elsewhere.

Lord T. No; I am convinced he loves her.

Lady T. Maskwell love Cynthia? Impossible.

Lord T. I tell you he confessed it to me.

Lady T. Confusion! How's this? (*Aside.*)

Lord T. His humility long stifled his passion, and his love of Mellefont would have made him still conceal it; but, by encouragement, I wrung the secret from him; and know, he's no way to be rewarded but in her. I'll defer my further proceedings in it till you have considered it; but remember how we are both indebted to him. [*Exit.*

Lady T. Both indebted to him! Yes, we are both indebted to him, if you knew all. Villain! Oh, I am wild with this surprise of treachery! it is impossible, it cannot be. He love Cynthia! What, have I been dupe to his designs; his property only? Now I see what made him false to Mellefont. What shall I do? How shall I think? I cannot think. All my designs are lost, my love unsated, my revenge unfinished, and fresh cause of fury from unthought-of plagues.

Enter Sir Paul Pliant.

Sir P. Madam—sister, my lady, sister! did you see my lady, my wife?

Lady T. Oh, torture!

Sir P. Gadsbud! I can't find her high nor low. Where can she be, think you?

Lady T. Where she's serving you as all your sex ought to be served, making you a beast. Don't you know that you're a fool, brother?

Sir P. A fool! ha, ha, ha! you're merry. No, no, not I; I know no such matter.

Lady T. Why, then, you don't know half your happiness.

Sir P. That's a jest, with all my heart, faith, and troth. But harkye! my lord told me something of things; I don't know what to make on't; gadsbud! I must consult my wife. He talks of disinheriting his nephew, and I don't know what. Look you, sister; I must know what my girl has to trust to, or not a syllable of a wedding, gadsbud! to shew you that I am not a fool.

Lady T. Hear me:—consent to the breaking off this marriage, and the promoting any other, with-

out consulting me, and I'll renounce all blood, all relation, and concern with you for ever; nay, I'll be your enemy, and pursue you to destruction; I'll tear your eyes out, and tread you under my feet.

Sir P. Why, what's the matter now? Good Lord, what's all this for? Pho! here's a joke, indeed. Why, where's my wife?

Lady T. With Careless, fool! most likely.

Sir P. Oh, if she be with Mr. Careless, 'tis well enough.

Lady T. Fool, sot, insensible ox! But remember what I said to you, or you had better see my face no more; by this light, you had. [*Exit.*

Sir P. You're a passionate woman, gadshud! but, to say truth, all our family are choleric: I am the only peaceable person amongst 'em. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Mellefont *and* Maskwell, *with* Cynthia.

Mel. I know no other way but this he has proposed, if you have love enough to run the venture.

Cyn. I don't know whether I have love enough, but I find I have obstinacy enough to pursue whatever I have once resolved, and a true female courage to oppose anything that resists my will, though 'twere reason itself.

Mask. That's right. Well, I'll secure the writings, and run the hazard along with you.

Cyn. But how can the coach be got ready without suspicion?

Mask. Leave it to my care; that shall be so far from being suspected, that it shall be got ready by my lord's own order.

Mel. How?

Mask. Why, I intend to tell my lord the whole matter of our contrivance, that's my way.

Mel. I don't understand you.

Mask. Why, I'll tell my lord I laid this plot with you on purpose to betray you; and that which put me upon it, was the finding it impossible to gain the lady any other way but in the hopes of her marrying you.

Mel. So—

Mask. So! why so: while you're busied in making yourself ready, I'll wheedle her into the coach, and instead of you, borrow my lord's chaplain, and so run away with her myself.

Mel. Oh! I conceive you; you'll tell him so.

Mask. Tell him so! ay. Why, you don't think I mean to do so?

Mel. No, no. Ha, ha! I dare swear thou wilt not.

Mask. Therefore, for our further security, I would have you disguised like a parson, that, if my lord should have curiosity to peep, he may not discover you in the coach, but think the cheat is carried on as he would have it.

Mel. Excellent Maskwell!

Mask. Well, get yourselves ready, and meet me in half an hour, yonder in my lady's dressing-room; I'll send the chaplain to you with his robes; I have made him my own, and ordered him to meet us to-morrow morning at St. Alban's; there we will sum up this account to all our satisfactions.

Mel. Should I begin to thank or praise thee, I should waste the little time we have. [*Exit.*

Mask. Madam, you will be ready?

Cyn. I will be punctual to the minute. (*Going.*)

Mask. Stay, I have a doubt. Upon second thoughts, we had better meet in the chaplain's chamber here; there is a back way into it, so that you need not come through this door, and a pair of private stairs leading down to the stables. It will be more convenient.

Cyn. I am guided by you; but Mellefont will mistake.

Mask. No, no; I'll after him immediately, and tell him. [*Exit Cynthia.*] Why, *qui vult decipi decipiatur.* 'Tis no fault of mine; I have told 'em in plain terms how easy 'tis for me to cheat 'em; and if they will not hear the serpent's hiss, they must be stung into experience and future caution. Now to prepare my lord to consent to this. But, first, I must instruct my little Levite; he promised me to be within at this hour. Mr. Saygrace, Mr. Saygrace! (*Goes to the chamber-door, and knocks.*)

Say. (*Within.*) Sweet sir, I will but pen the the last line of an acrostic, and be with you in the twinkling of an ejaculation, or before you can—

Mask. Nay, good Mr. Saygrace, do not prolong the time, by describing to me the shortness of your stay; rather, if you please, defer the finishing of your wit, and let us talk about our business; it shall be tithes in your way.

Enter Saygrace.

Say. You shall prevail; I would break off in the middle of a sermon to do you a pleasure.

Mask. You could not do me a greater, except the business in hand. Have you provided a habit for Mellefont?

Say. I have; it is ready in my chamber, together with clean starched band and cuffs.

Mask. Good. Let them be carried to him. Have you stitched the gown sleeve, that he may be puzzled, and waste time in putting it on?

Say. I have; the gown will not be endued without perplexity.

Mask. Meet me in half an hour, here in your own chamber. When Cynthia comes, let there be no light, and do not speak, that she may not distinguish you from Mellefont. I'll urge haste, to excuse your silence.

Say. You have no more commands?

Mask. None; your text is short.

Say. But pithy; and I will handle it with discretion. [*Exit.*

Mask. It will be the first you have so served.

Re-enter Lord Touchwood.

Lord T. Sure, I was born to be controlled by those I should command! my very slaves will shortly give me rules how I shall govern them!

Mask. I am concerned to see your lordship discomposed.

Lord T. Have you seen my wife lately, or disobliged her?

Mask. No, my lord. What can this mean? (*Aside.*)

Lord T. Then Mellefont has urged somebody to incense her. Something she has heard of you, which carries her beyond the bounds of patience.

Mask. This I feared. (*Aside.*) Did not your lordship tell her of the honours you designed me?

Lord T. Yes.

Mask. 'Tis that; you know my lady has a spirit; she thinks I am unworthy.

Lord T. Unworthy! 'tis an ignorant pride in her to think so. Honesty to me is true nobility. However, 'tis my will it shall be so, and that should be convincing to her as much as reason. I'll not be wife-ridden. Were it possible, it should be done this night.

Mask. Ha! he meets my wishes. (*Aside.*) Few things are impossible to willing minds.

Lord T. Instruct me how this may be done, and you shall see I want no inclination.

Mask. I had laid a small design for to-morrow, (as love will be inventing,) which I thought to communicate to your lordship; but it may be as well done to-night.

Lord T. Here's company; come this way, and tell me. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Cynthia, *with* Careless.

Care. Is not that he, now gone out with my lord?

Cyn. I am convinced there's treachery. The confusion that I saw your father in, my Lady Touchwood's passion, with what imperfectly I overheard between my lord and her, confirm me in my fears. Where's Mellefont?

Care. Here he comes.

Re-enter Mellefont.

Cyn. Did Maskwell tell you anything of the chaplain's chamber?

Mel. No, my dear. Will you get ready? The things are all in my chamber; I want nothing but the habit.

Care. You are betrayed, and Maskwell is the villain I always thought him.

Cyn. When you were gone, he said his mind was changed, and bid me meet him in the chaplain's room, pretending immediately to follow you, and give you notice.

Care. There's Saygrace tripping by with a bundle under his arm. He cannot be ignorant that Maskwell means to use his chamber; let's in, and examine him.

Mel. 'Tis loss of time, I cannot think him false.

[*Exeunt Careless and Mellefont.*

Re-enter Lord Touchwood.

Cyn. My lord musing! (*Aside.*)

Lord T. He has a quick invention, if this were suddenly designed. Yet, he says, he had prepared my chaplain already.

Cyn. How's this? Now I fear, indeed. (*Aside.*)

Lord T. Cynthia here! Alone, fair cousin, and melancholy.

Cyn. Your lordship was thoughtful.

Lord T. My thoughts were on serious business, not worth your hearing.

Cyn. Mine were on treachery concerning you, and may be worth your hearing.

Lord T. Treachery concerning me! Pray be plain. What noise?

Mask. (*Within.*) Will you not hear me?

Lady T. (*Within.*) No, monster! traitor! No.

Cyn. My lady and Maskwell! This may be lucky. My lord, let me entreat you to stand behind this screen, and listen; perhaps this chance will give you proof of what you never could have believed from my suspicions. (*They retire behind the screen.*)

Re-enter Maskwell, *and* Lady Touchwood *with a dagger.*

Lady T. You want but leisure to invent fresh falsehood, and sooth me to a fond belief of all your fictions; but I will stab the lie that's forming in your heart, and save a sin in pity to your soul.

Mask. Strike, then, since you will have it so.

Lady T. Ha! a steady villain to the last.

Mask. Come, why do you dally with me thus?

Lady T. Thy stubborn temper shocks me, and you knew it would. This is cunning all; I know thee well; but thou shalt miss thy aim.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady T. Ha! do you mock my rage? Then this shall punish your fond rash contempt. Again smile? And such a smile as speaks in ambiguity! Ten thousand meanings lurk in each corner of that various face; oh! that they were written in thy heart, that I with this might lay thee open to my sight. But then 'twill be too late to know—Thou hast, thou hast found the only way to turn my rage; too well thou knowest my jealous soul could never bear uncertainty. Speak, then, and tell me! Yet are you silent? Oh! I am bewildered in all passions! But thus my anger melts. (*Weeps.*) Here, take this poniard; for my very spirits faint, and I want strength to hold it; thou hast disarmed my soul. (*Gives him the dagger.*)

Mask. So, 'tis well; let your wild fury have a vent; and when you have temper tell me.

Lady T. Now, now, now I am calm, and can hear you.

Mask. Thanks, my invention; and now I have it for you. (*Aside.*) First, tell me what urged you to this violence? for your passion broke in such imperfect terms, that yet I am to learn the cause.

Lady T. My lord himself surprised me with the news, you were to marry Cynthia; that you had owned your love to him; and his indulgence would assist you to attain your ends.

Mask. I grant you, in appearance, all is true; I seemed consenting to my lord, nay, transported with the blessing; but could you think that I, who had been happy in your loved embraces, could e'er be fond of an inferior slavery?—No. Yet, though I dote on each last favour more than all the rest, though I would give a limb for every look you cheaply throw away on any other object of your love; yet, so far I prize your pleasures o'er my own, that all this seeming plot that I have laid, has been to gratify your taste, and cheat the world, to prove a faithful rogue to you.

Lady T. If this were true; but how can it be?

Mask. I have so contrived, that Mellefont will presently, in the chaplain's habit, wait for Cynthia in your dressing-room; but I have put the change upon her, that she may be otherwise employed. Do you muffle yourself, and meet him in her stead. You may go privately by the back stairs, and unperceived; there you may propose to reinstate him in his uncle's favour, if he'll comply with your desires. His case is desperate, and I believe he'll yield to any conditions; if not, here, take this; you may employ it better than in the heart of one, who is nothing when not yours. (*Gives her the dagger.*)

Lady T. Thou canst deceive everybody; nay, thou hast deceived me. But 'tis as I would wish. Trusty villain! I could worship thee.

Mask. No more. It wants but a few minutes of the time; and Mellefont's love will carry him there before his hour.

Lady T. I go, I fly, incomparable Maskwell!

[*Exit.*

Mask. So! This was a pinch, indeed! My invention was upon the rack, and made discovery of her last plot. I hope Cynthia and my chaplain will be ready. I'll prepare for the expedition.

[*Exit. Cynthia and Lord T. come forward.*

Cyn. Now, my lord!

Lord T. Astonishment binds up my rage! Villany upon villany! Heavens! what a long track of dark deceit has this discovered. I am confounded when I look back, and want a clue to guide me through the various mazes of unheard-of treachery. My wife! oh, torture! my shame, my ruin!

Cyn. My lord, have patience; and be sensible how great our happiness is, that this discovery was not made too late.

Lord T. I thank you. Yet it may be still too late, if we don't presently prevent the execution of their plots. She'll think to meet him in that dressing-room; was't not so? And Maskwell will expect you in the chaplain's chamber. For once, I'll add my plot, too. Let us haste to find out, and inform my nephew; and do you, quickly as you can, bring all the company into this gallery. I'll expose the traitress and the villain. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Sir Paul Pliant, *with* Lord Froth.

Lord F. By heavens! I have slept an age. Sir

Paul, what o'clock is it? Past eight, on my conscience! My lady's is the most inviting couch, and a slumber there is the prettiest amusement!—But where's all the company?

Sir P. The company? Gadsbud! I don't know, my lord; but here's the strangest revolution! all turned topsy-turvy, as I hope for Providence!

Lord F. Oh, heavens! what's the matter?—Where's my wife?

Sir P. All turned topsy-turvy, as sure as a gun!

Lord F. How do you mean? My wife?

Sir P. The strangest posture of affairs!

Lord F. What, my wife?

Sir P. No, no; I mean the family.—Your lady! I saw her go into the garden with Mr. Brisk.

Lord F. How, where, when, what to do?

Sir P. I suppose they have been laying their heads together.

Lord F. How?

Sir P. Nay, only about poetry, I suppose, my lord; making couplets.

Lord F. Couplets!

Sir P. Oh! here they come.

Enter LADY FROTH *and* BRISK.

Brisk. My lord, your humble servant; Sir Paul, yours.—The finest night!

Lady F. My dear, Mr. Brisk and I have been star-gazing I don't know how long.

Sir P. Does it not tire your ladyship? Are you not weary with looking up?

Lady F. Oh! no; I love it violently. My dear, you're melancholy.

Lord F. No, my dear, I'm but just awake.

Lady F. Snuff some of my spirit of hartshorn.

Lord F. I've some of my own, thank you, my dear.

Lady F. Well, I swear, Mr. Brisk, you understand astronomy like an old Egyptian.

Brisk. Not comparable to your ladyship: you are the very Cynthia of the skies, and queen of stars.

Lady F. That's because I have no light, but what's by reflection from you, who are the sun.

Brisk. Madam, you have eclipsed me quite, let me perish! I can't answer that.

Lady F. No matter.—Harkye! shall you and I make an almanac together?

Brisk. With all my soul. Your ladyship has made me the man in't already, I'm so full of the wounds which you have given.

Lady F. Oh! finely taken! I swear now you are even with me. Oh, Parnassus! you have an infinite deal of wit.

Sir P. So he has, gadsbud! and so has your ladyship.

Re-enter CARELESS *and* CYNTHIA, *with* LADY PLIANT.

Lady P. You tell me most surprising things.—Bless me! who would ever trust a man? Oh! my heart aches for fear they should be all deceitful alike.

Care. You need not fear, madam; you have charms to fix inconstancy itself.

Lady P. Oh, dear! you make me blush.

Lord F. Come, my dear, shall we take leave of my lord and lady?

Cyn. They'll wait upon your lordship presently.

Lady F. Mr. Brisk, my coach shall set you down. (*Lady Touchwood shrieks from within.*)

All. What's the matter?

LADY TOUCHWOOD, *muffled up, runs in affrighted; followed by* LORD TOUCHWOOD, *dressed like a parson, with a dagger in his hand.*

Lady T. Oh! I'm betrayed.—Save me! help me!

Lord T. Now what evasion, wicked woman?

Lady T. Stand off! let me go! [*Exit.*

Lord T. Go, and thy own infamy pursue thee! You stare, as you were all amazed. I don't wonder at it; but too soon you will know mine, and that woman's shame. (*Throws off his gown.*)

Re-enter MELLEFONT, *disguised in a parson's habit, with two Servants, bringing in* MASKWELL.

Mel. Nay, by heaven! you shall be seen. (*To Maskwell.*) Careless, your hand. Do you hold down your head? (*To Maskwell.*) Yes, I am your chaplain. Look in the face of your injured friend, thou wonder of all falsehood! (*Throws off his disguise.*)

Lord T. Are you silent, monster?

Mel. Good heavens! how I believed and loved this man! Take him hence, for he's a disease to my sight.

Lord T. Secure the manifold villain. (*Servants take Maskwell off.*)

Care. Miracle of ingratitude!

Sir P. Oh! Providence, Providence, what discoveries are here!

Brisk. This is all very surprising, let me perish!

Lady F. You know I told you Saturn looked a little more angry than usual.

Lord T. We'll think of punishment at leisure. But let me hasten to do justice, in rewarding virtue and wronged innocence. Nephew, I hope I have your pardon, and Cynthia's.

Mel. We are your lordship's creatures.

Lord T. And be each other's comfort. Let me join your hands. Uninterrupted bliss attend you both! May circling joys tread round each happy year of your long lives!

Let secret villany from hence be warn'd,
Howe'er in private mischiefs are conceiv'd,
Torture and shame attend their open birth.
Like vipers in the breast, base treach'ry lies,
Still gnawing that whence first it did arise;
No sooner born, but the vile parent dies.

[*Exeunt.*

DUPLICITY;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



Act III.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

SIR HORNET ARMSTRONG	VANDERVELT	SCRIP	MELISSA
SIR HARRY PORTLAND	OSBORNE	SERVANTS	MISS TURNBULL
'SQUIRE TURNBULL	TIMID	CLARA	MRS. TRIP

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Sir Harry Portland's House.*

CLARA *and* MELISSA *discovered.*

Clara. Well, my dear Melissa, you will be a happy woman.

Mel. I have no doubt of it. The attention which Mr. Osborne has shewn me, was not that of a man eager to gain the affection of his mistress by humouring her caprices, praising her beauty, and flattering her follies. He is obliging and well-bred, but sincere; yet his disapprobation is delivered with a delicacy that makes it more agreeable than some people's compliments.

Clara. If time, instead of mellowing the strokes, should wear away this smooth varnish, and discover a harsh outline, should you not be offended at the severity of his manner, think you?

Mel. Believe me, dear Clara, there is no danger; for if there be one man on earth more capable of making a woman happy than another, it is Mr. Osborne.

Clara. It would be heresy in you, my dear, to hold any other opinion; and I have no doubt but you will continue orthodox after marriage.

Mel. Yes; I shall certainly die in that faith.

Clara. Your brother, Sir Harry, I believe, is of your religion, too.

Mel. Entirely. The friendship of Mr. Osborne and my brother is as sincere as the commencement of it was remarkable. Have you ever heard their story?

Clara. Never. You know my acquaintance with your family is but just begun; but I hope you will not think them words of course when I assure you that, short as it is, I feel myself interested in its happiness.

Mel. Oh! I am sure you are sincere; I know it by sympathy. Well, then, I'll tell you: Harry and Osborne happened to be both abroad at the same time. As my brother was going to Italy, and passing through the mountainous part of Savoy, he came to a hollow way, among the rocks, surrounded by trees and caverns; all on a sudden, at a turning in the road, he beheld Osborne and his servants, attacked by six banditti, and ready to sink under their wounds.

Clara. Was Sir Harry alone? (*Alarmed.*)

Mel. He had his governor, two servants, and the postillion. My brother instantly leaped from his carriage, snatched up his sword and pistols, and flew to the place of action.

Clara. I declare you terrify me.

Mel. He was not seen by the combatants, and took care to advance so near before he fired, that he could not fail to do execution. He laid two of the banditti dead; and their companions, who had discharged their fire-arms, and beheld Sir Harry's people running to the attack, and levelling their pieces, fled.

Clara. Thank you for that, my dear; you have given me breath.

Mel. The intrepidity with which Sir Harry saw Osborne defend himself, and the fortitude he discovered when he was informed, as it was at first believed, that his wounds were mortal, attached my brother so powerfully to him, that he resolved not to leave him in the hands of strangers, but anxiously waited while he was under cure.

Clara. This was a noble generosity.

Mel. It was; and Osborne was so sensible of it, that, though he was going the other way, he would return with Sir Harry into Italy; and their friendship has continued ever since.

Clara. But is it not strange, my dear, that he cannot detach his friend from the gaming-table?

Mel. My brother is infatuated. It is his greatest, almost his only weakness.

Clara. But the report is, that Mr. Osborne takes advantage of this weakness; and, in fact, has half ruined Sir Harry himself.

Mel. The report of malice, my dear.

Enter Sir Harry Portland *and* Mr. Osborne.

Sir Harry. Ladies, your obedient. Pray, when did you arrive in town, madam? (*To Clara.*)

Clara. Yesterday. But how came you to quit Bath so suddenly, gentlemen?

Sir Harry. Mr. Osborne, madam, was *horriblement ennuyé;* dull as an alderman at church, or a fat lap-dog after dinner; thinking on marriage, Melissa, and other important matters; and so—

Osb. Come, come, Sir Harry, this is mighty ingenious; but you were, at least, as willing to be gone as myself. The truth, madam, is, my modest friend here heard you were to set off in a day or two; and from that moment, was continually giving hints, and asking me how I, as a lover, could exist so long without a sight of my mistress; and, in short, began, all at once, to talk so sympathetically about absence and ages, that I, who had made the excursion purely to oblige him, was, I acknowledge, exceedingly happy to find I could oblige him by returning.

Clara. What say you to this, Sir Harry? But, I know your politeness: you will confess it all to be true, and begin to say civil things upon the subject, that will only put me to the trouble of blushing and curtsying; so we'll suppose them all, if you please. But come, tell me: what's the news of the day?

Mel. News! Oh! that's true. Look here, my dear. I thought I had something to tell you. (*Reads a paragraph in a newspaper.*) "*We hear, from very good authority, that an hymeneal treaty is concluded between a certain beautiful ward, not a mile from St. James's-square, and her old guardian; and that the lady is expected in town from Bath, every hour, to sign and seal.*"

Sir Harry. What say you to this, madam?

Clara. Say! I protest I don't know what to say; except that these newsmakers are a very pleasant, ingenious kind of people.

Mel. But aren't you angry?

Clara. Angry! no, indeed. I am sure I am very much obliged to them for thinking of me: I shall be so stared at! I'll go into public continually, and my guardian shall go with me. [my dear?

Mel. But is there any foundation for this report,

Clara. Nay, I am sure I can't tell. I have suspected the matter a great while, by my guardian's simpering and squeezing my hand so often. He read, the other day, in the Annual Register, of a man, at Inverness, who lived to the age of one hundred and seventeen; and he has been talking ever since of purchasing a country-seat in the Highlands.

Sir Harry. That would be pleasant.

Clara. Very. Then we should have a flock of goats, I suppose.

Sir Harry. Dorastus and Faunia. [way.

Clara. Oh! yes; quite in the Damon and Philida

Osb. You are very happy in a lover, madam.

Clara. Oh! quite proud of my conquest. There is no such great miracle in bringing a young fellow, whose passions are all afloat, to die at one's feet. The thing's so natural that one does it every day. But to thaw the icy blood of a grave old gentleman; to see him simper, sigh, dance minuets, and look ridiculous for one—Oh! there is, positively, no flattery equal to it.

Sir Harry. He will make your winter evenings in the Highlands quite entertaining, with relating the wild pranks he committed, and the deeds of prowess he was guilty of in his youth; then you will be so delighted with listening to his raptures, and tasting his panado, and—

Clara. Oh! yes; yes, yes—Ha, ha!—I—I think I see him now, with his venerable bald head, his shrivelled face, and his little pug nose, that looks as red and as bright as the best Dutch sealing-wax, rising from his chair, by the help of his crutch-headed stick, to breathe forth vows of love and everlasting fidelity. Ha, ha, ha!

Mel. It's whimsical enough.

Clara. Yes. Oh! now you talk of whimsicality, I was accosted by an old gentleman the night before I left Bath, in the rooms, who was the drollest being I ever met with. I thought he would have made love to me; swore I was an angel, and said a thousand civil things.

Osb. Oh! madam, the old men are the only polite men of this age.

Clara. Upon my word, I begin to think so.

Osb. The young ones, taught in the modern school, hold a rude familiarity to be the first principle of good breeding.

Clara. Manners, like point ruffles, are now most fashionable when they are soiled.

Sir Harry. No, no; they only hang the easier for being deprived of starch. But who was this old gentleman, pray, madam?

Clara. A relation of your's, sir.

Sir Harry. Of mine, madam?

Clara. I should suppose so, for he mentioned his nephew, Sir Harry Portland.

Mel. Our uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong.

Sir Harry. It is. I found a letter from him when I came to town, in which he informed me he should arrive in Bath the very day we left it.—[*Enter a Servant with a letter.*]—Who brought this?

Serv. It came by the post, sir. [*Exit.*

Clara. I die to be better acquainted with him. I must have him in my train of sighing swains.

Osb. You seem astonished, Sir Harry.

Clara. Some unkind billet from his mistress, I suppose.

Sir Harry. No, indeed; it is the most unaccountable epistle I ever received, and from my unaccountable uncle, too. There, read, read. (*To Osb.*)

Osb. (*Reads.*) "*Dear Harry,—You know, you dog, how your old uncle loves you. You will say so when you are thoroughly acquainted with the occasion of this. In brief, I met with a young lady at Bath, the most extraordinary, take her altogether, I ever beheld. She is a nonpareil, a phœnix! But you will judge for yourself: she is coming up to town with her brother; who, by-the-by, is a country booby—but that's no matter. I saw her only once, and that was in the rooms; but once is sufficient. They intend coming up to London, by way of seeing the town, for they are country people, I find; though the sister has more accomplishments, ease, and good-breeding, than I ever yet saw in the drawing-room. I proposed a match to the brother, and he seemed happy at the offer. They will arrive nearly as soon as this, for they set out before it; and I shall follow, maugre the gout, as fast as I can.*—Hornet Armstrong. *P.S. I forgot to mention their name is Turnbull.*" Turnbull! why, what, in the devil's name, is Sir Hornet mad?

Sir Harry. In one of his right ancient whims, I suppose. Sir Hornet has had many such in his time.

Mel. But pray, who is this miraculous lady, Mr. Osborne? for you seem to know something of her.

Osb. Do you remember, Sir Harry, a gawky girl, that stalked round the rooms, and stared prodigiously? she that was stuck to the side of a bob-wigged country 'squire?

Clara. Oh! what, the—the girl with her arms dangling, her chin projecting, and her mouth open, that looked as if she were afraid of being lost.

Sir Harry. Yes; or as if she dared not trust herself alone, out of her own parish, lest somebody should catch her, put her in a sack, and send her for a present to the king of the cannibals.

Osb. The same; that is the accomplished Miss Turnbull.

Sir Harry. How! [lady.

Osb. That is the easy, well-bred, drawing-room

Sir Harry. Is it possible?

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! Well, (*with affected gravity*) and I don't doubt but she would make a sort of a —a—a very good wife. Understands the art of brewing, baking, pickling of pork, curing of hung beef, darning of stockings, and other branches of housewifery, in perfection. Believes in ghosts, and has got the Wandering Prince of Troy, the Babes in the Wood, and the entertaining dialogue of Death and the Lady, by heart.

Osb. Such, and so numerous, are the wife-like properties of Miss Barbara Turnbull.

Clara. Turnbull, too! Well, that is such a delightful name for a country lady; so pastoral!

Osb. The father was one of the greatest graziers in the west of England; and was so intent on getting money, that he bred his children in the most stupid ignorance. He is lately dead, and the son has commenced gentleman and 'squire, by virtue of the father's industry, and a pack of fox-hounds; and though he has scarcely knowledge enough of articulate sounds to hold a dialogue with his own geese, yet does he esteem himself a devilish shrewd fellow, and a wit. His conversation is vociferous, and patched up of proverbs, and out-of-the-way sayings, which he strings together without order or connection; and utters, upon all occasions, and in all companies, without respect to time, place, or person.

Clara. Well, well, Sir Harry, I shall have to wish you joy soon, I suppose: but I must begone; fifty visits to make this morning—time flies—but agreeable company, and all that, you know—Oh! Sir Harry, you mean to attend the spring meetings this year, at Newmarket? I am told you understand the turf; I think of sending a venture of five hundred by somebody. But I shall see you often enough before then. Adieu. [*Exit with Melissa.*

Sir Harry. Well, what do you think of this lady, Osborne?

Osb. I think her a very amiable, accomplished lady; and one that, under an assumed levity, observes and understands everything about her.

Sir Harry. I am entirely of your opinion. If I may judge from an acquaintance of such short date, she is the first woman in the world.

Osb. Except one, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. You, Osborne, may make exceptions, if you please; I am not so captious. She has beauty without vanity, virtue without prudence, fashion without affectation, wit without malice, gaiety without coquetry, humour—

Osb. Hold, hold! stop to breathe. How was it? Vinegar without acid, fire without heat, light without shade, motion without matter, and a likeness without a feature.

Sir Harry. "Spite, by the gods! proud spite and burning envy!"

Osb. But did you observe her Newmarket hint, Sir Harry; and the concealed significance with which it was delivered?

Sir Harry. I did.

Osb. Which being faithfully done into English, bears this interpretation: "I, Clara Forrester, a beautiful, elegant, sensible girl, with a fine fortune, should like to take you, Harry Portland, with youth, spirit, and certain *et ceteras*, but"—

Sir Harry. "But that I am afraid of indulging a partiality for any man who is so intolerably addicted to gaming." Is not that the conclusion of your speech?

Osb. Oh, fie! No, no: gaming! That man has a body without a soul, that never felt an inclination to gaming.

Sir Harry. Perhaps so; but that man has the greatest soul who can best resist that inclination.

Osb. Psha! Gaming is the essence of fashion, and one of your strongest recommendations. Clara is a girl of spirit, and what girl that comes under that description, would ever place her affections on a sneaking, sober, prudent fellow? a mechanical scoundrel, that knows the day of the month, sips tea, keeps a pew in the parish church, writes memorandums, and goes to bed at eleven o'clock. Pho! absurd!

Sir Harry. Curse me, Osborne, if I know what to make of you. You are a riddle that I cannot expound. You have such an awkward way of praising gaming, that it always has the appearance of satire.

Osb. Satire! How so? Do you think I'd satirize myself? Who sports more freely than I do?

Sir Harry. Why, there's the mystery. You are as eager, to the full, as I am. If I set a hundred on a back hand, you offer a thousand; nay, had I the fortune of a nabob, and were to stake it all, you would be the first man to cry "covered!" and be d—d mad if any one wanted to go a guinea: not because you have not generosity, but in the true and inveterate spirit of gaming.

Osb. Certainly. Gaming! why, gaming is the best sal volatile for the spleen: it rouses the spirits, agitates the blood, quickens the pulse, and puts the whole nervous system in a continual vibration. No man ever yet died of an apoplexy, that loved a box and dice.

Sir Harry. But they have died as suddenly.

Osb. Oh! ay, ay; but that's a fashionable disease, an influenza; that's to make your exit with *éclat*; that's to go out of the world with a good report.

Sir Harry. True, true; and, indeed, as to a few years, more or less, that is, in reality, a mighty insignificant circumstance.

Osb. A bagatelle! Let us live while we do live, and die when we can't live any longer.

Sir Harry. That's my comfort, that's my comfort. Yes, yes; a pistol—a pistol is a very certain remedy for the cholic. Nobody but a pitiful scoundrel would go sighing, and whining, and teasing other people with his griefs and complaints. When a man is weary, what should he do but go to sleep?

Osb. To be sure. Life itself is but a dream. 'Tis only sleeping a little sounder.

Sir Harry. What! live to be pitied! Ha, ha! A decayed gentleman! No, no, no. A withered branch; a firelock without a flint. And yet—heigho! this Clara—d—n it, it's provoking. Youth, beauty, affability—she's a bewitching girl!

Osb. She is, indeed.

Sir Harry. A lovely girl!

Osb. Ay, enough so to make any man, that might hope to be in her favour, in love with life.

Sir Harry. Any man, any man but me—no, no—Undone, undone, undone!

Osb. Well, but, seriously, since you have such bad success, why don't you renounce play?

Sir Harry. 'Tis too late. I have sunk eighty thousand; my resources almost all exhausted, my estates all mortgaged to Jews and scoundrels.

Osb. All?

Sir Harry. All; except the estate in Kent.

Osb. Well, then, if you cannot content yourself with your present loss, your best way will be to make another vigorous push.

Sir Harry. That's exactly what I am determined to do; and, unless the devil possesses the dice, I think I may expect, without a miracle, that fortune should change hands.

Osb. One would think so, indeed. Will you dine, then, at my house? There will be the Chevalier, the Baron, and the usual set. They have engaged to dine with me. They are spirited fellows, and will play for any sum.

Sir Harry. I don't know. Suspicion is a cursed meanness; and yet, I cannot help having my doubts of some among that company. Nay, had you not so

often assured me you were perfectly acquainted with them all—

Osb. Why, I tell you again and again, so I am. I will be answerable for their conduct, and that's more than I would say for any other set of gamblers upon earth.

Sir Harry. Well, well; I'll meet you there.

Osb. We dine early; at five.

Sir Harry. Agreed.

Osb. And then, hey for a light heart and a heavy purse. [*Exit.*

Sir Harry. No, no; no light heart for me: I am sunk, degraded in my own opinion. Gaming alters our very nature. Osborne used to hate it; he was then an open-hearted, generous fellow; he now appears to have contracted an insatiable love for money, and a violent desire to win, he cares not of whom, of me as soon as another. Were I in his situation, and he in mine, I think I should find an aversion to increase his distress; he knows mine, yet has no such aversion. Perhaps he thinks my ruin certain, and that he may as well profit by it as another. I know him to have the most refined and strictest sense of honour: I have lost most of my money to him, and in his company, and, therefore, have not been duped out of it. That is some comfort, however. [*Exit.*

Scene II.

Enter Mr. Osborne *and* Timid.

Osb. Well, Mr. Timid, has Sir Harry sent to you for a further supply?

Timid. Lackaday! sir, yes; and a very large supply, too. He wants five thousand pounds immediately. Lackaday! I asked him how he thought it possible for me to raise such sums as he called upon me for every day; reminded him what a bad way his affairs were in, and what an usurious rate I was obliged to borrow all his money at.

Osb. What said he?

Timid. Lackaday! not much: seemed chagrined; said it must have an end, one way or another, soon; and demanded whether I could or could not raise the money. Lackaday! I told him I was no longer master of ways and means; and he said then he must positively employ another prime minister, for supplies he must have.

Osb. Why did you tell him that? Go to him, inform him you have met with a tender-hearted Jew, who knows nothing of the situation of his affairs, that will lend him ten thousand pounds directly, if he want it.

Timid. Ten thousand! on what terms?

Osb. Oh! the mortgage of the Kentish estate.

Timid. The Kentish estate! Lackaday! but suppose he should go to gaming, and lose it to somebody else instead of you.

Osb. Oh! I'll take care of that.

Timid. Lackaday! It must not be Benjamin Solomons who lends this?

Osb. True; no—humph! Isaac Levi, agent to a private company at Amsterdam.

Timid. (*Writes in a pocket-book.*) "Isaac Levi, agent to a private company at Amsterdam." Lackaday!

Osb. Well, go you to him, and inform him that the money shall be ready in about half-an-hour.

Timid. Lackaday! good young gentleman! Heaven pardon me, I had like to have said d— the dice! You'll be a true friend?

Osb. Be under no apprehensions. This old fool is become suspicious, I must be sudden. (*Aside.*)

Timid. Had not we better inform him of all, before he goes any further?

Osb. By no means; leave that to me.

Timid. Lackaday! Well, the remembrance of a good deed is grateful on a death-bed.

Osb. Do you be expeditious; I'll instruct the Jew, and he shall meet you here. [*Exeunt.*

Act II.—Scene I.—*The same.*

Sir Harry Portland *and* Melissa *discovered.*

Sir Harry. Heavens! what romance! I can scarcely believe my eyes. Did you ever hear of so strange an affair?

Mel. Strange! it's miraculous. Quixotism! And our good uncle is the prince of madmen.

Sir Harry. To send a foolish, illiterate, country dowdy, and her blockhead brother, a visiting on such an errand! What can I say to them? I declare I don't know how to behave: never was so embarrassed in my life. Where are they?

Mel. He has made an acquaintance with the groom, and is gone to the mews, which seems to be his proper element, to examine the horses; and I left her with my woman, staring, like a Dutch doll, at everything she fixed her eyes on. Here she comes.

Enter Miss Turnbull.

Miss T. My gracious! Here be a power of voine —(*staring about*)—I wonder if that be he that be to be my husband. (*Aside.*)

Sir Harry. I hope, madam, the fatigue of your journey has not injured your health.

Miss T. Zir? [journey.

Sir Harry. I hope you are pretty well after your

Miss T. Pretty well, thank you, zir. Iveck! he's a handsome man. (*Aside.*)

Mel. This is the oddest affair.

Sir Harry. (*Aside.*) I don't know what to say to her. I am afraid, Miss Turnbull, you won't find the town so agreeable as the Elysian fields of Somersetshire.

Miss T. Lysian fields! There be no zuch vields in our parts. There be only corn vields and hay vields.

Mel. My brother, madam, means to say, you are not so well pleased with the town as with the country, perhaps.

Miss T. Oh! yes, but I be though, and ten times better. (*They stand silent for some time.*) Pray, miss, when did you zee Zekel Turnbull, my uncle?

Mel. I have not the honour to know him.

Miss T. My gracious! What, don't you know

Mel. No, indeed. [Zekel?

Miss T. Why, he do come to London zity vour times every year.

Sir Harry. Is he in parliament?

Miss T. Parliament!

Sir Harry. Yes.

Miss T. What, a parliament-man?

Sir Harry. Yes.

Miss T. No; he be a grazier. (*Silent again.*) Pray, miss, have you been to zee the lions and the

Mel. To-day? [wax-work to-day.

Miss T. Ees.

Mel. I never saw them in my life.

Miss T. My gracious! What, never zaw the kings, and the queens, and the tomb-stones?

Mel. No. [zee 'em now, then.

Miss T. Merciful vather! Well, let's go and

Mel. People of fashion never go to those kind of

Miss T. Never! [places.

Mel. Never.

Miss T. My gracious! But I am zure I will go every day, while I be in London zity, if I can vind the way. Pray, be this vair-time here? Where be all those volk gwain, and where do they all come fro'?

Turn. (*Without.*) Barbara, Barbara! Where beest, Barbara?

Miss T. I be here.

Enter 'Squire Turnbull.

Turn. Well, Zir Harry, here we be. Madam, your zervant. I zupped wi' Zir Hornet three nights ago, an' a zaid you be a vine lass; what, though I had never zeen you, but I gave you, miss, in a bumper; an' Zir Hornet swore that, except Barbara, a didn't knaw one to match you.

Mel. He did me great honour.

Turn. Why, to be zure a did. What, though a was wrong—I zee a was wrong; Barbara is well enough; but vor all the length of her spurs, she won't do, pitted against this vine ginger pullet.

Mel. Your compliments quite overpower me, sir.

Turn. Compliments! No, no. What, though vather be dead, an' I ha' three thousand a year, and the best pack of vox dogs in Zomerzetzhire, I ha' no need make compliments; I would as zoon override the hounds, or velt oak zaplings vor vire-wood. Barbara, mayhap, understands zic things, her reads kademy o' compliments; vor my part, I ha' no time vor zic trash—

Miss T. I'm zure it be a very pretty book.

Turn. Hold thy tongue, Barbara, an' then nobody will knaw thee beest a vool. Lookye me, miss: I do want a wife, and I should like hugely vor you an' I to zet our horses together, as the zaying is.

Mel. Sir, I don't understand—

Turn. Vor my part, I am none o' your half-bred ones. What, though shilly-shally and no thank you are always hungry—a lame tongue gets nothing, and the last wooer wins the maid—a bad hound may start a hare, but a good one will catch her.

Sir Harry. I believe, sir, you never saw my sister before.

Turn. Why, no, to be zure. What though, love and a red nose can't be hid—If you cut up the goose, I'll eat it—The hare starts when the hound least expects it.

Sir Harry. Very true, sir; but here is a disagreeable misunderstanding—

Turn. Why, to be zure, I do knaw it. We misunderstand the thing parfitly well: it be very disagreeable, an' I be glad of it. I ha' brought Barbara to London to zee the lions, buy ribands, an' be married. But, what though, liking's liking, an' love's love; myzelf bevore my zister. If the mountain won't go to the man, the man mun go to the mountain—an' vaint heart never won vair lady.

Sir Harry. Don't you think, sir, that were my sister's affections totally disengaged, this abruptness were very unlikely to gain them? Is it not too violent, think you, for female delicacy?

Turn. Why, to be zure—vemale delicacy! I hate it; and as vor your abruptness, why, gi' me the man that speaks bolt outright: I am vor none o' your abruptness. What though, he must ha' leave to speak that can't hold his tongue.

Mel. Your proverb is quite apropos, sir.

Turn. Why, to be sure; dogs bark as they are bred.

Sir Harry and Mel. Ha, ha, ha!

Turn. I am a staunch hound, miss, and seldom at vault; an' zo, wi' your leave, I'll—(*Offers to kiss Melissa.*)

Mel. I beg, sir—

Turn. Nay, don't be bashful; I like fruit too well to play long at bob-cherry—a's a vool, indeed, that can't carve a plum-pudding. (*Offers to kiss again, and is prevented by Sir Harry.*)

Sir Harry. I am sorry to be obliged to inform you, that you are entirely mistaken, both with respect to the affections of my sister and myself. As a friend of my uncle's, sir, I shall be happy to shew you every respect, but nothing farther can possibly take place between the families.—[*Enter a Servant, and delivers a card to Melissa. Exit Melissa.*]

Serv. Mr. Timid desired me to tell you, sir, that Mr. Levi is quite tired of waiting; and says, if you can't come now, he will call again to-morrow.

Sir Harry. Oh! tell him he must not go; I beg Mr. Levi's pardon, I'll be with him in a minute. [*Exit Serv.*] Sir Hornet has been exceedingly precipitate in this business, sir: he is coming to town, and must apologize for his error. As to my sister, I have no doubt but she has every respect for your merits they deserve; but her affections are pre-engaged, the nuptials fixed, and are soon to be celebrated. While you remain in town, however, I beg you will command my house and services. [*Exit.*

Turn. Well, Barbara, what dost think on un?

Miss T. Why, a he well enough; but I daunt rightly knaw what a means.

Turn. What a means! thee beest a vool; thee dost na' knaw the London tongue, thee means: a zaid, in a kind o' round-about way, that it's all right.

Miss T. Did a?

Turn. Did a! why, to be zure a did; didst na' zee how zivil a were, an' what a low bow a made? But thee has no contagion in thee; thee will never learn what's what.

Miss T. Why, where be I to learn zic things? I ha' never been no where.

Turn. Never been no where! Well, what o' that? Where have I been? I ha' never been no where. What though, I do knaw how to ztir my broth without scalding my vinger—I can zee an owl in an oven as zoon as another.

Miss T. But when be us to go and zee the zights?

Turn. Oh! we'll go all together on the wedding-day.

Miss T. My gracious! I wish it were here.

Turn. Ay, ay; I daunt doubt thee: women, pigs, and poultry, be never zatisfied.

Miss T. An' he you to be married as well?

Turn. Be I to be married as well! Why, to be zure I be. Isn't vather dead? an' ha' not I three thousand a-year, an' the best pack o' vox dogs in Zomerzetzhire? An' didst na' hear me tell miss 'at I would marry her? What though, I do knaw how to catch two pigeons wi' one pea; shew a dog a bone, and he'll wag his tail; he that is born a beauty is half-married, an' like will to like.

Miss T. Well, then, take me to parliament-house, an' shew me the king, an' the queen, and the lord mayor, an' th' elephant, an' the rest o' th' royal vamily.

Turn. I tell thee, thee sha'n't.

Miss T. My gracious! What zignification's my coming to London zity, an' I must be moped up a this'n? I will go, zo I will.

Turn. I tell thee, thee sha'n't.

Miss T. Why, then, an' I munnot zee the king, I'll go into next room and zee his picter, that I will. [*Exit.*

Turn. Ahoic! Barbara, Barbara! The helve after the hatchet—He that holds a woman, mun ha' a long rope an' a strong arm—Women an' mules will go their own road in zpite of riders or ztinging-nettles. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The House of Mr. Vandervelt.*

Enter VANDERVELT.

Vand. Clara is very beautiful, but mankind is very censorious. They will tell me that sixty-seven is too late in life to undertake the begetting, bringing up, and providing for a family. What of that? Must I go out of the world as I came into it, nobody to remember me? Must the name of Vandervelt be forgotten? Must I leave no pretty picture of myself? Sixty-seven is but sixty-seven. Have not we a thousand examples of longevity upon record? And, then, as to cuckolds, I cannot be persuaded that they are as common now as they were when I was a youngster. Times, men, and manners alter. Children are born wittier, and the world gets more sedate: I myself am a living proof of it: I never go to bagnios now; I never break lamps, beat watchmen, and kick constables now. I have no such wicked inclinations.

Enter CLARA.

Clara. Ah! *mon cher* papa! What, ruminating?

Vand. Ah! turtle. But why do you always call me papa? you know I don't like that word, turtle.

Clara. And why, papa, do you always call me turtle? Have not I told you, fifty times, it puts me in mind of calipash, and aldermen, and other ugly animals.

Vand. Calipash! Thou art sweeter, more tender, delicate, delightful, and delicious, than all the calipash and calipee in the universe. A gem, a jewel, that all the sultans, grand signiors, and great moguls of the whole earth have not riches enough to purchase.

Clara. You are so gallant! You do say the most obliging things.

Vand. Say the most obliging things! Ay, and will—no matter—Deeds, title-deeds, rent-rolls, India bonds—Well, death and the day of judgment will make strange discoveries.

Clara. Oh! yes: I know you wise men often meditate on these serious subjects.

Vand. Ay, life is treacherous ground; one foot firm, and the next in a pit.

Clara. But why so melancholy, papa?

Vand. I have no friends; that is, no relations, no children; have made a great fortune by care, and labour, and anxiety, and debarring myself the pleasures and comforts of life in my youth; and why should not I sit down and enjoy it?

Clara. Very true; and why don't you?

Vand. Because men are fools, and laugh they don't know why. I hate ridicule; nobody loves to be thought ridiculous. The world has got false notions: a man of fifty is called old, and must not be in love, for fear of being pointed at; whereas, some men are older at thirty, than others at threescore.

Clara. Certainly.

Vand. What is threescore?

Clara. A handful of minutes,—

Vand. That vanish like a summer shower,—

Clara. Melt like a lump of sugar in a dish of tea—

Vand. That come you don't know how,—

Clara. And go you don't know where.

Vand. Surely, a man of sixty may walk through a church-yard without fear of tumbling into a grave?

Clara. If he can jump over it.

Vand. True: and I was once an excellent jumper. Sixty! why, Henry Jenkins, the Yorkshire fisherman, lived to a hundred and sixty-nine. So that a man of sixty, even in these degenerate days, has a chance to live at least a hundred years.

Clara. Well, I declare, papa, you are quite a blooming youth; forty years younger, in my opinion, than you were a quarter of an hour ago.

Vand. Forty?

Clara. At least.

Vand. Why, then, by dad, as thou sayest, I am a blooming youth. Ah! turtle, I could tell you something that would surprise you; I could tell you—Think what I could tell you. (*Sings.*) "If 'tis joy to wound a lover"—hem!—"how much more to give him ease."

Clara. (*Sings.*) "When his passion we discover"—

Vand. "Oh! how pleasing 'tis to please!" Oh! I could tell—but no, no; you are sniggering, laughing in your sleeve: ay, ay, I perceive it; you're a wit, and I am an old fool: sneering, ridiculing me; I hate wit and ridicule.

Clara. Me a wit! Lord! papa, I would not be such an animal for the world. A wit! Why, a wit is a kind of urchin, that every man will set his dog at, but won't touch himself, for fear of pricking his fingers. A wit is a monster with a hideous long tongue and no brains; a dealer in paradoxes; one that is blind through a profusion of light; walks upon metaphor, is always seen in a simile, vanishes if you come too near him, and is only to be laid by a cudgel.

Vand. Frightful, indeed! Thank heaven, nobody can say I am a wit.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Codicil, the attorney, desires to speak with you, sir.

Vand. Very well; I am coming.

Serv. Mrs. Trip, madam, is in the housekeeper's room, and says she hopes your ladyship is well.

Clara. Desire her to walk up. [*Exit Serv.*

Vand. Who is Mrs. Trip, turtle?

Clara. A person that lived several years in our family. She is, at present, lady's-maid to Melissa, Sir Harry Portland's sister. She will divert me with her fine language; besides that, I wish to ask her how she likes Sir Harry's family.

Vand. I know Sir Harry's uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong, very well; an old friend.

Clara. Indeed! I never saw him here.

Vand. Why, no, I don't know how it has happened, but I have not seen him above twice these two years myself; he's an odd mortal; a whimsical old gentleman. Well, b'ye, b'ye!

Clara. Adieu!

Vand. B'ye, b'ye! [*Exit.*

Clara. This Sir Harry runs continually in my head; ay, and I am afraid has found a place in my heart: yes, yes; there's no denying that: but that friend, that Mr. Osborne—If I have any penetration, that man wears a most suspicious, hypocritical face.—[*Enter* Mrs. Trip.]—So, Mrs. Trip, how have you done this long time?

Mrs. T. Pretty well, thank you, madam, except that I am subject to the historicals, and troubled with the vapours; being, as I am, of a dilikut nervous system, whereof I am so giddy, that my poor head is sometimes quite in a whirlpool; and if I did not bathe with my lady, the doctor tells me I should decline into a liturgy, and so fall down and die, perhaps, in a fit of apostacy.

Clara. And how long have you lived in Sir Harry's family, Mrs. Trip?

Mrs. T. I came soon after my poor dear lady, your mamma, died, and was interrogated; whereof I was at her funeral. My lady is a very good lady; that is, I mean, ma'am, my future lady that I live with at present: she is to be married soon to Mr. Osborne, and may Hydra, the god of marriage, tie the gorgon knot; whereof I heard your ladyship is to be one of the ceremonials.

Clara. I am invited, and shall be there. But, pray, Mrs. Trip, what is your opinion of Mr. Osborne?

Mrs. T. Oh, lard! ma'am, consarning Mr. Osborne—I heard a small bird sing.

Clara. A small bird sing!

Mrs. T. Yes; ma'am.

Clara. Of what feather was this fowl?

Mrs. T. Foul! No, I assure you, your ladyship, as fair a speechified person as any in England; whereof he has a great valiation for me.

Clara. Well.

Mrs. T. And so, the secret is that Mr. Osborne has won almost all Sir Harry's estate.

Clara. Indeed!

Mrs. T. And, moreover, has pretended to be a synagogue, and a Jew, and has lent money in other people's names, on mortgagees and nuitants, whereof my friend has been a party consarned.

Clara. Good heaven, what villany! (*Aside.*) And pray, who is your friend, Mrs. Trip?

Mrs. T. Oh! ma'am, I hope your ladyship won't intoxicate me on that head, for I know Mr. Timid too well to—

Clara. Oh! it was Mr. Timid?

Mrs. T. Why—that is, ma'am—I didn't mean—Mercy! what have I said?

Clara. You may assure yourself, Mrs. Trip, I shall be careful not to do you any prejudice.

Mrs. T. I am sure, I am supinely obligationed to your ladyship. [*Exit.*

Clara. Poor Sir Harry! He has a heart that does honour to mankind, that does not merit distress; yet, if I augur right, it must shortly feel the severest pangs false friendship can inflict. Ungrateful Osborne! I must warn Melissa to beware of him, and if possible, to detach Sir Harry from the gaming-table. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Sir Harry Portland's House.*

Enter Sir Harry Portland, Clara, Melissa, *and* Vandervelt.

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! Sir Harry, you are a happy man.

Vand. Ay, Sir Harry, you are a happy man.

Mel. Such an accomplished spouse!

Clara. And so kind an uncle!

Sir Harry. Upon my soul, I can't help laughing; and yet the more I reflect on the affair, the more I am amazed; Sir Hornet is whimsical, 'tis true, but no fool.

Vand. Fool, Sir Harry! no, no; he is always the readiest to spy the fooleries of other people: many a time have I laughed at his whims and jokes; an odd mortal he is.

Clara. Nay, if he be so fond of a joke, who knows but he may have sent them on this errand for the joke's sake?

Vand. By dad, turtle, thou hast hit it. As sure as can be, that's it; it is for the joke's sake.

Sir Harry. Impossible: the affair is too serious to be intentional caprice.

Mel. But I thought, when I left you, you were coming to an eclaircissement.

Sir Harry. Coming to an eclaircissement! Why, I told them, as plain as I could speak, that no alliance whatever could take place between the families. [then.

Mel. 'Tis certain they have not understood you,

Sir Harry. Well, there the matter must rest till I can find an interpreter, for I can't make myself more intelligible. [scene yet?

Clara. And you have not had one tender love

Sir Harry. Not one. I am amazed at the girl's simplicity, it equals her ignorance; she speaks and looks so totally unconscious of impropriety, so void of intentional error, that I don't know how to reply.

Clara. Suppose, then, you were to practise a little. Come, I'll stand up for the young lady.

Sir Harry. I shall still find a difficulty to speak.

Clara. Surely!

Sir Harry. In very truth, ma'am. But it will be from a quite different motive.

Clara. Oh! for the love of curiosity, Sir Harry, explain your motive.

Vand. Ay, Sir Harry, explain your motive.

Sir Harry. I cannot, sir.

Vand. Cannot! Sir Harry, why so?

Sir Harry. For reasons, sir, which are far more easily imagined than described.

Vand. Nay, don't be afraid, Sir Harry. My turtle knows how to answer interrogatories; you won't find her a simpleton, I warrant.

Sir Harry. No, sir; the danger is that she might find me one.

Vand. I fancy, Sir Harry, you are a little like me: cautious with the ladies, lest you should be made ridiculous. I am very circumspect in those matters.

Sir Harry. You are very right, sir; it is not every one who has the gift of wearing a fool's-cap with a grace.

Clara. Ay, but notwithstanding all this, Sir Harry, I should like to have a love-scene with you.

Vand. How, turtle!

Clara. In the character of Miss Turnbull.

Vand. Oh! ay, do, Sir Harry, have a love-scene with my turtle.

Sir Harry. Anything to oblige you, sir.

Vand. Come, then, begin. (*Clara sets herself in an awkward, silly attitude.*) Ha, ha, ha! Look, look at my Turtle lovey-dovey.

Sir Harry. (*Addressing Clara.*) My uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong, madam, is desirous that I should gain the inestimable blessing of your hand.

Clara. Anan!

Vand. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Harry. And give me leave to say, madam, however unworthy I may be of the happiness and honour intended me, no person can be more sensible of them.

Clara. What! that be as much as to zay you wunt ha' me, I zuppose. (*Whimpers.*)

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! Nay, but don't cry in earnest, lovey-dovey.

Sir Harry. Oh! dry those heavenly eyes, madam, and believe me, when I call every sacred power to witness my affection, I love, I adore, I die for you. Suffer me to wipe away those pearly tears that hide the beauties of your cheek. (*Offering to salute her.*)

Clara. Hold, hold, Sir Harry!

Vand. Ay, hold, hold, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. Why so, sir? 'Tis quite in character.

Clara. Deuce take you, Sir Harry, you—you are too passionate in your feigned addresses; so warm and pressing—

Vand. Ay, so warm and pressing.

Clara. One was not aware.

Sir Harry. I was taken by surprise myself, madam. The bounteous god of love kindly contrived an opportunity which my profound adoration, and a conscious want of merit, had totally deprived me of. Pardon me, if, for a moment, I forgot that respect which every one, who beholds you, cannot help feeling.

Vand. Why, what's this, Sir Harry? You are not in downright earnest, are you?

Sir Harry. Sincere as dying sinners imploring mercy.

Vand. What, in love with my turtle?

Clara. Pooh! Why, no, to be sure. We were only acting a supposed scene.

Vand. Supposed! By dad, I think it was devilishly like a real scene. You both did your parts very naturally.

Sir Harry. Oh! sir, no actor who feels as forcibly as I do, can ever mistake his character.

Vand. Feels forcibly! Your feelings are forcible, indeed.

Mel. Come, come, let us adjourn to the drawing-room; I want to have your opinions on a painting of Coreggio's that my brother has made me a present of.

Vand. Favour me with your hand, young lady; and, Sir Harry, do you take my turtle's; but don't you let your feelings be too forcible. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*The Hall in Sir Harry Portland's house.*

Enter Sir Hornet Armstrong *and Servant.*

Sir Hor. Are the trunks, safe, sirrah, George?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Sir Hor. And did you order that dog of a postillion to take care of the poor devils the horses?

Serv. I did, sir.

Sir Hor. And of himself?

Serv. I did, sir.

Sir Hor. You did, sir? Why, then, do you go and take care of yourself, you rascal.

Serv. I will, sir.

Sir Hor. And do you hear, George?

Serv. Sir? [break your bones.

Sir Hor. If I find you disobey my orders, I'll

Serv. I'll be very careful, sir, I assure you. [*Exit.*

Enter Timid *and* Scrip.

Timid. Brokerage comes rather heavy, Mr. Scrip, when the sum is large.

Scrip. Heavy! no, no; a d—d paltry pittance; five-and-twenty pounds only, you see, for selling out twenty thousand. Get more by one lucky hit than fifty of these would produce.

Timid. Ay!

Scrip. Oh! yes; jobbing—stock-jobbing, between you and I, is the high road to wealth.

Timid. Lackaday! may be so. Well, good day. (*Scrip is going, but seeing Sir Hornet, stops to listen.*)

Sir Hor. What, old Lackaday!

Timid. Ah! Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. What's the best news with you?

Timid. Ah, lackaday! the best news I know is scarcely worth relating.

Scrip. Beg pardon, sir, (*to Sir Hor.*) beg pardon—bad news in town, did you say?

Sir Hor. Bad! sir; not that I have heard.

Scrip. Exceedingly sorry for it.

Sir Hor. Sir?

Scrip. Never was more distressed for bad news.

Sir Hor. Distressed for bad news!

Scrip. Excessively! The reduction of Gibraltar, the taking of Jamaica, or the destruction of the grand fleet, one of the three would make me a happy man for life. [you happy for life?

Sir Hor. The destruction of the grand fleet make

Scrip. Completely.

Sir Hor. Here's a precious scoundrel!

Scrip. No great reason to complain, to be sure; do more business than any three doctors of the college; generally of the sure side; made a large fortune, if this does not give me a twinge; rather overdone it; but any severe stroke, any great national misfortune, would exactly close my account.

Sir Hor. Hark you, sir!

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. It is to be hoped—

Scrip. Yes, sir, it is to be hoped. [account.

Sir Hor. That a halter will exactly close your

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. You raven-faced rascal! Rejoice at national misfortunes! Zounds! I thought such language was nowhere to be heard from the mouth of an Englishman, unless he were a member of parliament.

Scrip. Lord! sir, you don't consider that I am a bear for almost half a million.

Sir Hor. You are an impudent villain! Rejoice at the distress of your country!

Scrip. Why, Lord! sir, to be sure; when I am a bear. There's not a bear in the Alley but would do the same. Were I a bull, indeed, the case would be

Sir Hor. A bull! [altered.

Scrip. For instance, at the taking of Charles-Town, no man was merrier, no man more elate, no man in better spirits.

Sir Hor. How so, gentle sir?

Scrip. Oh! dear sir, at that time I was a bull to a vast amount, when, very fortunately for me, the news arrived; the guns fired, the bells clattered, the stocks mounted, and I made ten thousand pounds. Enough to make a man merry. Never spent a happier night in my life.

Sir Hor. Aha! then, according to that arithmetic, you would be as merry and as happy to-night, could you accomplish the destruction of this said British fleet.

Scrip. Happier, happier by half! for I should realize at least twice the sum—twice the sum.

Sir Hor. Twice the sum!

Scrip. Ay, twice the sum. Oh! that would be a glorious event, indeed. Never prayed so earnestly for anything since I was born; and who knows—who knows what a little time may do for us?

Sir Hor. Zounds! how my elbow aches! (*Aside.*)

Scrip. I shall call on some leading people—men of intelligence—of the right stamp.

Sir Hor. You shall?

Scrip. Yes, sir.

Sir Hor. Why, then, perhaps you will be able to destroy the British fleet between you.

Scrip. I hope so, I hope so—do everything in my power. Oh! it would be a glorious event.

Sir Hor. Hark you! sir, do you see that door?

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. And this cane?

Scrip. Why, but, sir—

Sir Hor. Make your exit, you imp!

Scrip. But, sir—

Sir Hor. Get out of the house, you vile rascal, you diabolical—[*Drives Scrip off.*] A son's son of a scoundrel! Who is he? What business had he here?

Timid. Lackaday! sir, he is a stock-broker, that Sir Harry employed, at his sister's request, to sell out for her; because she chooses to have her fortune in her own possession against to-morrow. I have been paying him the brokerage, and receiving the money, which I shall deliver to madam Melissa directly.

Sir Hor. An incomprehensible dog! Pray for the reduction of Gibraltar, the taking of Jamaica, or the destruction of the British fleet!

Timid. Lackaday! sir, it is his trade.

Sir Hor. Trade! a nation will never flourish that encourages traders to thrive by her misfortunes. But come, tell me something of my own affairs: where is Harry? how does he go on?

Timid. Ah, lackaday!

Sir Hor. What, is he a wild young dog? Does he get into thy books?

Timid. Ah, lackaday!

Sir Hor. Ah, lackaday! Zounds! don't sigh, man: he won't die in thy debt.

Timid. Ah, lackaday! Sir Hornet, he should be welcome to the last farthing I have in the world.

Sir Hor. Should he, old Truepenny? then give me thy hand; thou shalt be remembered in my codicil: but, what, he shakes his elbow, I suppose, eh? Seven's the main?

Timid. Ah, lackaday! Sir Hornet, what between main and chance he has been sadly nicked.

Sir Hor. Has he? I'll score his losings upon his pate, a dog—that is, if he will let me. But where is Miss Turnbull? she'll soon reform him; her angelic smiles will teach him—

Timid. Sir?

Sir Hor. Sir! Zounds! you stare like the wooden heads of the twelve Cæsars. Miss Turnbull's charms I say, will find employment for all his virtues and wean him from all his vices.

Timid. Will they, sir?

Sir Hor. Will they, sir! Yes, they will, sir.

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Hor. Lackaday! What ails you?

Timid. Nothing, sir, nothing; only that I am afraid my eyes begin to grow dim.

Sir Hor. Your head, I believe, begins to grow very thick.

Timid. Ah, lackaday! sir, like enough, like enough.

Sir Hor. Be kind enough to answer me a few questions: is not Miss Turnbull a beautiful girl?

Timid. May I speak truth? [may.

Sir Hor. May you speak truth! to be sure you

Timid. Then I answer no, sir.

Sir Hor. No!

Timid. No.

Sir Hor. Is she not an elegant girl?

Timid. No.

Sir Hor. Nor a witty girl?

Timid. No. [she, in your opinion?

Sir Hor. Tol de rol lol! tititum! Pray, what is

Timid. A silly, ignorant, ill-bred, country girl, and very unfit for Sir Harry's wife.

Sir Hor. Tol de rol lol! laditum! Let me look in your face. Yes, yes; he has it; the moon's almost at full. Poor Lackaday! which is your right hand? (*Timid holds it up.*) Indeed! wonderful! And are you really in your sober senses?

Timid. Why, indeed, sir, I begin to be rather in doubt: I believe so; but lest I should lose them, I will wish your honour a good morning. [*Exit.*

Sir Hor. Lackaday! Ha, ha! Not beautiful, nor witty, nor—tol de rol lol! The old fool has a mind to set up for a wit, and has began by bantering me. Zounds! I was neither drunk nor mad; and to the best of my knowledge, I am not now in a dream.

The brother, indeed, is a booby; and does not appear to be of the same family—hardly of the same species; though he had sense enough to snap at the offer immediately. I remarked he did not stand on ceremony. Surely, I have made no mistake in the business—'Sblood! if it prove so! Parson Adams the second! I shall—Eh! who's this? No, no, no—it is; 'tis she herself, in *propria pers*—[*Enter* CLARA.]—Miss Turnbull, I most heartily rejoice to

Clara. Miss Turnbull! (*Aside.*) [see you.

Sir Hor. Your presence has relieved me from one of the oddest qualms—but the sight of you has given me a cordial.

Clara. What do you mean, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. Mean, my angel! why, here has been a bantering, lying, enigmatical son of a scoundrel, with a bundle of ironical, diabolical tales, railing at your beauty and accomplishments, till, egad! I began to fancy my fine-flavoured pine-apple a crab.

Clara. This is delightful! But I cannot find in my heart to undeceive him. (*Aside.*) There is no answering for the difference of taste, sir.

Sir Hor. True. Asses prefer thistles to nectarines; but yet he must be an ass, indeed, who could not distinguish St. Paul's from the pillory.

Clara. Taste, Sir Hornet, is a sort of shot silk, and has a variety of shades: one says 'tis blue, another black, and a third is positive 'tis yellow. It would be a vain attempt, therefore, for Miss Turnbull to endeavour to please the whole world.

Sir Hor. An old booby! I would not give a hair of the pope's beard to please him. But how is it with Sir Harry? is he in raptures? is he dying for you?

Clara. No, sir; he eats and drinks as usual, and is, for aught I can discover, in tolerably good health.

Sir Hor. Is he? an audacious dog! in good health! If I find him in good health I'll pistol him. But you mistake the matter, perhaps: the rascal's proud, and not willing you should see his sufferings; he is a stricken deer, and sheds his tears in solitude and silence, mayhap. Do you discover no symptoms of the sighing swain? Does he never cut his fingers? or scald himself? or run against a post, and beg its

Clara. No, sir. [pardon?

Sir Hor. I doubt he is a sad dog. But no, no; I am certain he adores you; 'tis impossible he should do otherwise. But there is another material point, about which I am not quite so certain.

Clara. What is that, sir?

Sir Hor. Has he found any place in your affections? 'Tis true, he's a fine fellow. I don't mean by that, one that is pickled in cosmetics; preserved in musk and marechal powder; and that will melt away, like Lot's wife, in the first hard shower: none of your fellows that are too valiant to give a woman the wall, and too witty to let her have the last word; but one that is—in short, his own manner will best describe what he is. [so short.

Clara. True, Sir Hornet, but the time has been

Sir Hor. Short! Ah! madam, if he did not do the business with a *coup d'œil*, at once, I would not give a feather of a goose-wing for all the arrows his Cupid has in his quiver. But come, Miss Turnbull, I know you are above the silly prejudices that ordinary minds are swayed by; tell me sincerely, has he made any impression on your heart? Is he the man?

Clara. To speak ingenuously, Sir Hornet, that is a point entirely undetermined, at present.

Sir Hor. Undetermined! why, what—

Clara. Sir Harry's person is engaging, his manners delightful, and his understanding unexceptionable. [hear you say so.

Sir Hor. Bravo! my dear girl! you charm me to

Clara. I will say more, Sir Hornet. I find my heart interested in his behalf, and sincerely believe I shall never see another man with whom I could be half so happy.

Sir Hor. My dear Miss Turnbull!

Clara. But yet I have too many reasons to fear it will be impossible we should ever be united.

Sir Hor. Impossible!

Clara. I firmly believe, Sir Harry possesses a thousand virtues, but they are all discoloured by a failing, which, if not as erroneous as some other vices, is more destructive than any.

Sir Hor. I understand you.

Clara. This will for ever deter a woman, who values her own peace, from cherishing a passion that must, in its consequences, be so fatal.

Sir Hor. But you, my angel, will soon cure him of this: it is not a rooted vice—

Clara. Permanently, or my intelligence says false.

Sir Hor. Well, but we have hopes that Mr. Osborne will find means to reclaim him; he is continually with him, continually warning him, and—

Clara. Mr. Osborne, Sir Hornet, is an interested physician, and would rather encourage than cure the disease. [of this?

Sir Hor. Heaven forbid! But who informs you

Clara. Those who are in the secret, I assure you, sir. I am afraid Mr. Osborne is a wicked man; he is—what I dare not speak.

Sir Hor. I confess you alarm me, though I hope without cause. Osborne assumes every appearance of rigid virtue; and, if this were true, he would be the worst of villains. However, suspend your opinion awhile; I'll soon sift the affair: and in the meantime, let me beg of you to think as well of Sir Harry as your doubts will permit you.

Clara. I shall do that, Sir Hornet, without an effort. [*Exit.*

Enter VANDERVELT.

Vand. (*Sees Clara going off.*) Why, turtle, why—Ah! Sir Hornet, I am glad to see you.

Sir Hor. Ah, ha! friend Van! why, you look tolerably well. [should I not?

Vand. Tolerably well! Ay, to be sure. Why

Sir Hor. Why should you not! Let me see: there are, as near as I can guess, about seventy reasons why you should not.

Vand. Humph! Oh! what, my age? No, no: let me tell you, Sir Hornet, I—I am not an old man.

Sir Hor. No?

Vand. No; nor you neither.

Sir Hor. Indeed! I am exceedingly glad of that: and, pray, when did you make this discovery?

Vand. Make it! why, I have been making it these twenty years and upwards.

Sir Hor. Oh, ho! And how do you prove it?

Vand. By comparison and reflection. I'll tell you—hold! first, I'll shew you what I call my list of worthies: there, look at that. (*Gives a common-place book.*)

Sir Hor. What the devil have we here? (*Reads.*) "*Patrick O'Neal, married, for the seventh time, at the age of one hundred and thirteen; walks without a cane, never idle; children and great-grand-children to the number of one hundred and twenty-three.*"

Vand. There's a fellow! I warrant that man is alive and hearty at this moment.

Sir Hor. Humph! And, pray, do you think to imitate this worthy, as you call him? Will you be married seven times, and have a hundred and twenty-three children?

Vand. That's more than I can tell.

Sir Hor. Ha! (*Reads.*) "*Thomas Parr, being aged one hundred and twenty, fell in love with Catherine Milton.*" [the church-door.

Vand. Ay, and did penance in a white sheet at

Sir Hor. Humph! (*Reads.*) "*Henry Jenkins*"—

Vand. Ay, there's another: corrected his great grandson, a youth of seventy, with his own hand, for being idle.

Sir Hor. (*Reads.*) "*Johannes de Temporibus, or John of Times, armour-bearer to the emperor Charlemagne, died, aged three hundred threescore and one year.*"

Vand. Very well; now tell me, when you compare me to Johannes Temporibus, that is, when you compare sixty-seven to three hundred threescore and one, can you say I am an old man?

Sir Hor. An old man! By the beard of Methuselah, thou art scarce an infant; it will be, perhaps, these five years yet before thou art perfectly a child.

Vand. Nay, Sir Hornet, let me beg of you to be serious; you are an old friend, and know the world; I shall be glad of your advice: I ruminate on these things by myself, till I am quite melancholy; now, if I had but somebody to bear half my griefs, I should suppose they would be lessened. [so.

Sir Hor. Why, true, as you say, one would imagine

Vand. Don't you think, then, if I were to take a handsome, young wife, I should, perhaps, find a cure for all my ills?

Sir Hor. An infallible one.

Vand. And this is, seriously, your opinion.

Sir Hor. Seriously.

Vand. Then tell me—you were talking with the young lady that went out as I entered—

Sir Hor. Well, what of her?

Vand. Is she not very beautiful?

Sir Hor. A divinity.

Vand. Finely accomplished?

Sir Hor. Beyond description.

Vand. That's right. You are a sensible, discerning man, Sir Hornet; and I am delighted to find you approve my choice.

Sir Hor. Your choice!

Vand. My choice. That is the young lady, you must know, to whom I intend to pay my addresses.

Sir Hor. Your what!

Vand. The lady I mean to marry.

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Nay, Sir Hornet—

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! all mad; every soul.

Vand. I don't understand.

Sir Hor. Most reverend youth, I beg your pardon. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. You see things in a mighty strange light, Sir Hornet. Is it any miracle that a man should love a beautiful woman?

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! Love! why thou'rt another Ætna—Cupid's burning mountain. Your nose has taken fire at your fancy, and become a beacon to warn all young gentlemen of three-score and ten, of the rocks and quicksands hidden in the sea of amorous desires.

Vand. Upon my word, Sir Hornet, this is exceedingly strange.

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! You must excuse me. What a rosy youth! Harkye! friend Vanderveldt, it's my opinion you have been bantering me.

Vand. Od! that's a good thought. (*Aside.*)—Bantering you! why, ay, to be sure I have. Ha, ha, ha! (*Forces a laugh.*)

Sir Hor. Oh! you have?

Vand. Certainly. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! (*With the same tone.*)

Vand. Didn't you perceive that before? Ha, ha!

Sir Hor. No, 'faith! Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. That's a good joke. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Excellent! Ha, ha, ha! (*During the laugh, Sir H. imitates Vandervelt.*)—Now let us be serious.

Vand. With all my heart.

Sir Hor. And I'll tell you a story.

Vand. Do.

Sir Hor. There was a certain antient personage of my acquaintance, called Andrew Vandervelt—

Vand. What, is your story about me?

Sir Hor. Give me leave, young gentleman, and you shall hear.—Everybody imagined him to be a prudent, sedate, grave person, with a moderate share of common sense—

Vand. Well!

Sir H. And, as it was evident his beard was grey, his limbs palsied, his skin shrivelled, and his sinews shrunk—

Vand. How, Sir Hornet?

Sir H. They naturally concluded, he had made his will, wrote his epitaph, and bespoke his coffin—

Vand. Mercy upon me!

Sir Hor. But instead of meditating, like a pious Christian, on the last four things, a crotchet takes him in the head, he buys a three-penny fiddle, scrapes a matrimonial jig, claps a pair of horns upon his head, and curvets through the town, the sport of the mob, derided by the young, pitied by the old, and laughed at by all the world.

Vand. Heaven deliver me, what a picture!—But you forget, Sir Hornet; didn't I explain to you that it was only a joke?

Sir Hor. Oh! true. Ah! witty rogue! Well, adieu. I'll remember the joke. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Ay do. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Oh! for a song to the tune of "Room for Cuckolds!" [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*A Chamber at Sir Harry Portland's.*

Enter Sir Harry Portland.

Sir Harry. (*Much agitated.*) May the everlasting curse of heaven consume those implements of hell, those deceitful, infernal fiends! I'll never touch, never look on cards or dice again. If I ever make another bet, may all the horrors of a ruined fortune haunt me, sleeping and waking; may I be pointed at by children, and pitied by sharpers. Distraction! May I be—I am already ruined, past redemption.

Enter a Servant, who delivers a letter to Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. (*Breaks open the letter hastily.*) Um—Um—Stay, sir. (*To the Servant.*) D———n! Is it possible! In league with sharpers. Who brought this letter, sir?

Servant. A porter, sir.

Sir Harry. Where is he? [in a hurry.

Servant. Gone, sir; he ran off round the corner

Sir Harry. You may go, sir. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter Osborne.

Osb. You seem moved, Sir Harry; may I enquire the cause?

Sir Harry. You are the cause, sir.

Osb. I!

Sir Harry. Yes, you. There, read, sir.

Osb. (*Reads.*) "*Beware of a false friend; the person who gives you this caution, would sacrifice a life to preserve you from the destruction that threatens you. Mr. Osborne is in league with Jews and sharpers, and you are a victim to his avarice and duplicity.*" So, so. Well, Sir Harry, do you give any credit to this epistle?

Sir Harry. Nay, sir, you are to tell me how much or how little credit it deserves.

Osb. Why, look you, Sir Harry, I cannot, nor I will not, enter into explanations.

Sir Harry. Sir! Cannot, nor will not, enter into explanations!

Osb. No, sir.

Sir Harry. But I say, sir, you shall.

Osb. Shall!

Sir Harry. Yes, sir, shall.

Osb. Ay, sir? Who is he that shall make me?

Sir Harry. I am he, sir.

Osb. Indeed!

Sir Harry. Friendship, honour, honesty, ought to make you; but present appearances declare you void of these.

Osb. Present appearances declare you void of reason, sir, otherwise you would remember me for one of those who are are not to be terrified by a loud tongue, or an angry brow. I repeat it, I will not now enter into explanations. I have played

with you, I have staked my money, and won yours. Would it have been dishonourable had you won mine? I have disposed of that money as I thought proper. No matter whether with Jews or Christians; and, I should have supposed, your passion and suspicion would have required better proof, than the malevolent aspersion of an anonymous letter, ere they ought to have incited you to a quarrel with your friend.

Sir Harry. I beg your pardon, dear Osborne; I am to blame; nothing but the severity of my late losses can plead for me; I know you to be a noble-hearted, worthy fellow, and explanations, on such an accusation, are as much beneath you to give, as me to demand. Forget my silly warmth: it is my weakness.

Osb. Do you forget the cause of it, Harry, and it is forgot.

Sir Harry. It was madness—I am above suspicion—'tis ungenerous—'tis damnable—pray excuse—pray forgive me.

Osb. Well, well, think no more on't; only guard against suspicion for the future. [*Exit.*

Sir Harry. No, no, it cannot be; there is an open fortitude in his manner, a boldness that can only result from innocence.

Enter Melissa.

Mel. Oh! brother, I am glad I have found you. Why did you send these troublesome things to me? Why did not you take care of them for me? Trust a giddy girl, indeed, with a parcel of bank bills. Here, here, here they are, take 'em, take 'em, they will be safe with you; I have been in a panic, ever since they were in my possession, lest they should take wing, and fly through the key-hole, or in some other unaccountable way. I am unused to such large sums, and don't feel happy while they are about me.

Sir Harry. But what am I to do with them?

Mel. Keep them till to-morrow, and then, you know, when you give my hand to your friend, you may give them too, to make it the more acceptable; there are just twenty, of one thousand each. So, now I am easy—good b'ye: I am going to purchase a few knick-knacks. [*Exit.*

Sir Harry. Well, but, sister! Melissa! She's gone, flown on the light wings of innocence and happiness, while I, depressed by folly, feel a weight upon my heart, that hope itself cannot remove. What is a ruined gamester? An idiot, who begins for his amusement, who continues hoping to retrieve, and who is ruined before he can recollect himself; a wretch, deserted, solitary, forlorn; ashamed of society, yet miserable when alone; shunned by the prosperous; despised by the prudent; deservedly exposed to the poisoned shafts of insolence and envy; a by-word to the vulgar, and a jest to the fortunate; haunted by duns, preyed upon by usurers, persecuted and curst by creditors. Inexplicable infatuation! [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter Clara, Melissa, *and* 'Squire Turnbull.

Mel. Mr. Turnbull, I must beg, sir, you'll desist.

Turn. Dezist, why, to be zure; I'll go and buy license out o'hand, make hay while the zun do zhine, and don't lose the zheep for a ha'porth o'tar; what tho,' the pepper-box must ha' a lid; a bushel o'words wunt vill a basket; when the owl goes a bunting, 'tis time to light the candle.

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! If you'll permit me, my dear, I think I can relieve you from this embarassment.

Mel. Permit you! I am sure if you can, you shall be canonized, and have churches erected to your memory.

Clara. I'll talk to him in his own language, he can comprehend no other.

Turn. Well, vair lady.

Clara. Well, zir.

Turn. You do zee how the nail do drive. Be you to be one at bridal!

Clara. No.

Turn. No! Why zo? you'st be bride-maid.

Clara. No, but I wunt.

Turn. Wunt you?

Clara. No; nor you'st not be bridegroom, nother.

Turn. No!

Clara. No.

Turn. How zo!

Clara. Because you've zold the zkin avore you've catched the vox. You've reckoned your chickens bevore they be hatched.

Turn. Nay, nay; stop at the dike; zure I do knaw my own mind, an miss be agreed.

Clara. But miss ben't agreed.

Turn. No! That's a good joke; but she be,

Clara. But she ben't, though. [though.

Turn. But I'm zure she be.

Clara. But I'm zure she ben't.

Turn. No! Why, miss, ben't you agreed?

Mel. No, sir.

Turn. No!

Clara. You may gape, but the cherry won't drop; too much mettle is dangerous in a blind horse; misreckoning is no payment; John would ha' wed, but Mary war na willing.

Mel. You seem surprised, sir; I can only say, it is without reason; you have deceived yourself, in supposing such an alliance possible, and I hope your own good sense will inform you, that, after this declaration, any renewal of your addresses to me must be considered an insult.

Turn. An' zo, then, the meaning of all this vine zpeech, I zuppose, is, that you wunt ha' me?

Mel. It is.

Clara. "Make hay while the zun do zhine; don't lose the zheep for a ha'p'orth of tar; a bushel of words wunt vill a basket; when the owl goes a hunting, 'tis time to light the candle." Your most obedient, gentle 'squire. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit, with Clara.*

Turn. Zo, then, it zeems I ha'-been reckoning without my host here. Well, what though, zoon hot zoon cold; zoon got zoon gone; care's no cure; zorrow won't pay a man's debts; he wanted a zinging-bird, that gave a groat for a cuckoo; an' he that loses a wife and zixpence, has lost a tester. —[*Enter* Miss Turnbull.]—Why, Barbara, what be's the matter wi' thee? Where hast thee been?

Miss T. Been! Why I ha' bin wildered.

Turn. What, lost!

Miss T. Ees; an' if I had na' by good hap met wi' John, who has got direction in written hand, it were vive golden guineas to a brass varthin I'ad been kidnapped an' zent to America, among the Turks.

Turn. Zerve thee right, thee must be gadding; but I ha' news vor thee, the cow has kicked down the milk; it's all off 'tween miss and I.

Miss T. Zure! rabbit me an I didn't guess as much.

Turn. Ees, the nail's clenched; zhe and I ha' zhook hands, an' parted.

Miss T. My gracious! What, won't yo' ha' zhe?

Turn. No, I wunt; her may whistle, but I zha'n't hear; her may beckon, but I zha'n't come; catch me an' ha' me, I'm no vool; zo, do you zee, an' you be minded to wed, zay grace an' vall to; vor I don't like your London tricks, an' zo I'st leave it as vast as I can.

Miss T. An' when be I to be wed?

Turn. Why, I do vind Zir Hornet be come; zo, when yo' do zee Zir Harry, yo' may zettle't; an', d'ye hear, Barbara, don't let me vind yo' at any o'these skittish off an' on freaks; I ha' zeen too

much on 'um lately. Oh! here be Zir Harry ooming, an' zo I'st leave you to make love your own way; I'st not play my ace o'trumps out yet. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Harry Portland.

Sir Harry. So, here's my good whimsical uncle's nonpareil, as he calls her—his phœnix. All alone, Miss Turnbull?

Miss T. Ees; brother be just gone; a's vallen out wi' miss, an' a's plaguily frumped.

Sir Harry. Sure! [make love.

Miss T. Ees; a zaid, too, 'at yo' an' I be to

Sir Harry. He did!

Miss T. Ees; aud I do knaw his tricks; a'll be in a woundy rage, an I don't do as he bids me.

Sir Harry. What, will he be surly?

Miss T. Zurly! a'll snarl worser than our great dog, Jowler, at a beggar.

Sir Harry. He is ill-tempered, then?

Miss T. Oh! a'll zulk vor a vortnight round, an' when a comes about again, a'll make a believe to romp; an' then a' lumps, an' gripes, an' pinches, till I am quite a weary on't.

Sir Harry. Well you may, I think. Poor thing. (*Aside.*) And which way are we to make love?

Miss T. My gracious! don't you knaw?

Sir Harry. I believe I can give a guess; you, I suppose, are to hang down your head and titter.

Miss T. Ees.

Sir Harry. I—hem! and look sheepish.

Miss T. Ees. [thumbs.

Sir Harry. You gnaw your apron; I twirl my

Miss T. He, he! Ees.

Sir Harry. You say—it's a very fine day, sir, and I answer, yes, ma'am, only it rains.

Miss T. He, he, he! Ees, iveck, that be vor all the world the very moral of our country vashion. Oh! but here be zomebody coming.

Enter Sir Hornet Armstrong, Clara, *and* Vandervelt.

Sir Hor. Why, Harry, you dog, what, have you hid yourself, because you would not see me?

Sir Harry. Dear sir, I am exceedingly glad to see you, but it is not a quarter of an hour since I heard of your being in town; and I suppose, sir, you will scarcely be angry at finding me in this company. (*Vand., Sir Harry, and Miss T. retires.*)

Sir Hor. Finding you in—Zounds! what awkward cargo of rusticity has he got there? (*To Clara.*)

Clara. A young lady from Somersetshire, with a tolerably good fortune, that Sir Harry, it is thought by some, intends to marry.

Sir Hor. Marry! He should as soon marry the mummy of queen Semiramis.

Clara. She has been strongly recommended to the family, sir.

Sir Hor. Recommended! By whom?

Clara. By one you are very intimate with, and who has very great influence with Sir Harry, as well as with yourself.

Sir Hor. Ay! Who is that?

Clara. Pardon me there, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Certainly the fellow cannot be foolish enough to admire her; but I shall soon discover that, by what he thinks of you. Harkye, Harry!

Sir Harry. Sir.

Sir Hor. I cannot, upon the whole, tell very well what to make of you. Are you thoroughly convinced that you are, at this instant, legally capable of making your will?

Sir Harry. My will, sir!

Sir Hor. Ay, are you of sound mind?

Sir Harry. I believe so, sir.

Sir Hor. Then pray tell me, now we have you face to face, what is your opinion of Miss Turnbull?

Sir Harry. Sir, that is by no means a question proper to be answered in this company.

Sir Hor. Psha! D—n your delicacy. Make your panegyric, and I'll blush for her and you, too.

Sir Harry. Sir, I have no panegyric to make.

Sir Hor. Sir!

Sir Harry. Even so.

Sir Hor. Why you impudent, confounded—Have you the barefaced effrontery, with such a picture before your eyes, to—

Sir Harry. You have applied the torture, and my own ease requires confession.

Sir Hor. Humph! And so you—Now, pray, all be attentive, for Bacon's brazen head is going to utter. So you do not think Miss Turnbull a most engaging—(*Sir Harry smiles.*)—Why, you intolerable—

Sir Harry. I am concerned to see you so serious on the subject. I must acknowledge, that in this case, sir, I have either a most perverse or stupid imagination, and, cannot, for the soul of me, discover the latent wonders in the young lady, which your better sight has so distinct a view of.

Sir Hor. Ha!

Sir Harry. I am, however, exceedingly willing to try the utmost strength of my faith, to believe as much as I can, and take the rest for granted; provided you will not inflict the punishment of a wife upon my superstition.

Sir Hor. Obliging youth! (*Bows.*) Inflict the punishment of a wife upon your superstition! And so you think, no doubt, a wife a burthen much too heavy for the back of so fine and pretty a town-made gentleman as yourself.

Sir Harry. With the addition of Miss Turnbull's accomplishments, I most undoubtedly do, sir.

Sir Hor. You do! Humph! Pray, most civil sir, permit me to ask—perhaps there may be some other lady in this good company, to whom your profound penetration would give the preference?

Sir Harry. If such preference could, in the least, make me deserving of her, I have no scruple to say there is.

Sir Hor. Miracle of modesty! There is?

Sir Harry. Most assuredly. But, though to possess the lady you hint at, would make me blessed beyond description, I have never dared to declare so much before, because I am conscious of being unworthy of such a profusion of charms and accomplishments.

Clara. Generous diffidence! (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. Charms and—What the devil is all this? Where am I, at sea, or on shore? Have I a calenture in my brain, or is this my nose! They—they call you Sir Harry Portland, don't they, sir?

Sir Harry. And your nephew, sir.

Sir Hor. No; that's rather dubious. Well, then, Mr. Harry, or Sir Harry, or what you please, you are pretty well convinced, I suppose, that I have had some slight regard for you.

Sir Harry. Perfectly, sir, and remember it with gratitude.

Sir Hor. That remains to be proved, friend. Ever since your father's death, if I don't mistake, I have been tolerably busy, a little active, or so, in forming your mind and manners, and moulding you into a sort of being, a man might behold without blushing.

Sir Harry. It is impossible, sir, I should ever forget your goodness, though I am happy to be reminded of it.

Sir Hor. That's a lie, I believe. However, sir, among the rest of my cares, I was anxious to find a woman worthy of you; nay, so solicitous was I about adjusting preliminaries, that though the gout had laid an embargo upon a parcel of my fingers and toes, I resolved to forego my own ease, and set sail immediately, that I might convoy you safe into the harbour of happiness.

Sir Harry. I am very sensible of the benevo-

lence of your intentions, sir, and only wish you had done me the honour to—

Sir Hor. Well, I have only a word or two more to say on the subject: I have been an enthusiastic old blockhead, 'tis true, and was fool enough to think all men had eyes; however, if you have not either the complaisance, the wit, or the love, to hit upon some expedient to make your peace with Miss Turnbull, I will never see, never know, never speak to you again. And now, sir, you will act as your great wisdom shall direct.

Sir Harry. Indeed, sir, I am distressed to see you so intent upon this business; I am exceedingly unhappy to do the least thing to incur your displeasure, at this moment especially: I have a thousand reasons to be dissatisfied with myself, and am grieved to add your anger to the list. I would do anything in my power to preserve your friendship and affection; but this is too severe a task; I cannot totally forget common sense: I cannot entirely command so delicate a passion as that of love. A little time will discover whether I am ever to think of love or happiness again! of this, however, I am certain, I never can possess either with Miss Turnbull. [*Exit.*

Sir Hor. Indeed, youngster! so resolute!

Clara. What a noble fortitude! (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. We shall see who will first read their recantation. An insensible, blind puppy! I'll be a greater torment to him, than a beadle to a beggar, a cat to a rat, or a candle to a moth: I'll singe his wings; I'll plague him worse than Moses did the Egyptians. [ther opinion.

Clara. Oh! Sir Hornet, you'll soon be of ano-

Sir Hor. Never, never, never!—[*Enter* 'Squire Turnbull, *unperceived.*]—However, let him act as he will, Miss Turnbull shall have no cause to repent her coming to London. [zights?

Miss T. What! will yo' take me to zee the

Turn. Who the devil bade that goose cackle?

Sir Hor. A cursed idiot, or I have no skill in physiognomy.

Turn. What, Barbara! Ees, that her be, though no vool, neather: her do knaw better than to thatch her house wi' pancakes.

Sir Hor. Psha! Miss Turnbull! (*To Clara.*)

Miss T. Ees, I be here.

Sir Hor. Again! (*Takes Clara by the hand.*) Give me leave, I say, dear Miss Turnbull, to—

Vand. Eh! Sir Horoet!

Clara. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Why, what— [bull, sure?

Vand. You don't take my turtle for Miss Turn-

Sir Hor. Your turtle! I don't know what you mean by your turtle; but I take this young lady for Miss Turnbull, sure.

Vand. You do!

Sir Hor. Yes, I do. (*Vand. and Clara laugh.*) Why, what the devil—Eh!—why, sure—

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! This is a good joke.

Sir Hor. A good joke! Why, madam—'Squire —Zounds!—

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! I would not have missed this for a thousand pounds in new coined guineas.

Sir Hor. Mr. Turnbull, sir, is not this your

Turn. Zister! [sister, sir?

Sir Hor. Yes.

Turn. What thic!

Sir Hor. Yes.

Turn. Thic Barbara!

Sir Hor. Zounds! yes, I tell you.

Turn. Why, no, to be zure. Thic be Barbara!

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! [fleered.

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! the biter bit; the fleerer

Sir Hor. (*Whistles.*) Thic be Barbara!

Turn. Ees, thic be Barbara!

Miss T. Ees, I be Barbara.

Vand. Why, what a numskull your nephew is, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Do you think so?

Vand. A blind, insensible puppy!

Sir Hor. Is he?

Vand. But you'll torment him; you'll singe his wings; you'll plague him worse than Moses did the Egyptians. What a discovery!

Sir Hor. Oh! yes; I have made more disco- [veries.

Vand. Ay, what are they?

Sir Hor. Why the first is, you're an old fool; the next is, I am another; and the third is, that we are not the only fools in company.

[*Exit, followed by Clara and Vand.*

Turn. Barbara.

Miss T. Ees.

Turn. How does thee like London?

Miss T. I knaw not; it do zeem a strange place.

Turn. A strange place!

Miss T. Ees, I do think it be.

Turn. Thee dost?

Miss T. Ees.

Turn. An' zo do I; whereby, dost zee? I'll get out on't as vast as I can. A pretty chace, as the man said that rode vifty miles a'ter a wild goose. London! An this be London, the devil take London. Come, pack up thy ribands an' vlappets, an' make thyzel ready.

Miss T. Neea, zure; you wunt go zo zoon.

Turn. Wunt I? An' I stay in thic town to-night, I'll eat it vor breakvast to-morrow.

Miss T. My gracious!

Turn. Come, come, don't stand mauxing and dawdling, but make thyzel ready.

Miss T. Lard! why I a' zeen nothing yet.

Turn. No, nor nothing thee zhalt zee, that I promise thee; zo stir thy stumps, I tell thee.

Miss T. My gracious! Mun I go down into t' country again like a vool, an' ha' nothing to zay vor myzel?

Turn. Why, look thee, Barbara; come along; vor thee have come up like a vool, zo there can be no harm in thy going down like a vool. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*A Library in Sir Harry Portland's house.*

Sir Harry Portland *and* Timid *discovered.*

Timid. Indeed, sir, you have always been the best of masters to me.

Sir Harry. No, Timid, no; I have been a very weak, idle, fellow; and have put it out of my power to be a good master to any one.

Timid. Lackaday! Sir, don't say so; I am afraid I have been a bad servant; a very bad servant.

Sir Harry. Never.

Timid. Lackaday! sir, you don't know, you don't know! Lackaday! I thought all for the best.

Sir Harry. You have only done what I commanded.

Timid. To be sure, sir. But, lackaday! I wish I dared to open my mind to him. I am terrified; he will never believe me innocent. (*Aside.*)

Sir Harry. My ruin is all my own work. Here, Mr. Timid, take this ring and remember me; it may be the last present I shall ever make you.

Timid. Pray don't say so, sir. I am terrified.

Sir Harry. I am going to Mr. Osborne's.

Timid. To Mr. Osborne's!

Sir Harry. Yes, if you should not see me to-morrow morning; if any accident should happen—

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Harry. Give the state of my affairs, which I ordered you to draw up, to my uncle, and this picture to Clara, the young lady that is with him.

Timid. Sir! What do you mean?

Sir Harry. Oh! nothing, nothing; I'm not very well; I—a slight swimming in my head, that's all; but there is no knowing what may happen.

Timid. Lackaday! Sir, you terrify me, you talk like a dying man making his will.

Sir Harry. No, no, not so; I have nothing to leave: and, as to dying, men must die; live as long as they can, they must all die at last.

Timid. Shall I go for Sir Hornet, or your sister, or the young lady?

Sir Harry. No; no young ladies for—Oh!

Timid. Lackaday! my heart aches.

Sir Harry. I am going to Mr. Osborne's presently.

Timid. Lackaday! I wish he knew—I'll take the mortgage of the Kentish estate; Mr. Osborne ordered me to bring it: I'll lay it open on Mr. Osborne's table. I hope my dear master will see it; I hope he will discover all. (*Aside.*)

Sir Harry. Heigho!

Timid. Dear sir, don't sigh so; don't look so: tell me what I can do to serve you, to oblige you, to make you happier?

Sir Harry. Nothing, nothing; past hope, past cure; quite, quite—

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Harry. A thoughtless, profligate, idle, dissipated fellow. Oh! my head, my head!

Timid. I cannot bear to see him so. I'll hurry to Mr. Osborne's; I'll try if I can yet persuade him to be a true friend; I'll beg, I'll pray, I'll go down on my knees; I'll do anything. [*Exit.*

Sir Harry. Clara! an angel! a cherub! And what am I? Well, well, it will soon be all over; there will be a sudden stop—a speedy end. (*Laughing without.*) So happy—Heaven—Heaven increase your joys! mine are for ever fled—light laughter, innocent smiles, and social mirth are fled for ever, for ever. Oh, folly! Oh, madness! [*Exit.*

Enter SIR HORNET, VANDERVELT, *and* CLARA, (*Laughing.*)

Sir Hor. Ay, ay, pray laugh, laugh heartily, I beseech you; I deserve, and I desire no mercy.

Clara. It is one of the oddest adventures.

Vand. How the deuce could you mistake that blowzabel, Miss Turnbull, for my turtle?

Sir Hor. Why, true, as you say, friend Van; but that happens to be a blunder which I never did, nor ever could make. I should as soon take myself for a king, or you for a conjuror. I only mistook this lady to be Miss Turnbull, not Miss Turnbull to be this lady.

Vand. Mistook Miss Turnbull and this lady, and —I don't understand it.

Clara. Be kind enough, Sir Hornet, to explain the matter.

Sir Hor. You remember, madam, I had some conversation with you in the rooms at Bath.

Clara. Perfectly.

Sir Hor. And you could not but perceive how forcibly I was struck with your wit, beauty, and accomplishments.

Clara. I recollect you were very polite, sir, and were pleased to say abundance of obliging things.

Sir Hor. Not half so many as I thought, I assure you, madam.

Vand. Well said, Sir Hornet. My old friend is quite enamoured with you, turtle.

Sir Hor. Yes, sir, so I am; though I do not intend to marry the lady.

Vand. Hem!

Sir Hor. My grand object, the thing that, of all others, I have most at heart, is to see my nephew, Sir Harry, happy; as for myself, I feel I am growing old apace, and am almost tired of the farce of life.

Vand. Why so, Sir Hornet? I am sure you play your part excellently.

Sir Hor. No, no; I am rolling down hill apace, and as the first steep declivity may precipitate me to the bottom, there are certain affairs I wish to see finished, one of which is the marriage of Sir Harry.

Clara. So the person you asked concerning me, when I went out of the rooms, mistook the question, and thought you meant Miss Turnbull?

Sir Hor. So it appears, madam; and I was too much enraptured to stay to rectify mistakes. When I negotiated the affair with 'Squire Turnbull, I studiously avoided an interview with his supposed sister, for fear the business should wear a face of precipitate indelicacy; and I thought if I could once bring you and Sir Harry together, I would leave the contingent possibilities to love, and the superior good qualities and penetration of the parties, which I, rationally enough, concluded could not fail to produce the desired effect.

Clara. But, Sir Hornet, how did it happen that you did not enquire of me myself who I was?

Sir Hor. Why, 'faith! madam, I had been so particular with you, and had spoken so freely on the subjects of love and matrimony, that I was afraid, if I made those kind of inquiries, you would mistake the matter, perhaps, and think I wanted to make love to you in my own proper person. Hey! young Van. (*Aside.*)

Vand. Heigho!

Clara. Oh! no, Sir Hornet, I assure you, I had a better opinion of your understanding.

Vand. Hem!

Sir Hor. Certainly, had I been capable of such a whim, I should have made myself cursedly ridiculous. Hey! young Van. (*Aside.*)

Clara. Beyond dispute!

Vand. Heigho!

Enter TIMID, *looking wild and frighted.*

Sir Hor. Heyday! What's the matter with you, old Lackaday?

Timid. I'm terrified, I'm terrified, I'm terrified!

Sir Hor. Terrified! What's the matter? Zounds! why don't you speak?

Timid. Lackaday! I can't, I can't speak.

Sir Hor. Make signs then.

Timid. I'm a miserable old man; I ran all the way to tell you—

Sir Hor. What?

Timid. Mr. Osborne!

Sir Hor. Mr. Osborne! What of him?

Timid. Lackaday! Sir Harry!

Clara. Heavens! A duel.

Timid. I have put my trust in man, and am deceived; I have lean'd upon a reed, and am fallen; I have seen the shadow of friendship and—

Sir Hor. Curse light on your metaphors; come to facts: What of Osborne? What of Sir Harry? Where are they? What have they done? What are they doing?

Timid. Gambling!

Sir Hor. How!

Timid. I was at Mr. Osborne's when Sir Harry came; I was there with the mortgage of the Kent-

Sir H. Of what? [ish estate.

Timid. It was executed this very day; I am a miserable old man—all lost!

Sir Hor. Lost!

Timid. Lackaday! that's not all; I went into the next room and heard Sir Harry go to gaming with a gang of sharpers that were there on purpose; Sir Harry had lost everything he had in the world; Mr. Osborne has got all, all the mortgages of all his estates, I saw 'em, left 'em all in a box on his table.

Sir Hor. Mortgages of all his estates! Perdition! How did he get them? How came you to know?

Timid. Lackaday! I am terrified, I dare not tell; I am an accomplice! A wicked, innocent, miserable old man.

Sir Hor. D——n! Order the coach, there; I'll tear him to atoms; I'll rend him piecemeal—my poor boy—an intolerable villain! Dear madam, you don't know what I feel.

Clara. Pardon me, Sir Hornet, if you knew my heart, you would not say so; I detest the treachery of Mr. Osborne as much as you do; and, woman as I am, would risk my life to see it properly punished.

Sir Hor. A smooth-tongued, hypocritical villain, that owes his life to my boy.

Clara. Dear Sir Hornet, excuse my weakness; I am in the utmost terror—in dread of consequences still more fatal.

Timid. Lackaday! sir, so am I; I am terrified. Sir Harry gave me this ring for a remembrance, and bade me deliver this picture to you, madam.

Clara. (*Bursts into tears.*) It is his own.

Timid. He looked so melancholy, and so furious; he had his pistols.

Clara. His pistols! Oh! for pity's sake, Sir Hornet, let us fly.

Sir Hor. Instantly.

Timid. I'm a miserable old man. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Mr. Osborne's House.*

Enter SIR HARRY PORTLAND *excessively agitated, followed by Osborne with a brace of pistols that he had wrested from him.*

Osb. How now, Sir Harry; what is the cause of this sudden phrenzy? Why expose your want of temper and fortitude thus to the company? You have driven them away, they are all going—

Sir Harry. Oh! horror!

Osb. If you must wreak vengeance on yourself, let it be a becoming one at least.

Sir Harry. Insupportable horror!

Osb. Fie, fie, recover your temper; be, or seem to be a man. What—You knew you were ruined before this event.

Sir Harry. Oh, Osborne! Oh, Melissa! I cannot speak—I cannot utter it; I'm a wretch—a villain, the meanest, the worst of villains, and infamy, eternal infamy is mine.

Osb. Why, what have you done?

Sir Harry. Ruined you, ruined my sister.

Osb. How!

Sir Harry. And branded myself, everlastingly, a villain. [way?

Osb. Ruined me! ruined your sister! which

Sir Harry. The money I have lost within.

Osb. Well.

Sir Harry. Is her's—Is your's.

Osb. Mine!

Sir Harry. Melissa's—her fortune—she put it into my hand this very day.

Osb. D——n!

Sir Harry. Have compassion on me, give me the pistols, let me at once put an end to my misery and shame.

Osb. Thoughtless, weak man! Do you think the momentary pang of death a sufficient punishment for the ruin and destruction you have entailed upon all those who have had the misfortune to love, or to be related to you? Do you think that to die, and to forget, at once, your infamy and crimes, is a compensation for the havoc you have made with the peace and property of those who were dearest to you, who must live to feel the effect of your vices, and bear, unjustly, the reproach of your abandoned conduct.

Sir Harry. Oh, torture!

Osb. Was it not enough that you had reduced yourself, from affluence and honour, to contempt and beggary, but you must wantonly, wickedly, sport with what was not your own; and involve the innocent and unborn in your wretchedness? Shall not your sister's offspring, whom your intemperance shall have reduced to poverty and misery, detest your memory, and imprecate curses on your name?

Sir Harry. Oh, hell!

SIR HORNET ARMSTRONG *speaks without, and afterwards enters, followed by* CLARA *and* TIMID.

Sir Hor. Where are they? which is the room? So, Mr. Lucifer—could you decoy your friend to no other place to rob him, but your own house?

Osb. Did you address yourself to me, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Yes, I did, Sir Satan, and if—

Sir Harry. Dear sir, forbear; I alone am the proper object of anger—of vengeance—a wretch—a despised and miserable outcast; and bitterness and despair are deservedly my portion.

Sir Hor. You are a dupe, a poor fascinated fool; you have beheld the serpent's mouth open, have felt the influence of his poisonous breath, yet stupidly dropped into his ravenous jaws, and sung a requiem to your own destruction.

Osb. You are liberal, sir, of your epithets and accusations. What do you mean by them?

Sir Hor. Horrible impudence! Have you not taken a vile, a rascally advantage of the want of temper in the man, for whom you professed the most perfect friendship? Have you not stripped him of his estate, by the most villanous arts, by plotting with Jews and scoundrels?

Osb. You talk loud, sir. [was true.

Sir Harry. Osborne plotting! the letter then

Sir Hor. Yes, plotting! He is the principal, the leader of the hellish gang that has been plundering you.

Osb. Well, sir! suppose it—What then?

Sir Hor. What then! Halters!

Osb. Why so, sir? He has persisted in bringing destruction upon himself, and must suffer the effects of his obstinacy. What crime was there in my receiving what he was resolved to throw away? He had not been a month returned from his travels, before his passion for play made him the jest of every polite sharper in town. They saw there was an estate to be scrambled for, and every one was industrious to obtain a share. After squandering a part of his fortune among these adventurers, he engaged at play with me, and after losing one sum, was never easy till he had lost another. Am I, then, to be accountable for his folly? [it?

Sir Harry. Infernal treachery! Dares he avow

Osb. Dare! Yes, sir, I dare.

Clara. Righteous heaven! Is there no peculiar, no quick vengeance for ingratitude? (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. The deeds, the annuities you have granted, the mortgages you have made, are in his possession; he owns he has them all.

Sir Harry. He!

Osb. Yes, sir, I.

Sir Harry. Madness! Remember and beware, remember and tremble, though I have no longer the fortune of Sir Harry Portland, I have still Harry's spirit, and dare chastise insolence and perfidy.

Osb. No doubt; the man who is rash enough to risk his estate upon the chance of a die, has, generally, valour enough to wish to cut the winner's throat. Friendship is no protection.

Clara. Friendship! Monstrous prostitution! Friendship! Deeds, Mr. Osborne, are the best proofs of friendship, and that preacher will gain but little credit who is a detected villain, while he is describing the fitness and beauty of moral virtue.

Sir Hor. Friendship! Where are the deeds, the mortgages?

Osb. There they are, sir. (*Points to a box.*) They are mine; the annuities he has granted, and the mortgages he has made are mine; his effects are mine, his houses are mine, his estates are mine, his notes are mine, his all is mine, except his poverty and spirit, which, as he says, are his own.

Sir Harry. Heavens! must I bear this?

Sir Hor. Oh! for ratsbane or hemp.

Osb. Nay more, sir: (*To Sir Harry.*) I was not only aware, but certain of my own superior ad-

dress, or I had not been weak enough to have risked any part of my fortune. I have not yet acquired your heroic contempt for riches; as it was, I used every art to stimulate and incite you to play; took every advantage, studied every trick, improved every lucky chance, and rejoiced at every and all of your losses, till I had you totally in my power; I beheld distress accumulating on your head, and was happy at it; remarked the agitation of your mind, and increased it; saw the infirmity of your temper, and aggravated it.

Sir Harry. D——n! Are you a man?

Osb. Try me.

Sir Harry. Dare you give me the satisfaction—the revenge of a man?

Osb. I'll give it you instantly, sir. (*As Sir Harry offers to go, Osborne seizes his arm, and before he speaks, his countenance changes from assumed anger and contempt, to the most tender and expressive friendship.*) There, there lies your revenge! there is your satisfaction! Take them, remember your former folly, and be happy.

Sir Harry. Sir!

Sir Hor. What?

Clara. Astonishment!

Osb. Why do you seem surprised? My heart is your's, my life is your's! I owe you everything; a debt which never can be repaid, and never will be forgotten. When sinking beneath the murderous hand of villany, it was the benevolent ardour of your soul, it was the intrepid valour of your arm that rescued me!

Sir Harry. Generous friend!

Osb. In that box is contained all that I have ever won of you, and almost all you have ever lost. I have become an associate with sharpers to protect you from them; and, by sacrificing a little, have preserved the rest. I have worn the mask till it is become too painful, and now gladly cast it off. If my conduct have yet a dubious appearance, I have a witness that will be instantly credited.—(*Goes to the chamber-door, and calls Melissa.*—Melissa *enters, and runs to Sir Harry.*)

Mel. My brother!

Sir Harry. Sister! Osborne!

Clara. Oh, my heart!

Sir Hor. (*After a pause.*) Tol de rol!

Timid. Lackaday! I'm a happy old man! He's a friend, he's a true friend! I'm a happy old man!

Sir Harry. Can you, too, sister, forgive my folly? you that I have injured so unpardonably?

Mel. Dear brother, you are not so guilty as you suppose. It was a plot upon you; you were led into it, to shew you what a losing gamester is capable of?

Sir Hor. Harkye, sir! (*To Osborne.*) All the mortgages and deeds are there, you say?

Osb. All, sir; together with whatever money that has, at any time, been won of him, since I have been concerned in this transaction.

Sir Hor. All in that box?

Osb. All.

Timid. I'm a happy old man!

Sir Harry. My dear uncle!

Sir Hor. Let me alone—Tol de rol!—(*Goes to Osborne, and takes his hand.*) Will you forgive me, Osborne? will you—will you forgive my boy?

Sir Harry. (*Takes Osborne's other hand.*) Osborne!—I cannot speak—

Clara. Indeed, Mr. Osborne, I don't know how to tell you what I think. Esteem, admiration, are poor expressions to convey my feelings. I have been mistaken and to blame. I trembled for Sir Harry; I condemned you; and wrote a letter—

Sir Harry. Dear madam, was that letter your's?

Clara. It was.

Sir Harry. How much obliged am I to you, and to you all.

Clara. I am sorry; I was to blame.

Osb. Nay, madam; nobody was to blame. And now, dear Harry, suffer me to say one word: let this transaction be a powerful, an everlasting memento to you. Remember the blood that has been spilt in the moment of passion and distress, in consequence of indulging in this shocking vice; remember the distracted wife and widow's curse, the sting of desperation, and the red and impious hand of suicide! Despise the folly that made the practice fashionable; oppose its destructive course; and for ever shun, for ever abominate, the detestable vice of gaming.

Sir Harry. Professions of resolution from me, Osborne, come with an ill grace. I am ashamed of my folly: I despised, even while I practised it; but the punishment you have inflicted has been so judicious, so severely generous, I think I can safely say there is no probability of a relapse.

Sir Hor. Well, but, Harry, turn about—look at this lady; surely, you have not forgotten Miss Turnbull, have you?

Sir Harry. Your Miss Turnbull, sir, I shall never forget.

Sir Hor. Oh! what you have heard the renowned history of my Bath adventure?

Sir Harry. I have, sir.

Sir Hor. Well, and what say you to—eh! my cherub? You told me, you know, you had no aversion to the fellow.

Clara. Nay, Sir Hornet, is that the part of a confidante?

Sir Hor. Why, yes, it is; for, as I take it, a confidante is but a kind of a go-between to bring the parties together—And here comes the blooming youth—[*Enter* Vandervelt.]—here comes Johannes de Temporibus to second the motion.

Vand. To second what motion, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. An hymeneal motion.

Vand. Can't tell. Who are the candidates?

Sir Hor. Harry Portland and Clara Forester.

Vand. Hold, hold! Sir Hornet, not so fast! that lady is my ward. [wife.

Sir Hor. Yes, and may, if she please, be your

Vand. Nay, I—I did not say so, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. No, but I did, young Van. But, harkye! (*takes him aside*) resign all your silly pretensions peaceably, throw your worthies into the fire, and give up the lady to her lover; or you shall be held up, in terrorem, an object of ridicule, to frighten all the dangling, whining, old fools in Christendom, who are turned of three-score.

Vand. Well, well, speak in a lower key.

Sir Hor. May I be certain of your consent, then?

Vand. Why, yes, yes—Heigho!

Sir Hor. Dear madam, this worthy, old gentleman, your guardian, most humbly implores you would have pity upon Sir Harry.

Clara. Did you say so, papa?

Vand. Me! no.

Sir Hor. How?

Vand. Not in those exact words; but something very like it, turtle. Heigho!

Mel. Come, my dear Clara, let me have the happiness to call you sister.

Osb. Let me intercede, madam.

Clara. Psha! here is everybody interceding, but him that can intercede most to the purpose.

Sir Harry. Forgive me, dearest Clara! my fate is suspended on your lips; and I am so conscious of unworthiness, and so much affected by the fear of a severe sentence, that I have not power to plead for mercy.

Clara. Yes; but you have a partial, tender-hearted judge.

Sir Hor. Ay, "and a wise young judge," too.

Clara. Well, well! I cannot dissemble. A generous heart, a noble mind, are seldom met and seldom merited. When happiness like this presents itself, to reject is not to deserve it. [*Exeunt.*

EVERY ONE HAS HIS FAULT;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY MRS. INCHBALD.



Act V.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

LORD NORLAND	PLACID	LADY E. IRWIN
SIR ROBERT RAMBLE	IRWIN	MRS. PLACID
SOLUS	HAMMOND	MISS SPINSTER
HARMONY	EDWARD	MISS WOOBURN

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Mr. Placid's.*

Enter MR. PLACID *and* MR. SOLUS.

Placid. You are to blame.

Solus. I say the same by you.

Placid. And yet your singularity pleases me; for you are the first elderly bachelor I ever knew, who did not hug himself in the reflection that he was not in the tramınels of wedlock.

Solus. No; I am only the first elderly bachelor who has truth and courage enough to confess his dissatisfaction.

Placid. And you really wish you were married?

Solus. I do. I wish still more, that I had been married thirty years ago. Oh! I wish a wife and half-a-score children would now start up around me, and bring along with them all that affection which we should have had for each other by being earlier acquainted. But as it is, in my present state, there is not a person in the world I care a straw for; and the world is pretty even with me, for I don't believe there is a creature in it who cares a straw for me.

Placid. Psha! you have in your time been a man of gallantry; and, consequently, must have made many attachments.

Solus. Yes, such as men of gallantry usually make. I have been attached to women who have purloined my fortune, and to men who have partaken of the theft: I have been in as much fear of my mistress as you are of your wife.

Placid. Is that possible?

Solus. Yes; and without having one of those tender delicate ties of a husband, as an excuse for my apprehension. I have maintained children—

Placid. Then why do you complain for the want of a family?

Solus. I did not say I ever had any children; I said I had maintained them; but I never believed they were mine; for I could have no dependence upon the principles of their mother: and never did I take one of those tender infants in my arms, that the forehead of my valet, the squint eye of my apothecary, or the double-chin of my chaplain did not stare me in the face, and damp all the fine feelings of the parent, which I had just called up.

Placid. But those are accidents which may occur in the marriage state.

Solus. In that case a man is pitied, in mine he is only laughed at.

Placid. I wish to heaven I could exchange the pity which my friends bestow on me, for the merriment which your ill fate excites.

Solus. You want but courage to be envied.

Placid. Does any one doubt my courage?

Solus. No. If a prince were to offend you you would challenge him, I have no doubt.

Placid. But if my wife offend me, I am obliged to make an apology. Was not that her voice? I hope she has not overheard our conversation.

Solus. If she have, she'll be in an ill humour.

Placid. That she will be, whether she have heard it or not.

Solus. Well, good day. I don't like to be driven from my fixed plan of wedlock; and, therefore, I

won't be a spectator of your mutual discontent. (*Going.*)

Placid. But before you go, Mr. Solus, permit me to remind you of a certain concern that, I think, would afford you much more delight than all you can, at this time of life, propose to yourself in marriage. Make happy by your beneficence, a near relation whom the truest affection has drawn into that state, but who is denied the blessing of competency to make the state supportable.

Solus. You mean my nephew, Irwin? But do not you acknowledge he has a wife and children? Did not he marry the woman he loved, and has he not, at this moment, a large family, by whom he is beloved? And is he not, therefore, with all his poverty, much happier than I? He has often told me, when I have reproached him with his indiscreet marriage, "that in his wife he possessed kingdoms!" Do you suppose I will give any part of my fortune to a man who enjoys such extensive domains? No: let him preserve his territories, and I will keep my little estate for my own use.

[*Exit.*

Placid. John, John!

Enter John.

Has your mistress been inquiring for me?

John. Yes, sir; my lady asked just now, if I knew who was with you?

Placid. Did she seem angry?

John. No, sir; pretty well.

Placid. You scoundrel, what do you mean by "pretty well?" (*In anger.*)

John. Much as usual, sir.

Placid. And do you call that "pretty well?" You scoundrel, I have a great mind—

Enter Mrs. Placid, *speaking as she enters.*

Mrs. P. What is the matter, Mr. Placid? What is all this noise about? You know I hate a noise. What is the matter?

Placid. My dear, I was only finding fault with that blockhead.

Mrs. P. Pray, Mr. Placid, do not find fault with anybody in this house. But I have something which I must take you very severely to task about, sir.

Placid. No, my dear, not just now, pray.

Mrs. P. Why not now?

Placid. (*Looking at his watch.*) Because dinner will be ready in a few minutes. I am very hungry, and it will be cruel of you to spoil my appetite. John, is the dinner on table?

Mrs. P. No, John, don't let it be served yet. Mr. Placid, you shall first hear what I have to say. (*Sitting down.*) [*Exit John.*

Placid. But then I know I sha'n't be able to eat a morsel.

Mrs. P. Sit down. (*He sits.*) I believe, Mr. Placid, you are going to do a very silly thing. I am afraid you are going to lend some money?

Placid. Well, my dear, and suppose I am?

Mrs. P. Then I don't approve of people lending their money.

Placid. But, my dear, I have known you approve of borrowing money; and, once in our lives, what should we have done if everybody had refused to lend?

Mrs. P. That is nothing to the purpose. And now, I desire you will hear what I say, without speaking a word yourself.

Placid. Well, my dear.

Mrs. P. Now mind you don't speak till I have done. Our old acquaintance, Captain Irwin and Lady Eleanor, his wife, (with whom we have lived upon very intimate terms, to be sure, while we were in America,) are returned to London, and I find you have visited them very frequently.

Placid. Not above two or three times, upon my word; for it hurts me to see them in distress, and I forbear to go.

Mrs. P. There! you own they are in distress; I expected as much. Now, own to me that they have asked you to lend them money.

Placid. I do own it, I do own it. Now, are you satisfied?

Mrs. P. No; for I have no doubt but you have promised they shall have it.

Placid. No, upon my word, I have not promised.

Mrs. P. Then promise me they shall not.

Placid. Nay, my dear, you have no idea of their distress.

Mrs. P. Yes, I have; and 'tis that which makes me suspicious.

Placid. His regiment is now broken; all her jewels and little baubles are disposed of; he is in such dread of his old creditors, that, in the lodging they have taken, he passes by the name of Middleton. They have three more children, my dear, than when we left them in New England; and they have in vain sent repeated supplications, both to his uncle and her father, for the smallest bounty.

Mrs. P. And is not Lord Norland, her father, a remarkably wise man, and a good man? And ought you to do for them what he has refused?

Placid. They have offended him; but they have never offended me.

Mrs. P. I think 'tis an offence to ask a friend for money, when there is no certainty of returning it.

Placid. By no means; for, if there were a certainty, even an enemy might lend.

Mrs. P. But I insist, Mr. Placid, that they shall not find a friend in you upon this occasion. What do you say, sir?

Placid. (*After a struggle.*) No, my dear, they shall not.

Mrs. P. Positively shall not?

Placid. Positively shall not—since they have found an enemy in you.

Enter John.

John. Dinner is on table.

Placid. Ah! I am not hungry now.

Mrs. P. What do you mean by that, Mr. Placid? I insist on your being hungry.

Placid. Oh, yes! I have a very excellent appetite. I shall eat prodigiously.

Mrs. P. You had best. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*An Apartment at Mr. Harmony's.*

Enter Mr. Harmony, *followed by* Miss Spinster.

Miss S. Cousin, cousin Harmony, I will not forgive you for thus continually speaking in the behalf of every servant whom you find me offended with. Your philanthropy becomes insupportable; and, instead of being a virtue, degenerates into a vice.

Har. Dear madam, do not upbraid me for a constitutional fault.

Miss S. Very true; you had it from your infancy. I have heard your mother say you were always foolishly tender-hearted, and never shewed one of those discriminating passions of envy, hatred, or revenge, to which all her other children were liable.

Har. No: since I can remember, I have felt the most unbounded affection for all my fellow-creatures. I even protest to you, dear madam, that, as I walk along the streets of this large metropolis, so warm is my heart towards every person who passes me, that I long to say, "How do you do?" and "I am glad to see you," to them all. Some men I should like even to stop and shake hands with; and some women I should like even to stop and kiss.

Miss S. How can you be so ridiculous?

Har. Nay, 'tis truth; and I sincerely lament that human beings should be such strangers to one another as we are. We live in the same street, without knowing one another's necessities; and oftentimes meet and part from each other at church, at coffee-houses, play-houses, and all public places, without ever speaking a single word, or nodding "Good bye!" though 'tis a hundred chances to ten we never see one another again.

Miss S. Let me tell you, kinsman, all this pretended philanthropy renders you ridiculous. There is not a fraud, a theft, or hardly any vice committed, that you do not take the criminal's part, shake your head, and cry, "Provisions are so scarce!" And no longer ago than last Lord Mayor's day, when you were told that Mr. Alderman Ravenous was ill with an indigestion, you endeavoured to soften the matter, by exclaiming, "Provisions are so scarce!" But, above all, I condemn that false humanity, which induces you to say many things in conversation which deserve to stigmatize you with the character of deceit.

Har. This is a weakness, I confess. But though my honour sometimes reproaches me with it as a fault, my conscience never does; for it is by this very failing that I have frequently made the bitterest enemies friends. Just by saying a few harmless sentences, which, though a species of falsehood and deceit, yet, being soothing and acceptable to the person offended, I have immediately inspired him with lenity and forgiveness; and then, by only repeating the self-same sentences to his opponent, I have known hearts cold and closed to each other, warmed and expanded, as every human creature's ought to be.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Mr. Solus. [*Exit.*

Miss S. I cannot think, Mr. Harmony, why you keep company with that old bachelor; he is a man, of all others on earth, I dislike; and so I am obliged to quit the room, though I have a thousand things to say. [*Exit angrily.*

Enter SOLUS.

Har. Mr. Solus, how do you do?

Solus. I am very lonely at home; will you come and dine with me?

Har. Now you are here, you had better stay with me: we have no company; only my cousin, Miss Spinster, and myself.

Solus. No, I must go home: do come to my house.

Har. Nay, pray stay: what objection can you have?

Solus. Why, to tell you the truth, your relation, Miss Spinster, is no great favourite of mine; and I don't like to dine with you, because I don't like her company.

Har. That is to me surprising!

Solus. Why, old bachelors and old maids never agree; we are too much alike in our habits; we know our own hearts so well, we are apt to discover every foible we would wish to forget, in the symptoms displayed by the other. Miss Spinster is peevish, fretful, and tiresome, and I am always in a fidget when I am in her company.

Har. How different are her sentiments of you! for one of her greatest joys is to be in your company. (*Solus starts and smiles.*) Poor woman! she has, to be sure, an uneven temper—

Solus. No, perhaps I am mistaken.

Har. But I will assure you, I never see her in half such good humour as when you are here; for I believe you are the greatest favourite she has.

Solus. I am very much obliged to her, and I certainly am mistaken about her temper. Some people, if they look ever so cross, are good-natured in the main; and I dare say she is so. Besides, she never has had a husband to sooth and soften her disposition; and there should be some allowance made for that.

Har. Will you dine with us?

Solus. I don't care if I do. Yes, I think I will. I must, however, step home first; but I'll be back in a quarter of an hour. My compliments to Miss Spinster, if you should see her before I return. [*Exit.*

Enter Servant.

Serv. My lady begs to know, sir, if you have invited Mr. Solus to dine; because, if you have, she shall go out. [*Exit.*

Enter MISS SPINSTER.

Har. Yes, madam, I could not help inviting him; for, poor man, his own house is in such a state for want of proper management, he cannot give a comfortable dinner himself.

Miss S. And so he must spoil the comfort of mine.

Har. Poor man, poor man! after all the praises he has been lavishing upon you.

Miss S. What praises?

Har. I won't tell you; for you won't believe them.

Miss S. Yes, I shall. Oh, no! now I recollect, this is some of your invention.

Har. Nay, I told him it was his invention; for he declared you looked better last night than any other lady at the opera.

Miss S. No, this sounds like truth: and, depend upon it, though I never liked the manners of Mr. Solus much, yet—

Har. Nay, Solus has his faults.

Miss S. So we have all.

Har. And will you leave him and me to dine by ourselves?

Miss S. Oh, no! I cannot be guilty of such ill manners, though I talked of it. Besides, poor Mr. Solus does not come so often, and it would be wrong not to shew him all the civility we can. For my part, I have no dislike to the man; and, if taking a bit of dinner with us now and then can oblige either you or him, I should be to blame to make any objection. Come, let us go into the drawing-room to receive him.

Har. Ay! this is right: this is as it should be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room at the lodgings of Mr. Irwin.*

MR. IRWIN *and* LADY ELEANOR IRWIN *discovered.*

Lady E. My dear husband, my dear Irwin, I cannot bear to see you thus melancholy. Is this the joy of returning to our native country, after a nine years' banishment?

Irwin. Yes; for I could bear my misfortunes, my wretched poverty, with patience, in a land where our sorrows were shared by those about us; but here, in London, where plenty and ease smile upon every face; where, by birth, you claim distinction, and I by services: here to be in want; to be obliged to take another name in shame of our own; to tremble at the voice of every stranger, for fear he should be a creditor; to meet each old acquaintance with an averted eye, because we would not feel the pang of being shunned: to have no reward for all this, even in a comfortable home; but there, to see our children looking up to me for that support I have not in my power to give, can I—can I love them and you, and not be miserable?

Lady E. And yet I am not so. And I am sure you will not doubt my love to you or them.

Irwin. I met my uncle this morning, and was mean enough to repeat my request to him; he burst into a fit of laughter, and told me my distresses were the result of my ambition, in marrying the

daughter of a nobleman, who himself was too ambitious ever to pardon us.

Lady E. Tell me no more of what he said.

Irwin. This was a day of trials: I saw your father too.

Lady E. My father! Lord Norland! Oh, heavens!

Irwin. He passed me in his carriage.

Lady E. I envy you the blessing of seeing him. For, oh!—excuse my tears—he is my father still. How did he look?

Irwin. As well as he did at the time I used to watch him from his house to steal to you. But I am sorry to acquaint you, that, to guard himself against all returning love for you, he has, I am informed, adopted a young lad, on whom he bestows every mark of that paternal affection, of which you lament the loss.

Lady E. May the young man deserve his tenderness better than I have done! may he never disobey him! may he be a comfort, and cherish his benefactor's declining years! and when his youthful passions teach him to love, may they not, like mine, teach him disobedience!

Enter Thomas, *with a letter.*

Irwin. What is that letter?

Thomas. It comes from Mr. Placid, the servant who brought it said, and requires no answer. [*Exit.*

Irwin. It's strange how I tremble at every letter I see, as if I dreaded the contents. How poverty has unmanned me! (*Aside.*) I must tell you, my dear, that finding myself left this morning without a guinea, I wrote to Mr. Placid to borrow a small sum. This is his answer: (*reading the superscription*) "*To Mr. Middleton,*"—that's right; he remembers the caution I gave him. I had forgot whether I had, my memory is not so good as it was. I did not even recollect his hand, though it is one I am so well acquainted with, and ought to give me joy rather than sorrow. (*Opens the letter hastily, reads, and lets it drop.*) Now I have not a friend on earth.

Lady E. Yes, you have me. You forget me.

Irwin. (*In a transport of grief.*) I would forget you—you—and all your children.

Lady E. I would not lose the remembrance of you, or of them, for all my father's fortune.

Irwin. What am I to do? I must leave you. I must go, I know not where. I cannot stay to see you perish. (*Going.*)

Lady E. (*Holding him.*) Where would you go? 'Tis evening—'tis dark! whither would you go at this time?

Irwin. (*Distractedly.*) I must consider what's to be done; and, in this room, my thoughts are too confined to reflect.

Lady E. And are London streets calculated for reflection?

Irwin. No: for action. To hurry the faint thought to resolution.

Lady E. You are not well; your health has been lately impaired. Your temper has undergone a change too; I tremble lest any accident—

Irwin. What accident? (*Wildly.*)

Lady E. I know your provocations from an ungrateful world; but despise it, as that despises you.

Irwin. But for your sake, I could.

Lady E. Then witness, heaven! I am happy. Though bred in all the delicacy, the luxury of wealth and splendour, yet I have never murmured at the change of fortune, while that change has made me wife to you, and mother of your children.

Irwin. We will be happy, if possible. But give me this evening to consider what plan to fix upon. There is no time to lose; we are without friends, without money, without credit. Farewell for an hour. I will see Mr. Placid, if I can; and, though he have not the money to lend, he may, perhaps, give me some advice.

Lady E. Suppose I call on her? Women are sometimes more considerate than men, and—

Irwin. Do you for the best, and so will I. Heavens bless you! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*A Coffee or Club-room at a Tavern.*

Enter Sir Robert Ramble, Mr. Solus, *and* Mr. Placid.

Solus. Sir Robert Ramble, how do you do?

Sir R. My dear Mr. Solus, I am glad to see you. I have been dining by myself, and now come into this public room to meet with some good company.

Solus. Ay, Sir Robert, you are now reduced to the same necessity which I frequently am: I frequently am obliged to dine at taverns and coffee-houses, for want of company at home.

Sir R. Nay, I protest, I am never happier than in a house like this, where a man may meet his friend without the inconvenience of form, either as a host or a visitor.

Solus. Sir Robert, give me leave to introduce to you, Mr. Placid: he has been many years abroad; but, I believe, he now means to remain in his own country for the rest of his life. This, Mr. Placid, is Sir Robert Ramble.

Sir R. (*To Mr. Placid.*) Sir, I shall be happy in your acquaintance; and I assure you, if you will do me the honour to meet me now and then at this house, you will find everything very pleasant. I verily believe, that since I lost my wife, which is now about five months ago, I verily believe I have dined here three days out of the seven.

Placid. Have you lost your wife, sir? And so lately?

Sir R. (*With great indifference.*) Yes, sir; about five months ago—is it not, Mr. Solus? You keep account of such things better than I do.

Solus. Oh! ask me no questions about your wife, Sir Robert; if she had been mine, I would have had her to this moment.

Placid. What, wrested her from the gripe of death?

Sir R. No, sir; only from the gripe of the Scotch lawyers.

Solus. More shame for you! Shame! to wish to be divorced from a virtuous wife.

Placid. Was that the case? Divorced from a virtuous wife! I never heard of such a circumstance before. Pray, Sir Robert, (*very anxiously*) will you indulge me, by letting me know in what manner you were able to bring about so great an event?

Sir R. It may appear strange to you, sir; but my wife and I did not live happy together.

Placid. Not at all strange, sir; I can conceive, I can conceive very well.

Solus. Yes; he can conceive that part to a nicety.

Sir R. And so I was determined on a divorce.

Placid. But then her character could not be unimpeached.

Sir R. Yes, it was, sir. You must know, we were married in Scotland, and by the laws there, a wife can divorce her husband for breach of fidelity; and so, though my wife's character was unimpeached, mine was not, and she divorced me.

Placid. And is this the law in Scotland?

Sir R. It is. Blessed, blessed country! that will bind young people together before the years of discretion, and, as soon as they have discretion to repent, will unbind them again!

Placid. I wish I had been married in Scotland.

Solus. But, Sir Robert, with all this boasting, you must own that your divorce has greatly diminished your fortune.

Sir R. (*Taking Solus aside.*) Mr. Solus, you have frequently hinted at my fortune being impaired; but I do not approve of such notions being received abroad.

Solus. I beg your pardon; but everybody knows that you have played very deep lately, and have been a great loser, and everybody knows—

Sir R. No, sir, everybody does not know it, for I contradict that report wherever I go. A man of fashion does not like to be reckoned poor, no more than he likes to be reckoned unhappy. We none of us endeavour to be happy, sir, but merely to be thought so; and for my part, I had rather be in a state of misery, and envied for my supposed happiness, than in a state of happiuess, and pitied for my supposed misery.

Solus. But consider, these misfortunes which I have just hinted at, are not of any serious nature, only such as a few years' economy—

Sir R. But were my wife and her guardian to become acquainted with these little misfortunes, they would triumph in my embarrassments.

Solus. Lady Ramble triumph! (*They join Mr. Placid.*) She, who was so firmly attached to you, that I believe nothing but a compliance with your repeated request to be separated, caused her to take the step she did.

Sir R. Yes, I believe she did it to oblige me, and I am very much obliged to her.

Solus. As good a woman, Mr. Placid—

Sir R. Very good—but very ugly.

Solus. She is beautiful.

Sir R. (*To Solus.*) I tell you, sir, she is hideous. And then, she was grown so insufferably peevish.

Solus. I never saw her out of temper.

Sir R. Mr. Solus, it is very uncivil of you to praise her before my face. Lady Ramble, at the time I parted with her, had every possible fault both of mind and person, and so I made love to other women in her presence; told her bluntly that I was tired of her; that "I was very sorry to make her uneasy, but that I could not love her any longer." And was not that frank and open?

Solus. Oh! that I had but such a wife as she was!

Sir R. I must own I loved her myself when she was young.

Solus. Do you call her old?

Sir R. In years I am certainly older than she; but the difference of sex makes her a great deal older than I am. For instance, Mr. Solus, you have often lamented not being married in your youth; but if you had, what would you have now done with an old wife, a woman of your own age?

Solus. Loved and cherished her.

Sir R. What, in spite of her loss of beauty?

Solus. When she had lost her beauty, most likely I should have lost my eye-sight, and have been blind to the wane of her charms.

Placid. (*Anxiously.*) But, Sir Robert, you were explaining to me—Mr. Solus, give me leave to speak to Sir Robert, I feel myself particularly interested on this subject. And, sir, you were explaining to me—

Sir R. Very true: where did I leave off? Oh! at my ill usage of my Lady Ramble. Yes, I did use her very ill, and yet she loved me. Many a time when she has said to me, "Sir Robert, I detest your principles, your manners, and even your person," often, at that very instant, I have seen a little sparkle of a wish peep out of the corner of one eye, that has called to me, "Oh! Sir Robert, how I long to make it up with you!"

Solus. (*To Mr. Placid.*) Do not you wish that your wife had such a little sparkle at the corner of one of her eyes?

Sir R. (*To Mr. Placid.*) Sir, do you wish to be divorced?

Placid. I have no such prospect. Mrs. Placid is faithful, and I was married in England.

Sir R. But if you have an unconquerable desire to part, a separate maintenance will answer nearly the same end; for if your lady and you will only lay down the plan of separation, and agree—

Placid. But, unfortunately, we never do agree.

Sir R. Then speak of parting as a thing you dread worse than death; and make it your daily prayer to her, that she will never think of going from you—she will determine upon it directly.

Placid. I thank you; I'm very much obliged to to you: I thank you a thousand times.

Sir R. Yes, I have studied the art of teasing a wife; and there is nothing vexes her so much as laughing at her. Can you laugh, Mr. Placid?

Placid. I don't know whether I can; I have not laughed since I married. But I thank you, sir, for your instructions; I sincerely thank you.

Solus. And, now, Sir Robert, you have had the good nature to teach this gentleman how to get rid of his wife, will you have the kindness to teach me how to procure one?

Enter Mr. Irwin.

Sir R. Ha! sure, I know that gentleman's face.

Solus. My nephew! Let me escape his solicitations. (*Aside.*) Here, waiter! [*Exit.*

Placid. (*Starting.*) Having sent him a denial, I am ashamed to see him. (*Aside.*) Here, Mr. Solus! [*Exit, following Mr. Solus.*

Irwin. (*Aside.*) More cool faces! My necessitous countenance clears even a club-room.

Sir R. My dear Captain Irwin, is it you? Yes, 'faith! it is. After a nine years' absence, I most sincerely rejoice to see you.

Irwin. Sir Robert, you shake hands with a cordiality I have not experienced these many days, and I thank you.

Sir R. But what's the matter? You seem to droop. Where have you left your usual spirits? Has absence from your country changed your manners?

Irwin. No, sir; but I find some of my countrymen changed. I fancy them less warm, less friendly than they were; and it is that which, perhaps, has this effect upon me.

Sir R. Am I changed?

Irwin. You appear an exception.

Sir R. And I assure you, that instead of being grown more gloomy, I am even more gay than I was seven years ago; for then I was upon the point of matrimony, but now I am just relieved from its cares.

Irwin. I have heard as much. But I hope you have not taken so great an aversion to the marriage state as never to marry again.

Sir R. Perhaps not; but then it must be to some rich heiress.

Irwin. You are right to pay respect to fortune. Money is a necessary article in the marriage contract.

Sir R. As to that, that would be no great object at present. No, thank heaven! my estates are pretty large; I have no children; I have a rich uncle, excellent health, admirable spirits; and thus happy, it would be very strange if I did not meet my old friends with those smiles, which never for a moment quit my countenance.

Irwin. In the dispensation of the gifts of Providence, how few are found blest like you!

Sir R. And I assure you, my dear Mr. Irwin, it gives me the most serious reflections, and the most sincere concern, that they are not.

Irwin. I thank you, sir, most heartily: I thank you for mankind in general, and for myself in particular. For after this generous, unaffected declaration, (with less scruple than I should to any

man in the world,) I will own to you, that I am at this very time, in the utmost want of an act of friendship.

Sir R. (*Aside.*) And so am I. Now must I confess myself a poor man, or pass for an unfeeling one; and I will choose the latter. (*Bowing with great ceremony and coldness.*) Anything that I can command, is at your service.

Irwin. (*Confounded and hesitating.*) Why, then, Sir Robert—I am almost ashamed to say it—but circumstances have been rather unfavourable. My wife's father (*affecting to smile*) is not reconciled to us yet; my regiment is broke; my uncle will not part with a farthing—Lady Eleanor, my wife, (*wipes his eyes*) has been supported, as yet, with some little degree of tenderness, elegance; and, in short, I owe a small sum which I am afraid of being troubled for; I want a trifle also for our immediate use, and if you would lend me a hundred pounds—though, upon my honour, I am not in a situation to fix the exact time when I can pay it,—

Sir R. My dear sir, never trouble yourself about the time of paying it, because it happens not to be in my power to lend it you.

Irwin. Not in your power? I beg your pardon; but have you not this moment been saying you are rich?

Sir R. And is it not very common to be rich without money? Are not half the town rich? And yet half the town has no money. I speak for this end of the town, the west end. The squares, for instance, part of Piccadilly, down St. James's-street, and so home by Pall Mall. We have all estates, bonds, drafts, and notes of hand without number; but, as for money, we have no such thing belonging to us.

Irwin. I sincerely beg your pardon. And be assured, sir, nothing should have induced me to have taken the liberty I have done, but the necessities of my unhappy family, and having understood by your own words that you were in affluence.

Sir R. I am in affluence, I am, I am; but not in so much, perhaps, as my hasty, inconsiderate account may have given you reason to believe. I forgot to mention several heavy incumbrances, which you will perceive are great drawbacks on my fortune.—As my wife sued for the divorce, I have her fortune to return: I have also two sisters to portion off—a circumstance I totally forgot. But, my good friend, though I am not in circumstances to do what you require, I will do something that shall be better. I'll wait upon your father-in-law, Lord Norland, and entreat him to forgive his daughter; and I am sure he will if I ask him.

Irwin. Impossible.

Sir R. And so it is, now I recollect: for he is no other than the guardian of my late wife, and a request from me will be received worse than from any other person.—However, Mr. Irwin, depend upon it, that whenever I have an opportunity of serving you, I will; and whenever you shall do me the favour to call upon me, I shall be heartily glad to see you. If I am not at home, you can leave your card, which you know is all the same, and depend upon it I shall be extremely glad to see you or that, at any time. [*Exit.*

Irwin. Is this my native country? Is this the hospitable land which we describe to strangers? No—we are savages to each other; nay, worse.—The savage makes his fellow-savage welcome; divides with him his homely fare; gives him the best apartment his hut affords, and tries to hush those griefs that are confided in his bosom—while in this civilized city, among my own countrymen, even among my brother officers in the army, and many of my nearest relations, so very civilized they are, I could not take the liberty to enter under one roof, without a ceremonious invitation, and that they will not give me. I may leave my card at their door, but as for me, or any one of mine, they would not give us a dinner; unless, indeed, it was in such a style, that we might behold with admiration their grandeur, and return still more depressed to our own poverty.—Can I bear this treatment longer? No, not even for you, my Eleanor. And this—(*Takes out a pistol*) shall now be the only friend to whom I will apply.—And yet I want the courage to be a villain.

Enter Mr. Harmony, *speaking as he enters.* (*Irwin conceals the pistol instantly.*)

Har. Let me see half a dozen newspapers—every paper of the day.

Enter Waiter.

Waiter. That is about three dozen, sir.

Har. Get a couple of porters, and bring them all. (*He sits down; Waiter brings him papers, and he reads. Irwin starts, sits down, and shews various signs of uneasiness; then comes forward.*)

Irwin. Am I a man, a soldier—and a coward?—Yes, I run away, I turn my back on life—I forsake the post which my commander, Providence, has allotted me, and fly before a banditti of rude misfortunes.—Rally me, love—connubial and parental love, rally me back to the charge! No, those very affections sound the retreat.—(*Sits down with the same emotions of distraction as before.*)

Har. That gentleman does not seem happy. I wish I had an opportunity of speaking to him. (*Aside.*)

Irwin. (*Comes forward, and speaks again.*) But oh! my wife, what will be your sufferings, when I am brought home to your wretched habitation!—And by my own hand!

Har. I am afraid, sir, I engross all the news here. (*Holding up the papers.*)

Irwin. (*Still apart.*) Poor soul! how her heart will be torn!

Har. (*After looking steadfastly on him.*) Captain Irwin, till this moment I had not the pleasure of recollecting you! It is Mr. Irwin, is it not?

Irwin. (*His mind deranged by his misfortunes.*) Yes, sir: but what have you to say to him more than to a stranger?

Har. Nothing more, sir, than to apologise to you for having addressed you just now in so familiar a manner, before I knew who you were; and to assure you, that, although I have no other knowledge of you than from report, and having been once, I believe, in your company at this very house, before you left England, yet any services of mine, as far as my abilities can reach, you may freely command.

Irwin. Pray, sir, do you live at the west end of the town?

Har. I do.

Irwin. Then, sir, your services can be of no use to me.

Har. Here is the place where I live, here is my card. (*Gives it to him.*)

Irwin. And here is mine. And now I presume we have exchanged every act of friendship which the strict forms of etiquette, in this town, will admit of.

Har. By no means, sir. I assure you my professions never go beyond my intentions; and if there is any thing that I can serve you in—

Irwin. Have you no sisters to portion off? no lady's fortune to return? Or, perhaps, you will speak to my wife's father, and entreat him to forgive his child.

Har. On that subject you may command me; for I have the honour to be intimately acquainted with Lord Norland.

Irwin. But is there no reason you may recollect, "why you would be the most unfit person in the world to apply to him?"

Har. None. I have been honoured with marks of his friendship for many years past; and I do not know any one who could, with less hazard of his resentment, venture to name his daughter to him.

Irwin. Well, sir, if you should see him two or three days hence, when I am set out on a journey I am going, if you will then say a kind word to him for my wife and children, I'll thank you.

Har. I will go to him instantly. *(Going.)*

Irwin. No, do not see him yet; stay till I am gone. He will do nothing till I am gone.

Har. May I ask where you are going?

Irwin. No very tedious journey; but it is a country, to those who go without a proper passport always fatal.

Har. I'll see Lord Norland to-night: perhaps I may persuade him to prevent your journey. I'll see him to-night, or early in the morning, depend upon it. I am a man of my word, sir; though I must own I do live at the west end of the town. [*Exit.*

Irwin. 'Sdeath, am I become the ridicule of my fellow-creatures? or am I not in my senses?—I know this is London—this house a tavern—I know I have a wife. Oh! 'twere better to be mad than to remember her! She has a father—he is rich and proud—that I will not forget. But I will pass his house, and send a malediction as I pass it.—No; breathe out my last sigh at his inhospitable door, and that sigh shall breath—forgivenes. [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*The Lodgings of Mr. Irwin.*

Enter Mrs. Placid, *followed by* Lady Eleanor.

Lady E. I am ashamed of the trouble I have given you, Mrs. Placid. It had been sufficient to have sent me home in your carriage; to attend me yourself was ceremonious.

Mrs P. My dear Lady Eleanor, I was resolved to come home with you, as soon as Mr. Placid desired I would not.

Lady E. Was that the cause of your politeness? I am sorry it should.

Mrs. P. Why sorry? it is not proper he should have his way in every thing.

Lady E. But I am afraid you seldom let him have it at all.

Mrs. P. Yes, I do. But where my dear, is Mr. Irwin?

Lady E. (*Weeping.*) I cannot hear the name of Mr. Irwin without shedding tears: his health has been so much impaired of late, and his spirits so bad, sometimes I even fear for a failure in his mind.

Mrs. P. Is not he at home?

Lady E. I hope he is. *(Goes to the side and calls.)*

Enter Thomas.

Tell your master Mrs. Placid is here.

Thomas. My master has not yet come in, madam. [*Exit.*

Lady E. Not yet! I am very sorry for it; very sorry, indeed.

Mrs. P. Bless me, my dear, don't look thus pale. Come, sit down, and I'll stay with you till he returns. *(Sits down.)*

Lady E. My dear, you forget that Mr. Placid is in the carriage at the door all this time.

Mrs. P. No, I don't. Come, let us sit and have half an hour's conversation.

Lady E. Nay, I insist upon your going to him, or desiring him to walk in.

Mrs. P. Now I think of it, they may as well drive him home, and come back for me.

Enter Mr. Placid.

Why surely, Mr. Placid, you were very impatient! I think you might have waited a few minutes longer.

Placid. I would have waited my dear, but the evening is so damp.

Lady E. Ah! 'tis the evening which makes me alarmed for Mr. Irwin.

Placid. Lady Eleanor, you are one of the most tender, anxious, and affectionate wives I ever knew.

Mrs. P. There! now he wishes he was your husband. He admires the conduct of every wife but his own, and envies every married man of his acquaintance. But it is very ungenerous of you.

Placid. So it is, my dear; and not at all consistent with the law of retaliation; for I am sure there is not one of my acquaintance who envies me.

Mrs. P. Mr. Placid, your behaviour throughout this whole day has been so totally different to what it ever was before, that I am half resolved to live no longer with you.

Placid. (*Aside.*) It will do—it will do.

Lady E. Oh, my dear friends, do not talk of parting: how can you, while every blessing smiles on your union? Even I, who have reason to regret mine, yet, while that load of grief, a separation from Mr. Irwin, is but averted, I will think every other affliction supportable. *(A loud rapping at the door.)* That is he.

Mrs. P. Why you seem in raptures at his return!

Lady E. I know no greater rapture.

Enter Irwin, *pale, trembling, and disordered.*

Lady E. My dear, you are not well, I see.

Irwin. Yes. *(Aside to her in anger.)* Why do you speak of it?

Placid. How do you do, Irwin?

Irwin. I am glad to see you. *(Bows.)*

Mrs. P. But I am sorry to see you look so ill.

Irwin. I have only been taking a glass too much. *(Lady Eleanor weeps.)*

Placid. Psha! don't I know you never drink?

Irwin. You are mistaken: I do when my wife is not by. I am afraid of her.

Placid. Impossible.

Irwin. What! to be afraid of one's wife?

Placid. No; I think that very possible.

Mrs. P. But it does not look so well when it is so; it makes a man appear contemptible, and a woman a termagant. Come, Mr. Placid, I cannot stay another moment. Good night. Heaven bless you! *(To Lady Eleanor.)* Good night, my dear Mr. Irwin; and now, pray take my advice, and keep up your spirits.

Irwin. I will, madam. *(Shaking hands with Placid.)* And do you keep up your spirits. [*Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. Placid.*] *(Irwin shuts the door with care after them, and looks around the room, as if he feared to be seen or overheard.)* I am glad they are gone. I spoke unkindly to you just now, did I not? My temper is altered lately; and yet I love you.

Lady E. I never doubted it, nor never will.

Irwin. If you did you would wrong me! for there is not a danger I would not risk for your sake; there is not an infamy I would not be branded with to make you happy, nor a punishment I would not undergo, with joy, for your welfare. But there is a bar to this; we are unfortunately so entwined together, so linked, so riveted, so cruelly, painfully fettered to each other, you could not be happy unless I shared the self-same happiness with you. But you will learn better—now you are in London, and amongst fashionable wives, you must learn better. *(Walks about and smiles, with a ghastly countenance.)*

Lady E. Do not talk, do not look thus wildly. Indeed, indeed, you make me very uneasy.

Irwin. What! uneasy when I come to bring you comfort: and such comfort as you have not experienced for many a day? *(He pulls out a pocket-book.)* Here is a friend in our necessity—a friend

that brings a thousand friends; plenty and—no, not always peace. *(He takes several papers from the book, and puts them into her hands. She looks at them, then screams.)*

Lady E. Ah! 'tis money. *(Trembling.)* These are bank notes.

Irwin. Hush! for heaven's sake, hush! We shall be discovered. *(Trembling, and in great perturbation.)* What alarms you thus!

Lady E. What alarms you?

Irwin. Do you say I am frightened!

Lady E. A sight so new has frightened me.

Irwin. Nay, they are your own; by heaven, they are! No one on earth has a better or a fairer right to them than yourself. It was a laudable act by which I obtained them. The parent bird had forsook its young, and I but forced it back to perform the rites of nature.

Lady E. You are insane, I fear. No, no, I do not fear. I hope you are. *(A loud rapping at the street door. He starts, takes the notes from her, and puts them hastily into his pocket.)*

Irwin. Go to the door yourself; and if 'tis any one who asks for me, say I am not come home yet. *(She goes out, then returns.)*

Lady E. It is the person belonging to the house: no one to us.

Irwin. My dear Eleanor, are you willing to quit London with me in about two hours' time?

Lady E. Instantly.

Irwin. Nay, not only London, but England.

Lady E. This world, if you desire it. To go in company with you will make the journey pleasant; and all I loved on earth would still be with me.

Irwin. You can, then, leave your father without regret, never, never, to see him more?

Lady E. Why should I think on him, who will not think on me? *(Weeps.)*

Irwin. But our children—

Lady E. We are not to leave them?

Irwin, One of them we must: but do not let that give you uneasiness. You know he has never lived with us since his infancy, and cannot pine for the loss of parents whom he has never known.

Lady E. But I have known him. He was my first; and sometimes I think more closely wound around my heart than all the rest. The grief I felt on being forced to leave him when we went abroad, and the constant anxiety I have since experienced lest he should not be kindly treated, have augmented, I think, my tenderness.

Irwin. All my endeavours to-day, as well as every other day, have been in vain to find into what part of the country his nurse has taken him. Nay, be not thus overcome with tears; we will (in spite of all my haste to be gone) stay one more miserable day here, in hopes to procure intelligence, so as to take him with us; and then smile with contempt on all we leave behind. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I,—*A Library at Lord Norland's.*

Enter LORD NORLAND, *followed by* MR. HARMONY.

Lord N. (*In anger.*) I tell you, Mr. Harmony, that if any indifferent person, one on whom I had never bestowed a favour in my life, were to offend me, it is in my nature never to forgive. Can I then forgive my own daughter, my only child, on whom I heaped continually marks of the most affectionate fondness? Shall she dare to offend me in the tenderest point, and you dare to suppose I will pardon her?

Har. Your child, consider.

Lord N. The weakest argument you can use. As my child, was she not most bound to obey me? As my child, ought she not to have sacrificed her own happiness to mine? Instead of which, mine has been yielded up for a whim, a fancy, a fancy to marry a beggar; and as such is her choice, let her beg with him.

Har. She does by me;—pleads hard for your forgiveness.

Lord N. If I thought she dared to send a message to me, though dictated on her knees, she should find that she had not yet felt the full force of my resentment.

Har. What could you do more?

Lord N. I have done nothing yet. At present I have only abandoned her;—but I can persecute.

Har. I have no doubt of it: and that I may not be the means of aggravating your displeasure, I assure you that what I have now said has been entirely from myself, without any desire of her's; and, at the same time, I give you my promise I will never presume to intrude the subject again.

Lord N. On this condition (but on no other) I forgive you now.

Har. And now then, my lord, let us pass from those who have forfeited your love, to those who possess it. I heard sometime ago, but I never felt myself disposed to mention it to you, that you had adopted a young man as your son.

Lord N. A young man! Psha! no; a boy—a mere child, who fell in my way by accident.

Har. A chance child! Ho, ho!—I understand you.

Lord N. Do not jest with me, sir. Do I look—

Har. Yes, you look as if you would be ashamed to own it, if you had one.

Lord N. But this boy I am not ashamed of; he is a favourite—rather a favourite. I did not like him so well at first, but custom, and having a poor creature entirely at one's mercy, one begins to love it merely from the idea of—What would be its fate if one did not?

Har. Is he an orphan, then?

Lord N. No.

Har. You have a friendship for his parents?

Lord N. I never saw the father; his mother I had a friendship for, once. (*Sighing.*)

Har. Ay, while the husband was away.

Lord N. I tell you no. (*Violently.*) But ask no more questions. Who his parents are, is a secret which neither he nor any one (that is now living) knows, except myself; nor ever shall.

Har. Well, my lord, since 'tis your pleasure to consider him as your child, I sincerely wish you may experience more duty from him than you have done from your daughter.

Lord N. Thank heaven, his disposition is not in the least like her's—No; (*Very much impassioned.*) I have the joy to say, that never child was so unlike its mother.

Har. (*Starting.*) How! his mother!

Lord N. Confusion! what have I said! I am ashamed—

Har. No; be proud.

Lord N. Of what?

Har. That you have a lawful heir to all your riches; proud that you have a grandson.

Lord N. I would have concealed it from all the world; I wished it even unknown to myself. And let me tell you, sir, (as not by design, but through my inadvertency, you are become acquainted with this secret) that, if you ever breathe it to a single creature, the boy shall answer for it; for were he known to be her's, though he were dearer to me than ever she was, I would turn him from my house, and cast him from my heart, as I have done her.

Har. I believe you; and in compassion to the child, give you my solemn promise never to reveal who he is. I have heard that those unfortunate parents left an infant behind when they went abroad, and that they now lament him as lost,

Will you satisfy my curiosity in what manner you sought and found him out?

Lord N. Do you suppose I searched for him? No; he was forced upon me. A woman followed me, about eight years ago, in the fields adjoining to my country-seat, with a half-starved boy in her hand, and asked my charity for my grand-child; the impression of the word made me turn round involuntarily; and, casting my eyes upon him, I was rejoiced not to find a feature of his mother's in all his face; and I began to feel something like pity for him. In short, he caught such fast hold by one of my fingers, that I asked him carelessly, "if he would go home and live with me?" On which he answered me so willingly, "Yes," I took him at his word.

Har. And did never your regard for him plead in his mother's behalf?

Lord N. Never. For, by heaven, I would as soon forgive the robber who met me last night at my own door, and, holding a pistol to my breast, took from me a sum to a considerable amount, as I would pardon her.

Har. Did such an accident happen to you?

Lord N. Have you not heard of it?

Har. No.

Lord N. It is amazing we cannot put a stop to such depredations.

Har. Provisions are so scarce.

Enter RICHARD.

Richard. Miss Wooburn, my lord, if you are not engaged, will come and sit an hour with you.

Lord N. I have no company but what she is perfectly acquainted with, and I shall be glad of her visit. [*Exit Richard.*

Har. You forget I am a stranger, and my presence may not be welcome.

Lord N. A stranger? what, to my ward? to Lady Ramble? for that is the name which custom would authorise her to keep; but such courtesy she disdains, in contempt of the unworthy giver of the title.

Har. I am intimate with Sir Robert, my lord; and though I acknowledge that both you and his late wife have cause for complaint, yet Sir Robert has still many virtues.

Lord N. Not one. He is the most vile, the most detestable of characters. He not only contradicted my will in the whole of his conduct, but he seldom met me that he did not give me some personal affront.

Har. It is, however, generally held better to be uncivil in a person's presence than in his absence.

Lord N. He was uncivil to me in every respect.

Har. That I will deny; for I have heard Sir Robert, in your absence, say such things in your favour.

Lord N. Indeed!

Har. Most assuredly.

Lord N. I wish he had sometimes done me the honour to have spoken politely to my face.

Har. That is not Sir Robert's way; he is no flatterer. But then, no sooner has your back been turned, than I have heard him lavish in your praise.

Lord N. I must own, Mr. Harmony, that I never looked upon Sir Robert as incorrigible. I could always discern a ray of understanding and a beam of virtue through all his foibles; nor would I have urged the divorce, but that I found his wife's sensibility could not bear his neglect; and even now, notwithstanding her endeavour to conceal it, she pines in secret, and laments her hard fortune. All my hopes of restoring her health, rest on one prospect, that of finding a man worthy my recommendation for a second husband, and, by thus creating a second passion, expel the first.—Mr. Harmony, you and I have been long acquainted; I have known your disposition from your infancy. Now, if such a man as you were to offer—

Har. You flatter me.

Lord N. I do not. Would you venture to become her husband?

Har. I cannot say I have any particular desire; but if it will oblige either you or her; for my part, I think the short time we live in this world, we should do all we can to oblige each other.

Lord N. I should rejoice at such an union myself, and I think I can answer for her. You permit me, then to make overtures in your name?

Har. (*Considering.*) This is rather a serious business. However, I never did make a difficulty when I wished to oblige a friend. But there is one proviso, my lord; I must first mention it to Sir Robert.

Lord N. Why so?

Har. Because he and I have always been very intimate friends; and to marry his wife, without even telling him of it, will appear very uncivil.

Lord N. Do you mean, then, to ask his consent?

Har. Not absolutely his consent; but I will insinuate the subject to him, and obtain his approbation in a manner suitable to my own satisfaction.

Lord N. You will oblige me, then, if you will see him as early as possible, for it is reported he is going abroad.

Har. I will go to him immediately; and, my lord, I will do all in my power to oblige you, Sir Robert, and the lady; (*aside.*) but as to obliging myself, that was never one of my considerations. [*Exit.*

Enter MISS WOODBURN.

Lord N. I am sorry to see you thus; you have been weeping? Will you still lament your separation from a cruel husband, as if you had followed a kind one to the grave?

Miss W. By no means, my lord. Tears from our sex are not always the result of grief; they are frequently no more than little sympathetic tributes which we pay to our fellow beings, while the mind and the heart are steeled against the weakness which our eyes indicate.

Lord N. Can you say your mind and heart are so steeled?

Miss W. I can; my mind is as firmly fixed against Sir Robert Ramble, as at our first acquaintance it was fixed upon him. And I solemnly protest—

Lord N. To a man of my age and observation, protestations are vain. Give me a proof that you have rooted him from your heart.

Miss W. Any proof you require, I will give you without a moment's hesitation.

Lord N. I take you at your word; and desire you to accept a gentleman whom I shall recommend for your second husband. (*Miss W. starts.*) You said you would not hesitate a moment.

Miss W. I thought I should not; but this is something so unexpected—

Lord N. You break your word, then, and still give cause for this ungrateful man to ridicule your fondness for him.

Miss W. No, I will put an end to that humiliation; and whoever the gentleman is whom you mean to propose—yet do not name him at present, but give me the satisfaction of keeping the promise I have made to you (at least for a little time) without exactly knowing how far it extends; for, in return, I have a promise to ask from you, before I acquaint you with the nature of your engagement.

Lord N. I give my promise. Now name your request.

Miss W. Then, my lord—(*Hesitating and confused.*)—the law gave me back, upon my divorce from Sir Robert, the very large fortune which I

brought to him. I am afraid, that, in his present circumstances, to enforce the strict payment of this debt, would very much embarrass him.

Lord N. What if it did?

Miss W. It is my intreaty to you (in whose hands is invested the power to demand this right of law) to lay my claim aside for the present. (*Lord N. offers to speak.*) I know, my lord, what you are going to say; I know Sir Robert is not now, but I can never forget that he has been my husband.

Lord N. To shew my gratitude for your compliance with the request I have just made you—(*Goes to a table in the library.*)—here is the bond by which I am empowered to seize on the greatest part of his estates in right of you. Take the bond into your own possession till your next husband demands it of you; and by the time you have called him husband for a few weeks, this tenderness or delicacy to Sir Robert will be worn away.

Enter HARMONY, *hastily.*

Har. My lord, I beg pardon; but I forgot to mention—

Miss W. Oh, Mr. Harmony, I have not seen you before, I know not when; I am particularly happy at your calling just now, for I have—(*Hesitating.*)—a little favour to ask of you.

Har. If it were a great favour, madam, you might command me.

Miss W. But—my lord, I beg your pardon, the favour I have to ask of Mr. Harmony must be told to him in private.

Lord N. Oh! I am sure I have not the least objection to you and Mr. Harmony having a private conference. I'll leave you together. (*Harmony appears embarrassed.*) You do not derange my business. I'll be back in a short time. [*Exit.*

Miss W. Mr. Harmony, you are the very man on earth I most wanted to see. (*Harmony bows.*) I know the kindness of your heart, the liberality of your sentiments, and I wish to repose a charge to your trust, very near to me indeed; but you must be secret.

Har. When a lady reposes a trust in me, I should not be a man if I were not.

Miss W. I must first inform you that Lord Norland has just drawn from me a promise, that I will once more enter into the marriage state; and without knowing to whom he intends to give me, I will keep my promise. But it is in vain to say, that though I mean all duty and fidelity to my second husband, I shall not experience moments when my thoughts—will wander on my first.

Har. (*Starting.*) Hem! hem! (*To her.*) Indeed!

Miss W. I must always rejoice in Sir Robert's success, and lament over his misfortunes.

Har. If that is all—

Miss W. No, I would go one step further;—(*Harmony starts again.*)—I would secure him from those distresses, which to hear of, will disturb my peace of mind. I know his fortune has suffered very much, and I cannot, will not, place it in the power of the man whom my Lord Norland may point out for my next marriage, to harrass him further. This is the writing by which that gentleman may claim the part of my fortune from Sir Robert Ramble, which is in landed property; carry it, my dear Mr. Harmony, to Sir Robert instantly; and tell him, that in separating from him, I meant only to give him liberty; not to make him the debtor, perhaps the prisoner of my future husband.

Har. Madam, I will most undoubtedly take this bond to my friend; but will you give me leave to suggest to you, that the person on whom you bestow your hand may be a little surprised to find that while he is in possession of you, Sir Robert is in the possession of your fortune?

Miss W. Do not imagine, sir, that I shall marry any man, without first declaring what I have done; I only wish at present it should be concealed from Lord Norland. When this paper is given, as I have required, it cannot be recalled; and when that is past, I shall divulge my conduct to whom I please; and, first of all, to him who shall offer me his addresses.

Har. And, if he is a man of my feelings, his addresses will be doubly importunate for this proof of liberality to your former husband. But are you sure, that, in the return of this bond there is no secret affection, no latent spark of love?

Miss W. None. I know my heart; and if there was, I could not ask you, Mr. Harmony, (nor any one like you) to be the messenger of an imprudent passion. Sir Robert's vanity, I know, may cause him to judge otherwise, but undeceive him; let him know this is a sacrifice to the golden principles of duty, and not an offering to the tinselled shrine of love.

Re-enter LORD NORLAND.

Put up the bond. (*Harmony conceals it.*)

Lord N. Well, my dear, have you made your request?

Miss W. Yes, my lord.

Lord N. And has he granted it?

Har. Yes, my lord. I am going to grant it.

Lord N. I sincerely wish you both joy of this good understanding between you. But, Mr. Harmony, (*in a whisper*) are not you going to Sir Robert?

Har. Yes, my lord, I am going this moment.

Lord N. Make haste, then, and do not forget your errand.

Har. No, my lord, I sha'n't forget my errand; it won't slip my memory. Good morning my lord, good morning, madam. [*Exit.*

Lord N. Now, my dear, as you and Mr. Harmony seem to be on such excellent terms, I think I may venture to tell you, (if he has not yet told you himself) that he is the man who is to be your husband.

Miss W. He! Mr. Harmony! No, my lord, he has not told me; and I am confident he never will.

Lord N. What makes you think so?

Miss W. Because—because—he must be sensible he would not be the man I should choose.

Lord N. And where is the woman who marries the man she would choose? You are reversing the order of society; men, only, have the right of choice in marriage. Were women permitted theirs, we should have handsome beggars allied to our noblest families, and no such object in our whole island as an old maid.

Miss W. But being denied that choice, why am I forbid to remain as I am?

Lord N. What are you now? Neither a widow, a maid, nor a wife. If I could fix a term to your present state, I should not be thus anxious to place you in another.

Miss W. I am perfectly acquainted with your friendly motives, and feel the full force of your advice. I therefore renew my promise, and although Mr. Harmony (in respect to the marriage state) is as little to my wishes as any man on earth, I will nevertheless endeavour, whatever struggles it may cost me, to be to him, if he prefers his suit, a dutiful, an obedient, but, for a loving wife, that I can never be again. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment at Sir Robert Ramble's.*

Enter SIR ROBERT *and* MR. HARMONY.

Sir R. I thank you for this visit. I was unde-

termined what to do with myself. Your company has determined me to stay at home.

Har. I was with a gentleman just now, Sir Robert, and you were the subject of our conversation.

Sir R. Had it been a lady, I should be anxious to know what she said.

Har. I have been with a lady likewise; and she made you the subject of her discourse.

Sir. R. But was she handsome?

Har. Very handsome.

Sir R. My dear fellow, what is her name? What did she say, and where may I meet with her?

Har. Her name is Wooburn.

Sir R. That is the name of my late wife.

Har. It is her I mean.

Sir R. Zounds, you had just put my spirits into a flame, and now you throw cold water all over me.

Har. I am sorry to hear you say so, for I came from her this moment; and what do you think is the present she has given me to deliver to you?

Sir R. Psha! I want no presents. Some of my love-letters returned, I suppose, to remind me of my inconstancy?

Har. Do not undervalue her generosity; this is her present, this bond, which has power to take from you three thousand a-year, her right.

Sir R. Ah! this is a present indeed. Are you sure you speak truth? Let me look at it; sure my eyes deceive me! No, by heaven it is true! (*Reads.*) The very thing I wanted, and will make me perfectly happy. Now I'll be generous again; my bills shall be paid, my gaming debts cancelled, poor Irwin shall find a friend; and I'll send Miss Wooburn as pretty a copy of verses as ever I wrote in my life.

Har. Take care how you treat with levity a woman of her elevated mind. She charged me to assure you, "that love had no share whatever in this act, which is mere compassion to the embarrassed state of your affairs."

Sir R. Sir, I would have you to know, I am no object of compassion. However, a lady's favour one cannot return, and so I'll keep the bond. (*Puts the bond in his pocket.*)

Har. Nay, if your circumstances are different from what she imagines, give it me back, and I will restore it to her.

Sir R. No, poor thing! it would break her heart to send it back. No, I'll keep it, she would never forgive me, were I to send it back. I'll keep it. And she is welcome to attribute her concern for me to what she pleases. But surely you can see—you can understand—but heaven bless her for her love, and I would love her in return—if I could.

Har. You would not talk thus, if you had seen the firm dignity with which she gave me that paper. "Assure him," said she, "no remaining affection comes along with it, but merely a duty which I owe him, to protect him from the humiliation of being a debtor to the man whom I am going to marry."

Sir R. (*With the utmost emotion.*) Why, she is not going to be married again!

Har. I believe so.

Sir R. But are you sure of it, sir? Are you sure of it?

Har. Both she and her guardian told me so.

Sir R. That guardian, my Lord Norland, is one of the basest, vilest of men. I tell you what, sir, I'll resent this usage.

Har. Wherefore? As to his being the means of bringing about your separation, in that he obliged you.

Sir R. Yes, sir, he did, he certainly did; but though I am not in the least offended with him on that account, (for at that I rejoice) yet I will resent his disposing of her a second time.

Har. And wherefore?

Sir R. Because, little regard as I have for her myself, yet no other man shall dare to treat her so ill as I have done.

Har. Do not fear it; her next husband will be a man, who, I can safely say, will never insult, or even offend her; but soothe, indulge, and make her happy.

Sir R. And do you dare to tell me, that her next husband shall make her happy? Now, that is worse than the other; no, sir, no man shall ever have it to say "he has made her either happy or miserable," but myself.

Har. I know but one way to prevent it.

Sir R. And what is that?

Har. Pay your addresses to her, and marry her again yourself.

Sir R. And I would, rather than she should be happy with anybody else. The devil take me if I would not.

Har. To shew that I am wholly disinterested in this affair, I will carry her a letter from you if you like, and say all I can in your behalf.

Sir R. Ha, ha, ha! Now, my dear Harmony, you carry your good-natured simplicity too far. However, I thank you, I sincerely thank you; but do you imagine I would be such a blockhead, as to make love to the same woman I made love to seven years ago, and who for the last six years I totally neglected?

Har. Yes; for if you have neglected her six years, she will now be a novelty.

Sir R. Egad, and so she will. You are right.

Har. But being in possession of her fortune, you can be very happy without her.

Sir R. Take her fortune back, sir. (*Taking the bond from his pocket and offering it to Harmony.*) I would starve, I would perish, die in poverty and infamy, rather than owe an obligation to a vile perfidious, inconstant woman.

Har. Consider, Sir Robert, if you insist on my taking this bond back, it may fall into the husband's hands.

Sir R. Take it back; I insist upon it. (*Gives it him, and Harmony puts it up.*) But, Mr. Harmony, depend on it, Lord Norland shall hear from me, in the most serious manner, for his interference: I repeat, he is the vilest, the most villanous of men.

Har. How can you speak with such rancour of a nobleman, who speaks of you in the highest terms?

Sir R. Does he, 'faith?

Har. He owns you have some faults.

Sir R. I know I have.

Har. But he thinks your good qualities are numberless.

Sir R. Now d——e, if ever I thought so ill of him, as I have appeared to do! But who is the intended husband, my dear friend? Tell me, that I may laugh at him, and make you laugh at him.

Har. No, I am not inclined to laugh at him.

Sir R. Is it old Solus?

Har. No.

Sir R. But I will bet you a wager it is somebody equally ridiculous.

Har. I never bet.

Sir R. Solus is mad for a wife, and has been praising mine up to the heavens; you need say no more; I know it is he.

Har. Upon my honour it is not. However, I cannot disclose to you at present the person's name; I must first obtain Lord Norland's permission.

Sir R. I shall ask you no more. I'll write to her, she will tell me; or, I'll pay her a visit, and ask her boldly myself. Do you think—(*Anxiously*)—do you think she would see me?

Har. You can but try.

Enter William.

William. Mr. Solus. [*Exit.*

Sir R. Now I will find out the secret immediately. I'll charge him with being the intended husband.

Har. I won't stay to hear you.

Enter Solus.

Mr. Solus, how do you do? I am extremely sorry that my engagements take me away as soon as you enter. [*Exit.*

Solus. Sir Robert, what is the matter? Has any thing ruffled you? Why, I never saw you look more out of temper, even while you were married.

Sir R. Ah! that I had never married! never known what marriage was; for, even at this moment, I feel its torments in my heart.

Solus. I have often heard of the torments of matrimony; but I conceive, that at the worst, they are nothing more than a kind of violent tickling, which will force the tears into your eyes, though at the same time you are bursting your sides with laughter.

Sir R. You have defined marriage too favourably; there is no laughter in the state; all is melancholy, all gloom.

Solus. Now I think marriage is an excellent remedy for the spleen. I have known a gentleman at a feast receive an affront, disguise his rage, step home, vent it all upon his wife, return to his companions, and be as good company as if nothing had happened.

Sir R. But even the necessary expenses of a wife should alarm you.

Solus. I can then retrench some of my own. Oh, my dear sir, a married man has so many delightful privileges to what a bachelor has. An old lady will introduce her daughters to you in a dishabille—"It does not signify, my dears, it's a married man." One lady will suffer you to draw on her glove—"Never mind, it's a married man." Another will permit you to pull on her slipper; a third will even take you into her bed-chamber—"Psha! it's nothing but a married man."

Sir R. But the weight of your fetters will overbalance all these joys.

Solus. And yet I cannot say, notwithstanding you are relieved from those fetters, that I see much joy or content here.

Sir R. I am not very well at present; I have the head-ache; and if ever a wife can be of comfort to her husband, it must be when he is indisposed. A wife, then, binds up your head, mixes your powders, bathes your temples, and hovers about, in a way that is most endearing.

Solus. Don't speak of it; I long to have one hover about me. But I will—I am determined I I will, before I am a week older. Don't speak, don't attempt to dissuade me. Your description has renewed my eagerness—I will be married.

Sir R. And without pretending not to know who you mean to make your choice, I tell you plainly, it is Miss Wooburn, it is my late wife. I know you have made overtures to my Lord Norland, and that he has given his consent.

Solus. You tell me a great piece of news; I'll go ask my lord if it be true; and if he says it is, I shall be very glad to find it so.

Sir R. That is right, sir; marry her, marry her; I give you joy, that's all. Ha, ha, ha! I think I should know her temper. But if you will venture to marry her, I sincerely wish you happy.

Solus. And if we are not, you know we can be divorced.

Sir R. Not always. Take my advice, and live as you are.

Solus. You almost stagger my resolution. I had painted such bright prospects in marriage. Good day to you. (*Going; returns.*) You think I had better not marry?

Sir R. You are undone if you do.

Solus. (*Sighing.*) You ought to know from experience.

Sir R. From that I speak.

Solus. (*Going; returns.*) But then, what a poor disconsolate object shall I live, without a wife to hover about me; to bind up my head, and bathe my temples! Oh, I am impatient for all the chartered rights, privileges, and immunities of a married man. I will be married. [*Exit.*

Sir R. Furies, racks, torments; I cannot bear what I feel, and yet I am ashamed to own I feel anything.

Enter Mr. Placid.

Placid. My dear Sir Robert, give me joy. Mrs. Placid and I are come to the very point you advised; matters are in the fairest way for a separation.

Sir R. I do give you joy, and most sincerely. You are right; you'll soon be as happy as I am. (*Sighing.*) But, would you suppose it? that deluded woman, my wife, is going to be married again! I thought she had experienced enough from me.

Placid. Who is her intended husband?

Sir R. Solus, Solus; an old man—an ugly man! He left me this moment, and owned it—owned it. Go after him, will you, and persuade him not to have her.

Placid. My advice will have no effect, for you know he is determined upon matrimony.

Sir R. Then could not you, my dear sir, (as you are going to be separated) could not you recommend him to marry your wife? It will be all the same to him, and I shall like it much better.

Placid. Ours will not be a divorce, consider, but merely a separate maintenance. But were it otherwise, I wish no man so ill, as to wish him married to Mrs. Placid.

Sir R. That is my case exactly. I wish no man so ill, as to wish him married to my Lady Ramble; and poor old Solus in particular, poor old man! a very good sort of man—I have a great friendship for Solus. I can't stay a moment in the house—I must go somewhere—I'll go to Solus. No, I'll go to Lord Norland—no, I will go to Harmony; and then I'll call on you, and we'll take a bottle together; and when you are become free—(*takes his hand.*)—we'll both join, from that moment we'll join, to laugh at, to contemn, to despise all those who boast of the joys of conjugal love. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*An Apartment at Mr. Harmony's.*

Enter Mr. Harmony.

Har. And now, for one of the most painful tasks that brotherly love ever draws upon me; to tell another the suit of which I gave him hope, has failed. Yet, if I can but overcome Captain Irwin's delicacy so far as to prevail on him to accept one proof more of my good wishes towards him; but, to a man of his nice sense of obligations, the offer must be made with caution.

Enter Lord Norland.

Lord N. Mr. Harmony, I beg your pardon; I come in thus abruptly, from the anxiety I feel concerning what passed between us this morning in respect to Miss Wooburn. You have not changed your mind, I hope?

Har. Indeed, my lord, I am very sorry that it will not be in my power to oblige you.

Lord N. (*In anger.*) How, sir! Did not you give me your word?

Har. Only conditionally, my lord.

Lord N. And what were the conditions?

Har. Have you forgot them? Her former husband.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir Robert Ramble is in his carriage at the door, and, if you are at leisure, will come in.

Har. Desire him to walk up. I have your leave, I suppose, my lord? [*Exit Sam.*

Lord N. Yes; but let me get out of the house without meeting him. (*Going.*) Can I go this way?

Har. Why should you shun him?

Lord N. Because he used his wife ill.

Har. He did. But I believe he is very sorry for it. And as for you, he said to me only a few hours ago—but no matter.

Lord N. What did he say? I insist upon knowing.

Har. Why, then, he said, "that if he had a sacred trust to repose in any one, you should be the man on earth, to whom he would confide it."

Lord N. Well, I am in no hurry; I can stay a few minutes.

Enter SIR ROBERT RAMBLE.

Sir R. Oh! Harmony! I am in such a distracted state of mind—(*Seeing Lord N. he starts, and bows with the most humble respect.*)

Lord N. Sir Robert, how do you do?

Sir R. My lord, I am pretty well. I hope I have the happiness of seeing your lordship in perfect health.

Lord N. Very well, sir, I thank you.

Sir R. Indeed, my lord, I think I never saw you look better.

Lord N. Mr. Harmony, you and Sir Robert may have some business; I'll wish you a good morning.

Har. No, my lord, I fancy Sir Robert has nothing particular.

Sir R. Nothing, nothing, I assure you, my lord.

Lord N. However, I have business myself in another place, and so you will excuse me. (*Going.*)

Sir R. (*Following him.*) My lord—Lord Norland—I trust you will excuse my enquiries. I hope, my lord, all your family are well?

Lord N. All very well.

Sir R. Your little elève, Master Edward, the young gentleman you have adopted—I hope he is well. (*Hesitating and confused.*) And—your ward, sir—Miss Wooburn, I hope, my lord, she is well?

Lord N. Yes, Sir Robert, Miss Wooburn is tolerably well.

Sir R. Only tolerably, my lord? I am sorry for that.

Har. I hope, my lord, you will excuse my mentioning the subject; but I was telling Sir Robert just now, of your intentions respecting a second marriage for that lady; but Sir Robert does not appear to approve of the design.

Lord N. What objection can he have?

Sir R. My lord, there is such a number of bad husbands; there is such a number of dissipated, unthinking, unprincipled men! And—I should be extremely sorry to see any lady, with whom I have the honour of being so closely allied, united to a man who would undervalue her worth.

Lord N. Pray, Sir Robert, were you not then extremely sorry for her, while she was united to you?

Sir R. Very sorry for her, indeed, my lord. But, at that time, my mind was so much taken up with other cares, I own I did not feel the compassion which was her due; but, now that I am single, I shall have leisure to pay her more attention; and should I find her unhappy, it must, inevitably, make me so.

Lord N. Depend upon it, that on the present occasion, I shall take infinite care in the choice of her husband.

Sir R. If your lordship would permit me to have an interview with Miss Wooburn, I think I should be able at least—

Lord N. You would not sure insult her by your presence?

Sir R. I think I should be able at least to point out an object worthy of her taste: I know that which she would like better than any body in the world.

Lord N. Her request has been, that I may point her out a husband the reverse of you.

Sir R. Then, upon my honour, my lord, she won't like him.

Lord N. Have not you liked women the reverse of her?

Sir R. Yes, my lord, perhaps I have, and perhaps I still do. I do not pretend to love her; I did not say I did; nay, I positively protest I do not; but this indifference I acknowledge as one of my faults, and, notwithstanding all my faults, give me leave to acknowledge my gratitude that your lordship has nevertheless been pleased to declare you think my virtues are numberless. (*Lord Norland surprised.*)

Har. (*Aside to Sir Robert.*) Hush! hush! Don't talk of your virtues now.

Lord N. Sir Robert, to all this incoherent language this is my answer, this is my will; the lady, to whom I have had the honour to be guardian, shall never (while she calls me friend) see you more. (*Sir Robert stands silent for some time, then, suddenly recollecting himself.*)

Sir R. Lord Norland, I am too well acquainted with the truth of your word, and the firmness of your temper, to press my suit one sentence farther.

Lord N. I commend your discernment.

Sir R. My lord, I feel myself a little embarrassed. I am afraid I have made myself a little ridiculous upon this occasion. Will your lordship do me the favour to forget it?

Lord N. I will forget whatever you please.

Har. (*Following him, whispers.*) I am sorry to see you going away in despair.

Sir R. I never did despair in my life, sir; and while a woman is the object of my wishes, I never will. [*Exit.*

Lord N. What did he say?

Har. That he thought your conduct that of a just and an upright man.

Lord N. To say the truth, he has gone away with better manners than I could have imagined, considering his jealousy is provoked.

Har. Ah! I always knew he loved his wife, notwithstanding his behaviour to her; for, if you remember, he always spoke well behind her back.

Lord N. No, I do not remember it.

Har. Yes, he did; and that is the only criterion of a man's love or of his friendship.

Enter SAM.

Sam. A young gentleman is at the door, sir, enquiring for Lord Norland.

Lord N. Who can it be?

Har. Your young gentleman from home, I dare say. Desire him to walk in. Bring him here. [*Exit Sam.*

Lord N. What business can he have to follow me?

Enter EDWARD.

Edw. Oh! my lord, I beg your pardon for coming hither; but I come to tell you something you will be glad to hear.

Har. Good heaven! how like his mother!

Lord N. (*Taking him by the hand.*) I begin to think he is; but he was not so when I first took him. No, no; if he had, he would not have been thus near me now; but, to turn him away, because his countenance is a little changed, I think would not be right.

Edw. (*To Harmony.*) Pray, sir, did you know my mother?

Har. I have seen her.

Edw. Did you ever see her, my lord?

Lord N. I thought you had orders never to inquire about your parents? Have you forgotten those orders?

Edw. No, my lord; but when this gentleman said I was like my mother, it put me in mind of her.

Har. You do not remember your mother, do you?

Edw. Sometimes, I think, I do. I think, sometimes, I remember her kissing me, when she and my father went on board of a ship; and so hard she pressed me! I think I feel it now.

Har. Perhaps she was the only lady that ever saluted you?

Edw. No, sir; not by many.

Lord N. But, pray, young man, (to have done with this subject) what brought you here? You seem to have forgot your errand?

Edw. And so I had, upon my word. Speaking of my mother, put it quite out of my head. But, my lord, I came to let you know, the robber who stopped you last night is taken.

Lord N. I am glad to hear it.

Edw. I knew you would; and therefore I begged to be the first to tell you.

Har. (*To Lord Norland.*) Should you know the person again?

Lord N. I cannot say I should; his face seemed so much distorted.

Har. Ay, wretched man! I suppose with terror.

Lord N. No; it appeared a different passion from fear.

Edw. Perhaps, my lord, it was your fear that made you think so.

Lord N. No, sir, I was not frightened.

Edw. Then why did you give him your money?

Lord N. It was surprise caused me to do that.

Edw. I wondered what it was. You said it was not fear, and I was sure it could not be love.

Har. How has he been taken?

Edw. A person came to our steward, and informed against him: and, oh! my lord, his poor wife told the officers who took him, they had met with misfortunes, which, she feared, had caused a fever in her husband's head; and, indeed, they found him too ill to be removed; and so, she hoped, she said, "that, as a man not in his perfect mind, you would be merciful to him."

Lord N. I will be just.

Edw. And that is being merciful, is it not my lord?

Lord N. Not always.

Edw. I thought it had been. It is not just to be unmerciful, is it?

Lord N. Certainly not.

Edw. Then it must be just to have mercy.

Lord N. You draw a false conclusion. Great as is the virtue of mercy, justice is greater still. Justice holds its place among those cardinal virtues which include all the lesser. Come, Mr. Harmony, will you go home with me? And, before I attend to this business, let me persuade you to forget there is such a person in the world as Sir Robert Ramble, and suffer me to introduce you to Miss Wooburn, as the man who—

Har. I beg to be excused. Besides the consideration of Sir Robert, I have another reason why I cannot go with you. The melancholy tale which this young gentleman has been telling, has cast a gloom on my spirits, which renders me unfit for the society of a lady.

Lord N. Now I should not be surprised were you to go in search of this culprit and his family, and come to me, to entreat me to forego the prosecution; but, before you ask me, I tell you it is in vain: I will not.

Har. Lord Norland, I have lately been so unsuccessful in my petitions to you, I shall never presume to interpose between your rigour and a weak sufferer more.

Lord N. Plead the cause of the good, and I will listen; but you find none but the wicked for your compassion.

Har. The good in all states, even in the very grasp of death, are objects of envy; it is the bad who are the only sufferers. There, where no internal consolation cheers, who can refuse a little external comfort? And let me tell you, my lord, that, amidst all your authority, your state, your grandeur, I often pity you. (*Speaking with unaffected compassion.*)

Lord N. Good day, Mr. Harmony; and when you have apologised for what you have said, we may be friends again. [*Exit, leading off Edward.*

Har. Nay, hear my apology now. I cannot—no, it is not in my nature to live in resentment, nor under the resentment, of any creature in the world. [*Exit, following Lord Norland.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment at Lord Norland's.*

Enter SIR ROBERT RAMBLE, *followed by* SAM.

Sir R. Do not say who it is; but say a gentleman, who has some very particular business with her.

Sam. Yes, sir. (*Going.*)

Sir R. Pray—(*Sam returns.*)—you are but lately come into this service, I believe?

Sam. Only a few days, sir.

Sir R. You don't know me, then?

Sam. No, sir.

Sir R. I am very glad of it. So much the better. Go to Miss Wooburn, with a stranger's compliments, who is waiting, and who begs to speak with her upon an affair of importance.

Sam. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir R. I wish I may die if I don't feel very unaccountably! How different are our sensations towards our wives, and all other women! This is the very first time she has given me a palpitation since the honeymoon.

Enter MISS WOOBURN, *who starts on seeing Sir Robert; he bows in great confusion.*

Miss W. Support me, heaven! (*Aside.*)

Sir R. (*Bows repeatedly, and does not speak till after many efforts.*) Was ever man in such confusion before his wife! (*Aside.*)

Miss W. Sir Robert, having recovered, in some measure, from the surprise into which this intrusion first threw me, I have only to say, that, whatever pretence may have induced you to offer me this insult, there is not any that can oblige me to bear with it! (*Going.*)

Sir R. Lady Ram—(*Recalling himself.*)—Miss Woo—(*She turns.*)—Lady Ramble—(*Recalling himself again.*)—Miss Wooburn—Madam, you wrong me: there was a time when I insulted you, I confess; but it is impossible that time should ever return.

Miss W. While I stay with you, I incur the danger. (*Going.*)

Sir R. (*Holding her.*) Nay, listen to me as a friend, whom you have so often heard as an enemy. You offered me a favour by the hands of Mr. Harmony.

Miss W. And is this the motive of your visit? this the return—

Sir R. No, madam; that obligation was not the moment which drew me hither. The real cause of this seeming intrusion is, you are going to be married once more, and I come to warn you of your danger.

Miss W. That you did sufficiently in the marriage-state.

Sir R. But now I come to offer you advice that may be of the most material consequence, should you really be determined to yield yourself again into the power of a husband.

Miss W. Which I most assuredly am.

Sir R. Happy, happy man! How much is he the object of my envy! None, so well as I, know how to envy him; because none, so well as I, know how to value you. (*She offers to go.*) Nay, by heaven! you shall not go, till you have heard all that I came to say.

Miss W. Speak it, then, instantly.

Sir R. No, it would take whole ages to speak; and should we live together, as long as we have lived together, still I should not find time to tell you, how much I love you. (*A loud rapping at the street door.*)

Miss W. That, I hope, is Lord Norland.

Sir R. And what has Lord Norland to do with souls, free as ours? Let us go to Scotland again; and again bid defiance to his stern commands.

Miss W. Be assured that, through him only, will I ever listen to a syllable you have to utter.

Sir R. One syllable only, and I am gone that instant.

Miss W. Well, sir? (*He hesitates, trembles, seems to struggle with himself; then approaching her slowly, timidly, and as if ashamed of his humiliation, kneels to her. She turns away.*)

Sir R. (*Kneeling.*) Maria, Maria, look at me! Look at me, in this humble state. Could you have suspected this, Maria?

Miss W. No; nor can I conceive what this mockery means.

Sir R. It means, that now you are no longer my wife, you are my goddess; and thus I offer you my supplication, that, (if you are resolved not to live single,) amongst the numerous train who present their suit, you will once more select me.

Miss W. You! you, who have treated me with cruelty; who made no secret of your love for others, but gloried, boasted of your gallantries?

Sir R. I did, I did: but here I swear, only trust me again; do but once more trust me, and I swear by all I hold most sacred, that I will for the future carefully conceal all my gallantries from your knowledge, though they were ten times more frequent than before.

Enter EDWARD.

Edw. Oh! my dear Miss Wooburn! What! Sir Robert here, too! (*Goes to Sir Robert, and shakes hands.*) How do you do, Sir Robert? Who would have thought of seeing you here? I am glad to see you, though, with all my heart; and so I dare say is Miss Wooburn, though she may not like to say so.

Miss W. You are impertinent, sir.

Edw. What, for coming in? I will go away, then.

Sir R. Do, do, there's a good boy; do.

Edw. (*Going, returns.*) I cannot help laughing, though, to see you two together; for you know you never were together when you lived in the same house.

Sir R. Leave the room instantly, sir, or I shall call Lord Norland.

Edw. Oh! don't take the trouble; I will call him myself. (*Runs to the door.*) My lord! my lord! pray come hither this moment. As I am alive, here is Sir Robert Ramble along with Lady Ramble!

Enter LORD NORLAND. *Sir Robert looks confounded. Lord Norland points to Edward to leave the room.* [*Exit Edward.*

Lord N. Sir Robert, on what pretence do you come hither?

Sir R. On the same pretence as when I was for the first time admitted into your house: to solicit this lady's hand. And, after having had it once, no force shall compel me to take a refusal.

Lord N. I will try, however. Madam, quit the room instantly.

Sir R. My lord, she shall not quit it.

Lord N. I command her to go.

Sir R. And I command her to stay.

Lord N. Which of us will you obey?

Miss W. My inclination, my lord, disposes me me to obey you; but I have so lately been accustomed to obey him, that custom inclines me to obey him still.

Sir R. There, there, there, my lord! Now I hope you will understand better for the future, and not attempt to interfere between a man and his wife?

Lord N. (*To her.*) Be explicit in your answer to this question: Will you consent to be his wife?

Miss W. No, never.

Sir R. Zounds, my lord! now you are hurrying matters; you should do it by gentle means; let me ask her gently. (*With a most soft voice.*) Maria, Maria, will you be my wife once again?

Miss W. Never.

Sir R. So you said seven years ago, when I asked you, and yet you consented.

Lord N. And now, Sir Robert, you have had your answer; leave my house. (*Going up to him.*)

Sir R. Yes, sir; but not without my other half.

Lord N. Your other half!

Sir R. Yes, the wife of my bosom; the wife, whom I swore at the altar to love and to cherish, and, forsaking all others, cleave only to her as long as we both should live.

Lord N. You broke your oath, and made the contract void.

Sir R. But I am ready to take another oath; and another after that, and another after that. And oh, my dear Maria! be propitious to my vows, and give me hopes you will again be mine. (*He goes to her, and kneels in the most supplicating manner.*)

Enter EDWARD, *shewing in* MR. SOLUS, *and* MR. PLACID; *Edward points to Sir Robert,* (*who has his back towards them,*) *and goes off.*

Sir R. (*Still on his knees, and not perceiving their entrance.*) I cannot live without you. Receive your penitent husband, thus humbly acknowledging his faults, and imploring you to accept him once again.

Solus. (*Going up to Sir Robert, and tapping him on the shoulder.*) Now, is it wonderful that I should want a wife?

Placid. And is it to be wondered at, if I should hesitate about parting with mine?

Sir R. (*Starts up in great confusion.*) Mr. Solus, Mr. Placid, I am highly displeased that my private actions should be thus inspected.

Solus. No one shall persuade me now to live a day without a wife.

Placid. And no one shall persuade me now not to be content with my own.

Solus. I will procure a special licence, and marry the first woman I meet.

Sir R. Mr. Solus, you are, I believe, interested in a peculiar manner about the marriage of this lady.

Solus. And, poor man, you are sick, and want

"somebody to bathe your temples," and to "hover about you."

Miss W. You come in most opportunely, my dear Mr. Solus, to be a witness—

Sir R. "My dear Mr. Solus!"

Solus. To be a witness, madam, that a man is miserable without a wife. I have been a fatal instance of that, for some time.

Miss W. Come to me, then, and receive a lesson.

Sir R. No madam, he shall not come to you; nor shall he receive a lesson. No one shall receive a lesson from you, but myself.

Lord N. Sir Robert, one would suppose, by this extraordinary behaviour, you were jealous.

Sir R. And so I am, my lord; I have cause to be so.

Lord N. No cause to be jealous of Mr. Solus. He is not Miss Woodburn's lover, I assure you.

Sir R. Then, my lord, I verily believe it is yourself. Yes, I can see it is; I can see it in her eyes, and by every feature in your face.

Miss W. Oh! my good friend, Mr. Placid, only listen to him.

Sir R. And why "my good friend, Mr. Placid?" (*To Placid.*) By heavens, sir, I believe that you only wished to get rid of your own wife, in order to marry mine.

Placid. I do not wish to part with my own wife, Sir Robert, since what I have just seen.

Sir R. (*Going up to Solus and Lord Norland.*) Then, pray, gentlemen, he so good as to tell me which of you two is the happy man, that I may know how to conduct myself towards him.

Miss W. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir R. Do you insult me, Maria? Oh! have pity on my sufferings.

Solus. If you have a mind to kneel down again, we will go out of the room.

Placid. Just as I was comforting myself with the prospect of a divorce, I find my instructor and director pleading on his knees to be re-married.

Enter Mrs. Placid, *who steals upon Mr. Placid unperceived.*

Mrs. P. What were you saying about a divorce?

Sir R. Now, down on your knees, and beg pardon.

Miss W. My dear Mrs. Placid, if this visit is to me, I take it very kind.

Mrs. P. Not absolutely to you, my dear. I saw Mr. Placid's carriage at the door, and so I stepped in, to desire him to go home directly.

Placid. Presently, my dear; I will go presently.

Mrs. W. Presently won't do: I say directly. There is a lady at my house in the greatest possible distress. (*Whispers him.*) Lady Eleanor: I never saw a creature in such distraction; (*Raising her voice.*) therefore go home this moment; you sha'n't stay an instant longer.

Solus. Egad, I don't know whether I will marry or not.

Mrs. P. Why don't you go, Mr. Placid, when I bid you?

Solus. No; I think I won't marry.

Placid. But, my dear, won't you go home with me?

Mrs. P. Did not I tell you to go by yourself? (*Placid bows, and goes off.*)

Solus. No; I am sure I won't marry.

Lord N. And now, Mr. Solus, and Sir Robert, these ladies may have some private conversation. Do me the favour to leave them alone.

Miss W. My lord, with your leave, we will retire. (*Turns, when she gets to the door.*) Sir Robert, I have remained in your company, and compelled myself to the painful task of hearing all you have had to say, merely for the satisfaction of exposing your love; and then enjoying the triumph of bidding you farewell for ever.

[*Exit with Mrs. Placid.*

Solus. (*Looking steadfastly at Sir Robert.*) He turns pale at the thoughts of losing her. Yes, I think I'll marry.

Lord N. Come, Sir Robert, it is in vain to loiter; your doom is fixed.

Sir R. (*In a melancholy, musing tone.*) Shall I then, never again know what it is to have a heart like hers to repose my troubles on?

Solus. Yes, I'm pretty sure I'll marry.

Sir R. A friend in all my anxieties, a companion in all my pleasures, a physician in all my sick-

Solus. Yes, I will marry. [nesses—

Lord N. Come, come, Sir Robert, do not let you and I have any dispute. (*Leading him towards the door.*)

Sir R. Senseless man, not to value those blessings! Not to know how to estimate them, till they were lost! (*Lord Norland leads him off.*)

Solus. (*Following.*) Yes, I am determined; nothing shall prevent me; I will be married. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*An Apartment at Lord Norland's.*

Enter Hammond, *followed by* Lady Eleanor.

Ham. My lord is busily engaged, madam; I do do not suppose he would see any one, much less a stranger.

Lady E. I am no stranger.

Ham. Your name, then, madam?

Lady E. That I cannot send in. But tell him, sir, I am the afflicted wife of a man, who, for some weeks past, has given many fatal proofs of a disordered mind. In one of those fits of frenzy, he held an instrument of death, meant for his own destruction, to the breast of your lord, (who, by accident, that moment passed,) and took from him what he vainly hoped might preserve his own life, and relieve the wants of his family. But, his paroxysm over, he shrunk from what he had done, and gave the whole he had thus unwarrantably taken into a servant's hands, to be returned to its lawful owner. The man, admitted to this confidence, betrayed his trust, and, instead of giving up what was thus sacredly delivered to him, secreted it; and, to obtain the promised reward, came to this house, but to inform against the wretched offender: who now, only resting on your lord's clemency, can escape the direful fate he has incurred.

Ham. Madam, the account you give makes me interested in your behalf, and you may depend I will repeat it all with the greatest exactness.

[*Exit.*

Lady E. (*Looking round.*) This is my father's house! It is only through two rooms, and one short passage, and there he is sitting in his study. Oh! in that study, where I (even in the midst of all his business) have been so often welcome; where I have urged the suit of many an unhappy person, nor ever urged in vain. Now I am not permitted to speak for myself, nor have one friendly voice to do that office for me, which I have so often undertaken for others.

Enter Hammond, Edward *following.*

Ham. My lord says, that any petition concerning the person you come about is of no use. His respect for the laws of his country demands an example, such as he means to make.

Lady E. Am I—am I to despair, then? (*To Hammond.*) Dear sir, would you go once more to him, and humbly represent—

Ham. I should be happy to oblige you, but I dare not take any more messages to my lord; he

has given me my answer. If you will give me leave, madam, I'll see you to the door. [*Exit.*

Lady E. Misery! Distraction! Oh, Mr Placid! Oh, Mr. Harmony! are these the hopes you gave me? could I have the boldness to enter this house? But you would neither of you undertake to bring me here—neither of you undertake to speak for me! (*She is following the Servant; Edward walks softly after her, till she gets near the door; he then takes hold of her gown, and gently pulls it; she turns, and looks at him.*)

Edw. Shall I speak for you, madam?

Lady E. Who are you, pray, young gentleman? Is it you whom Lord Norland has adopted for his son?

Edw. I believe he has, madam; but he has never told me so yet.

Lady E. I am obliged to you for your offer; but my suit is of too much consequence for you to undertake.

Edw. I know what your suit is, madam, because I was with my lord when Hammond brought in your message; and I was so sorry for you, I came out on purpose to see you; and, without speaking to my lord, I could do you a great kindness, if I durst.

Lady E. What kindness?

Edw. But I durst not. No, do not ask me.

Lady E. I do not. But you have increased my anxiety; and, in a mind so distracted as mine, it is cruel to excite one additional pain.

Edw. I am sure, I would not add to your grief for the world. But, then, pray do not speak of what I am going to say. I heard my lord's lawyer tell him just now, that, as he said he should not know the person again, who committed the offence about which you came, and, as the man who informed against him is gone off, there could be no evidence that he did the action, but from a book, a particular pocket-book of my lord's, which he forgot to deliver to his servant, with the notes and money he returned, and which was found upon him at your house, and this Lord Norland will affirm to be his. Now, if I didn't think I was doing very wrong, this is the very book. (*Takes a pocket-book from his pocket.*) I took it from my lord's table; but it would be doing wrong, or I am sure I wish you had it.

Lady E. It will save my life, my husband's, and my children's.

Edw. (*Trembling.*) But what is to become of me?

Lady E. That providence, who never punishes the deed, unless the will be an accomplice, shall protect you, for saving one, who has only erred in a moment of distraction.

Edw. I never did any thing to offend my lord in my life; and I am in such fear of him, I did not think I ever should. Yet, I cannot refuse you; take it. (*Gives her the book.*) But pity me, when my lord shall know of it.

Lady E. Oh! should he discard you for what you have done, it will embitter every moment of my remaining life.

Edw. Do not frighten yourself about that. I think he loves me too well to discard me quite.

Lady E. Does he, indeed?

Edw. I think he does; for often, when we are alone, he presses me to his bosom so fondly, you would not suppose. And, when my poor nurse died, she called me to her bedside, and told me (but pray keep it a secret)—she told me I was his grandchild.

Lady E. You are—you are his grandchild! I see—I feel you are; for I feel that I am your mother! (*Embraces him.*) Oh! take this evidence back. (*Returning the book.*) I cannot receive it from thee, my child: no, let us all perish, rather than my boy, my only boy, should do an act to stain his conscience, or to lose his grandfather's love.

Edw. What do you mean?

Lady E. The name of the person with whom you lived in your infancy was Heyland?

Edw. It was.

Lady E. I am your mother, Lord Norland's only child; (*Edward kneels to her.*) who, for one act of disobedience, have been driven to another part of the globe in poverty, and forced to leave you, my life, behind. (*She embraces, and raises him.*) Your father, in his struggles to support us all, has fallen a victim; but heaven, which has preserved my son, will save my husband, restore his senses, and once more—

Edw. (*Starting.*) I hear my lord's step; he is coming this way. Begone, mother, or we are all undone.

Lady E. No, let him come; for, though his frown should kill me, yet must I thank him for his care of thee. (*She advances to the door to meet him.*)

Enter Lord Norland.

(*Lady Eleanor falls on her knees.*) You love me; 'tis in vain to say you do not. You love my child; and with whatever hardship you have dealt, or still mean to deal by me, I will never cease to think you love me, nor ever cease my gratitude for your goodness.

Lord N. Where are my servants? Who let this woman in? (*She rises, and retreats from him, alarmed and confused.*)

Edw. Oh, my lord! pity her. Do not let me see her hardly treated: indeed, I cannot bear it.

Enter Hammond.

Lord N. (*To Lady Eleanor.*) What was your errand here? If to see your child, take him away with you.

Lady E. I came to see my father. I have a house too full of such as he already.

Lord N. How did she gain admittance?

Ham. With a petition, which I repeated to your lordship. [*Exit.*

Lord N. Her husband, then, it was, who—(*To Lady Eleanor.*) But let him know, for this boy's sake, I will no longer pursue him.

Lady E. For that boy's sake you will not pursue his father; but, for whose sake are you so tender of that boy? 'Tis for mine—for my sake; and by that I conjure you— (*Offers to kneel.*)

Lord N. Your prayers are vain. (*To Edward.*) Go, take leave of your mother for ever, and instantly follow me; or shake hands with me for the last time, and instantly begone with her.

Edw. (*Stands between them in doubt for some little time; looks alternately at each with emotions of affection; at last goes to his grandfather, and takes hold of his hand.*) Farewell, my lord! it almost breaks my heart to part from you; but, if I have my choice, I must go with my mother. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Another Apartment at Lord Norland's.*

Enter Miss Wooburn *and* Mrs. Placid.

Mrs. P. Well, my dear, farewell. I have stayed a great while longer than I intended. I certainly forgot to tell Mr. Placid to come back after he had spoken with Lady Eleanor, or he would not have taken the liberty not to have come.

Miss W. How often have I lamented the fate of Lord Norland's daughter! But, luckily, I have no personal acquaintance with her, or I should probably feel a great deal more on her account than I do at present. She had quitted her father's house before I came to it.

Enter Mr. Harmony.

Har. My whole time is passed in endeavouring to make people happy, and yet they won't let me do it. I flattered myself that, after I had resigned all pretensions to you, Miss Wooburn, in order to accommodate Sir Robert; that, after I had told both my lord and him, in what high estimation they stood in each other's opinion, they would of course have been friends, or, at least, not have come to any desperate quarrel. Instead of which, what have they done, but, within this hour, had a duel! and poor Sir Robert—

Miss W. For heaven's sake, tell me of Sir Robert!

Har. You were the only person he mentioned after he received his wound; and such encomiums as he uttered—

Miss W. Good heaven! If he is in danger, it will be vain to endeavour to conceal what I shall suffer. (*Retires a few paces to hide her emotions.*)

Mrs. P. Was my husband there?

Har. He was one of the seconds.

Mrs. P. Then he shall not stir out of his house this month for it.

Har. He is not likely; for he is hurt too.

Mrs. P. A great deal hurt?

Har. Don't alarm yourself.

Mrs. P. I don't.

Har. Nay, if you had heard what he said!

Mrs. P. What did he say?

Har. How tenderly he spoke of you to all his friends!

Mrs P. But what did he say?

Har. He said you had imperfections.

Mrs. P. Then he told a falsehood.

Har. But he acknowledged they were such as only evinced a superior understanding to the rest of your sex; and that your heart—

Mrs. P. (*Bursting into tears.*) I am sure I am very sorry that any misfortune has happened to him, poor, silly man! But I don't suppose (*Drying up her tears at once.*) he'll die?

Har. If you will behave kindly to him, I should suppose not.

Mrs. P. Mr. Harmony, if Mr. Placid is either dying or dead, I shall behave with very great tenderness; but if I find him alive, and likely to live, I will lead him such a life as he has not led a long time.

Har. Then you mean to be kind? But, my dear Miss Wooburn, (*going to her*) why this seeming grief? Sir Robert is still living; and, should he die of his wounds, you may at least console yourself, that it was not your cruelty which killed him.

Miss W. Rather than have such a weight on my conscience, I would comply with the most extravagant of his desires, and suffer his cruelty to be the death of me.

Har. If those are your sentiments, it is my advice that you pay him a visit in his affliction.

Miss W. Oh, no, Mr. Harmony, I would not for the universe. Mrs. Placid, do you think it would be proper?

Mrs. P. No, I think it would not. Consider, my dear, you are no longer a wife, but a single woman, and would you run into the clutches of a man?

Har. He has no clutches, madam; he is ill in bed, and totally helpless. But, upon recollection, it would, perhaps, be needless to go; for he may be too ill to admit you.

Miss W. If that is the case, all respect to my situation, my character, sinks before the strong desire of seeing him once more. Oh! were I married to another, I feel, that, in spite of all my private declarations, or public vows, I should fly from him to pay my duty where it was first plighted.

Har. My coach is at the door; shall I take you to his house? Come, Mrs. Placid, waive all ceremonious motives on the present melancholy occasion, and go along with Miss Wooburn and me.

Miss W. But, Mrs. Placid, perhaps poor Mr. Placid is in want of your attendance at home.

Har. No; they were both carried in the same carriage to Sir Robert's.

Miss W. (*As Harmony leads her to the door.*) Oh! how I long to see my dear husband, that I may console him!

Mrs. P. Oh! how I long to see my dear husband, that I may quarrel with him! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*The Hall at Sir Robert Ramble's; the Porter discovered asleep.*

Enter William.

Will. Porter, porter, how can you sleep at this time of the day? It is only eight o'clock?

Porter. What did you want, Mr. William?

Will. To tell you my master must not be disturbed, and so you must not let in a single creature.

Porter. Mr. William, this is no less than the third time I have received those orders within this half hour; first from the butler, then from the valet, and now from the footman. Do you all suppose I am stupid?

Will. I was bid to tell you. I have only done what I was desired; and mind you do the same. [*Exit.*

Porter. I'll do my duty, I warrant you. I'll do my duty. (*A loud rapping at the door.*) And there's a summons to put my duty to the trial. (*Opens the door.*)

Enter Harmony, Miss Wooburn, *and* Mrs. Placid.

Har. These ladies come on a visit to Sir Robert. Desire one of the servants to conduct them to him instantly.

Porter. Indeed, sir, that is impossible. My master is not—

Har. We know he is at home, and therefore we can take no denial.

Porter. I own he is at home, sir; but, indeed, he is not in a situation—

Miss W. We know his situation.

Porter. Then, madam, you must suppose he is not to be disturbed. I have strict orders not to let in a single soul.

Har. This lady, you must be certain, is an exception.

Porter. No lady can be an exception in my master's present state; for I believe, sir, but, perhaps, I should not speak of it, I believe my master is nearly gone.

Miss W. Oh! support me, heaven!

Mrs. P. But has he his senses?

Porter. Not very clearly, I believe.

Miss W. Oh! Mr. Harmony, let me see him, before they are quite lost.

Porter. It is as much as my place is worth, to let a creature farther than this hall; for my master is but in the next room.

Mrs. P. That is a dining room. Is not he in bed?

Har. (*Aside to the ladies.*) In cases of wounds, the patient is oftentimes propped up in his chair.

Miss W. Does he talk at all?

Porter. Yes, madam; I heard him just now very loud.

Miss W. (*Listening.*) I think I hear him rave.

Har. No, that murmuring is the voice of other persons.

Mrs. P. The physicians in consultation, I apprehend. Has he taken any thing?

Porter. A great deal, I believe, madam.

Mrs. P. No amputation, I hope?

Porter. What, madam?

Har. He does not understand you. (*To Miss Wooburn.*) Come, will you go back?

Porter. Do, my lady, and call in the morning.

Miss W. By that time he may be totally insensible, and die without knowing how much I am attached to him.

Mrs. P. And my husband may die without knowing how angry I am with him. Mr. Harmony, never mind this foolish man, but force your way into the next room.

Porter. Indeed, sir, you must not. Pray, Mr. Harmony, pray, ladies, go away.

Miss W. Yes; I must go from my husband's house for ever, never to see that or him again! (*Faints on Mr. Harmony.*)

Mrs. P. She is fainting; open the windows; give her air.

Porter. Pray go away: there's plenty of air in the streets, ma'am.

Har. Scoundrel! Your impertinence is insupportable. Open these doors; I insist on their being opened. (*He thrusts open a door, which discovers Sir Robert and Mr. Placid at a table, surrounded by a company of gentlemen.*)

Sir R. A song, a song, another song! (*Miss Wooburn, all astonishment, is supported by Mr. Harmony and Mrs. Placid. The Porter runs off.*) Ah! what do I see? Women! Ladies! Celestial beings we were talking of! Can this be real? (*Sir Robert and Mr. Placid come forward. Sir Robert perceiving it is Miss Wooburn, turns himself to the company.*) Gentlemen, gentlemen, married men, and single men, hear me thus publicly renounce every woman on earth but this; and swear henceforward to be devoted to none but my own wife. (*Goes to her in raptures.*)

Placid. (*Looking at Mrs. Placid, then turning to the company.*) Gentlemen, gentlemen, married men and single men, hear me thus publicly declare, I will henceforth be master; and from this time forward will be obeyed by my wife. (*Sir Robert waves his hand, and the door is closed on the company of gentlemen.*)

Mrs. P. Mr. Placid—Mr. Placid, are you not afraid?

Placid. No, madam, I have consulted my friends, I have drank two bottles of wine, and I never intend to be afraid again.

Miss W. (*To Sir Robert.*) Can it be that I see you without a wound.

Sir R. No, my life, that you do not; for I have a wound through my heart, which none but you can cure. But in despair of your aid, I have flown to wine, to give me a temporary relief by the loss of reflection.

Mrs. P. Mr. Placid, you will be sober in the morning.

Placid. Yes, my dear; and I will take care that you shall be dutiful in the morning.

Har. For shame! how can you treat Mrs. Placid thus? You would not, if you knew what kind things she has been saying of you; and how anxious she was, when I told her you were wounded in a duel.

Mrs. P. Was not I, Mr. Harmony? (*Bursting into tears.*)

Placid. (*Aside to Harmony and Sir Robert.*) I did not know she could cry:—I never saw it before, and it has made me sober in an instant.

Miss W. Mr. Placid, I rely on you to conduct me immediately from this house.

Sir R. That I protest against; and will use even violent measures to prevent him.

Enter WILLIAM.

Will. Lord Norland. [*Exit.*

Enter LORD NORLAND.

Miss W. He will protect me.

Sir R. Who shall protect you in my house but myself? My lord, she is under my protection; and if you offer to take her from me, I'll exert the authority of a husband, and lock her up.

Lord N. (*To Miss Wooburn.*) Have you been deluded hither, and wish to leave the place with me? Tell me instantly, that I may know how to act.

Miss W. My lord, I am ready to go with you, but—

Har. But you find she is inclined to stay; and do have some compassion upon two people, that are so fond of you.

Enter MR. SOLUS, *dressed in a suit of white clothes.*

Solus. I am married! I am married! Wish me joy! I am married.

Sir R. I cannot give you joy, for envy.

Solus. Nay, I do not know whether you will envy me much when you see my spouse. I cannot say she was exactly my choice. However, she is my wife now; and that is a name so endearing, that I think I love her better since the ceremony has been performed.

Mrs. P. And pray when did it take place?

Solus. This moment. We are now returning from a friend's house, where we have been joined by a special licence; and I felt myself so happy, I could not pass Sir Robert's door without calling to tell him of my good fortune. And as I see your lady here, Sir Robert, I guess you are just married too; and so I'll hand my wife out of the carriage, and introduce the two brides to each other. I'm married! [*Exit.*

Sir R. You see, my lord, what construction Mr. Solus has put on Miss Wooburn's visit to me: and, by heaven, if you take her away, it will be said, that she came and offered herself to me, and that I rejected her.

Miss W. Such a report would kill me.

Re-enter SOLUS, *leading on* MISS SPINSTER.

Solus. Mistress Solus. (*Introducing her.*)

Har. (*Starting.*) My relation!—Dear madam, by what strange turn of fortune do I see you become a wife?

Miss S. Mr. Harmony, it is a weakness, I acknowledge; but you can never want an excuse for me, when you call to mind the scarcity of provisions.

Solus. Mr. Harmony, I have loved her ever since you told me she spoke so well of me behind my back.

Enter WILLIAM, *and whispers Mr. Harmony, who follows him off.*

Lord N. I agree with you, Mr. Solus, that this is a most excellent proof of a person's disposition; and in consideration, Sir Robert, that throughout all our many disagreements you have still preserved a respect for my character in my absence, I do at last say to that lady, she has my consent to trust you again.

Sir R. And she will trust me: I see it in her smiles. Oh! unexpected ecstasy.

Re-enter MR. HARMONY.

Har. (*Holding a letter in his hand.*) Amidst the bright prospects of joy which this company are contemplating, I come to announce an event that ought to cloud the splendour of the horizon.—A worthy, but an ill-fated man, whom you are all acquainted with, has just breathed his last.

Lord N. Do you mean the husband of my daughter?

Solus. Do you mean my nephew?

Placid. Is it my friend?

Sir R. And my old acquaintance?

Har. Did Mr. Irwin possess all those titles you have given him, gentlemen? Was he your son? (*To Lord Norland.*) Your nephew?—(*To Solus.*) Your friend?—(*To Mr. Placid.*) And your old acquaintance?—(*To Sir Robert.*) How strange he did not know it!

Placid. He did know it.

Har. Still more strange, that he should die for want, and not apply to any of you.

Solus. What! die for want in London! Starve in the midst of plenty!

Har. No; but he seized that plenty where law, where honour, where every social and religious tie forbade the trespass; and, in punishment of the guilt, has become his own executioner.

Lord N. Then my daughter is wretched, and her boy involved in his father's infamy!

Solus. The fear of his ghost haunting me, will disturb the joys of my married life.

Placid. Mrs. Placid, Mrs. Placid, my complying with your injunctions, in respect to Mr. Irwin, will make me miserable for ever.

Miss W. I wish he had applied to me.

Sir R. And, as I refused him his request, I would give half my estate that he had not applied to me.

Har. And a man who always spoke so well of you all behind your backs! I dare say that, in his dying moments, there was not one of you whom he did not praise for some virtue.

Solus. No, no; when he was dying, he would be more careful of what he said.

Lord N. Sir Robert, good day. Settle your marriage as you and your lady shall approve; you have my good wishes. But my spirits have received too great a shock, to be capable of any other impression at present.

Miss W. (*Holding him.*) Nay, stay, my lord.

Solus. And, Mrs. Solus, let me hand you into your carriage, to your company; but excuse my going home with you. My spirits have received too great a shock, to be capable of any other impression at present.

Har. (*Stopping Solus.*) Now, so loath am I to see any of you, only for a moment, in grief, while I have the power to relieve you, that I cannot help—yes, my philanthropy will get the better of my justice. (*Goes to the door, and leads in* Lady Eleanor, Irwin, *and* Edward.)

Lord N. (*Runs to Irwin, and embraces him.*) My son! I take a share in all your offences. The worst of accomplices, while I impelled you to them.

Irwin. (*On his knees.*) I come to offer my returning reason; to offer my vows, that, while that reason continues, so long will I be penitent for the phrensy which put your life in danger.

Lady E. (*Moving timidly to her father, leading Edward by the hand.*) I come to offer you this child, this affectionate child; who, in the midst of our caresses droops his head, and pines for your forgiveness.

Lord N. Ah! there is a corner of my heart left to receive him. (*Embraces him.*)

Edw. Then, pray, my lord, suffer the corner to be large enough to hold my mother too.

Lord N. My heart is softened and receives you all. (*Embraces Lady Eleanor, who falls on her knees; he then turns to Harmony.*) Mr. Harmony, I thank you, I most sincerely thank you, for this, the most joyful moment of my life. I not only experience release from misery, but a return to happiness.

Har. (*Goes hastily to Solus, and leads him to Irwin; then turns to Mr. and Mrs. Placid.*) And now that I see you all reconciled, I can say—there are not two enemies, in the whole circle of my acquaintance, that I have not, within these three days, made friends.

Sir R. Very true, Harmony: for we should never have known half how well we all love one another, if you had not told us.

Har. And yet, my good friends, notwithstanding the merit you may attribute to me, I have one most tremendous fault; and it weighs so heavy on my conscience, I would confess what it is, but that you might hereafter call my veracity in question.

Sir R. My dear Harmony, without a fault, you would not be a proper companion for any of us.

Lord N. And whilst a man like you may have (among so many virtues) some faults, let us hope there may be found in each of us (among all our faults) some virtues.

Har. Yes, my lord:—and, notwithstanding our numerous faults, it is my sincere wish, that the world may speak well of us all—behind our backs.

Exeunt.

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS;

ALTERED FROM BEN JONSON, BY DAVID GARRICK.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

JUSTICE CLEMENT	MASTER MATTHEW	DOWNRIGHT	FORMAL
CAPTAIN BOBADIL	KNO'WELL	WELLBRED	DAME KITELY
KITELY	YOUNG KNO'WELL	CASH	BRIDGET
MASTER STEPHEN	BRAINWORM	COB	TIB

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Court-yard before Kno'well's house.*

Enter KNO'WELL *and* BRAINWORM.

Kno. A goodly day toward, and a fresh morning. Brainworm,
Call up young master. Bid him rise, sir.
Tell him I have some business to employ him.

Brain. I will, sir, presently.

Kno. But hear you, sirrah,
If he be at his book, disturb him not.

Brain. Well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kno. How happy, yet, should I esteem myself,
Could I, by any practice, wean the boy
From one vain course of study he affects!
He is a scholar, if a man may trust
The liberal voice of fame in her report,
Of good account in both our universities;
Either of which have favour'd him with graces;
But their indulgence must not spring in me
A fond opinion, that he cannot err.

Enter MASTER STEPHEN.

Cousin Stephen,
What news with you, that you are here so early?

Step. Nothing; but e'en come to see how you do, uncle.

Kno. That's kindly done; you are welcome, coz.

Step. Ay, I know that, sir, I would not ha' come else. How doth my cousin Edward, uncle?

Kno. Oh! well, coz; go in and see: I doubt he be scarcely stirring yet.

Step. Uncle, afore I go in, can you tell me an' he have e'er a book of the sciences of hawking and hunting? I would fain borrow it.

Kno. Why, I hope you will not a-hawking now, will you?

Step. No wosse, but I'll practise against the next year, uncle. I have bought me a hawk, and a hood, and bells, and all; I lack nothing but a book to keep it by.

Kno. Oh! most ridiculous!

Step. Nay, look you now, you are angry, uncle. Why, you know, an' a man have not skill in the hawking and hunting languages, now-a-days, I'll not give a rush for him. They are more studied than the Greek or the Latin. What, do you talk on it? Because I dwell at Hogsden, I shall keep company with none but citizens! A fine jest, i'faith! 'Slid! a gentleman mun shew himself like a gentleman. Uncle, I pray you, be not angry. I know what I have to do, I trow; I am no novice.

Kno. You are a prodigal, absurd coxcomb! go to!
Nay, never look at me, it's I that speak.
Take't as you will, sir, I'll not flatter you.
Ha' you not yet found means enow, to waste
That which your friends have left you, but you must
Go cast away your money on a kite,
And know not how to keep it, when you've done?
So, now you're told on it, you look another way.

Step. What would you ha' me do?

Kno. What would I have you do? I'll tell you, kinsman;
Learn to be wise, and practise how to thrive;

That would I have thee do; and not to spend
Your coin on every bauble that you fancy,
Or every foolish brain that humours you.
Who comes here?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Save you, gentlemen!

Step. Nay, we do not stand much on our gentility, friend; yet, you are welcome; and I assure you, mine uncle here is a man of a thousand a-ycar, Middlesex land: he has but one son in all the world; I am his next heir at the common law, Master Stephen, as simple as I stand here; if my cousin die, as there's hope he will. I have a pretty living o'my own too, beside; hard by here.

Serv. In good time, sir.

Step. In good time, sir! Why? And in very good time, sir. You do not flout, friend, do you?

Serv. Not I, sir.

Step. Not you, sir! You were not best, sir; an' you should, here be them can perceive it, and that quickly, too. Go to! And they can give it again soundly, too, an' need be.

Serv. Why, sir, let this satisfy you: good faith, I had no such intent.

Step. Sir, an' I thought you had, I would talk with you, and that presently.

Serv. Good Master Stephen, so you may, sir, at your pleasure.

Step. And so I would, sir, good my saucy companion, an' you were out o'my uncle's ground, I can tell you; though I do not stand upon my gentility neither in't.

Kno. Cousin, cousin! will this ne'er be left?

Step. Whoreson, base fellow! A mechanical serving-man! By this cudgel, and 'twere not for shame, I would—

Kno. What would you do, you peremptory gull? If you cannot be quiet, get you hence.
You see the honest man demeans himself
Modestly towards you, giving no reply
To your unseason'd, quarrelling, rude fashion:
And still you huff it, with a kind of carriage
As void of wit as of humanity.
Go, get you in; 'fore heaven! I am asham'd
Thou hast a kinsman's interest in me. [*Exit Step.*

Serv. I pray you, sir, is this Master Kno'well's house?

Kno. Yes, marry, is't, sir.

Serv. I should inquire for a gentleman here, one Master Edward Kno'well. Do you know any such, sir, I pray you?

Kno. I should forget myself else, sir.

Serv. Are you the gentleman? 'Cry you mercy, sir, I was required by a gentleman i'the city, as I rode out at this end of the town, to deliver you this letter, sir.

Kno. To me, sir? (*Reads.*) "*To his most selected friend, Master Edward Kno'well.*" What might the gentleman's name be, sir, that sent it?

Serv. One Master Wellbred, sir.

Kno. Master Wellbred! A young gentleman, is he not?

Serv. The same, sir; Master Kitely married his sister: the rich merchant i'the Old-jewry.

Kno. You say very true. Brainworm!

Re-enter Brainworm.

Brain. Sir?

Kno. Make this honest friend drink here. Pray you, go in. [*Exeunt Brain. and Serv.*
This letter is directed to my son:
Yet I am Edward Kno'well too, and may,
With the safe conscience of good manners, use
The fellow's error to my satisfaction.
Well, I will break it ope; old men are curious.
What's this? (*Reads.*)
"*Why, Ned, I beseech thee, hast thou forsworn all thy friends in the Old-jewry? or dost thou think us all Jews that inhabit there? Leave thy vigilant father alone, to number over his green apricots, evening and morning, o'the north-west wall: an' I had been his son, I had saved him the labour long since; if taking in all the young wenches that pass by, at the back door, and coddling every kernel of the fruit for 'em would ha' served. But, pr'ythee, come over to me quickly this morning: I have such a present for thee. One is a a rhymer, sir, o'your own batch, your own leaven; but doth think himself poet-major o'the town; willing to be shewn, and worthy to be seen. The other —I will not venture his description with you till you come, because I would ha' you make hither with an appetite. If the worst of 'em be not worth your journey, draw your bill of charges as unconscionable as any Guildhall verdict will give it you, and you shall be allowed your viaticum. From the Windmill.*"
From the Burdello, it might come as well!
The Spital! Is this the man,
My son hath sung so, for the happiest wit,
The choicest brain, the times hath sent us forth?
I know not what he may be in the arts,
Nor what in schools; but, surely, for his manners,
I judge him a profane and dissolute wretch.
Brainworm!

Re-enter Brainworm.

Brain. Sir?

Kno. Is the fellow gone that brought this letter?

Brain. Yes, sir, a pretty while since.

Kno. And where's your young master?

Brain. In his chamber, sir.

Kno. He spake not with the fellow, did he?

Brain. No, sir, he saw him not.

Kno. Take you this letter, seal it, and deliver it my son; [life.
But with no notice that I have open'd it, on your

Brain. Oh, lord! sir, that were a jest, indeed!

Kno. I am resolv'd I will not stop his journey;
Nor practise any violent means to stay
The unbridled course of youth in him: for that,
Restrain'd, grows more impatient.
There is a way of winning more by love,
And urging of the modesty, than fear:
Force works on servile natures, not the free:
He, that's compell'd to goodness, may be good;
But 'tis but for that fit: where others, drawn
By softness and example, get a habit,
Then if they stray, but warn 'em; and the same
They would for virtue do, they'll do for shame.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Young Kno'well's Study.*

Enter Young Kno'well *and* Brainworm.

Young K. Did he open it, say'st thou?

Brain. Yes, o'my word, sir, and read the contents.

Young K. That's bad. What countenance, pray thee, made he i'the reading of it? Was he angry or pleased?

Brain. Nay, sir, I saw him not read it, nor open it, I assure your worship.

Young K. No! how know'st thou, then, that he did either?

Brain. Marry, sir, because he charged me, on my life, to tell nobody that he opened it: which, unless he had done, he would never fear to have it revealed.

Young K. That's true; well, I thank thee, Brainworm. [*Exit.*

Enter Master Stephen.

Step. Oh! Brainworm, didst thou not see a fellow here in a what-sha'-call-him doublet? He brought mine uncle a letter, e'en now.

Brain. Yes, Master Stephen, what of him?

Step. Oh! I ha' such a mind to beat him—where is he? canst thou tell?

Brain. Faith! he is not of that mind: he is gone, Master Stephen.

Step. Gone! Which way? When went he? How long since? [street-door.

Brain. He is rid hence. He took horse at the

Step. And I staid i'the fields! Whoreson, Scanderbeg rogue! Oh! that I had but a horse to fetch him back again!

Brain. Why, you may ha' my master's gelding to save your longing, sir.

Step. But I have no boots, that's the spite on't.

Brain. Why, a fine whisp of hay, rolled hard, Master Stephen.

Step. No, faith! it's no boot to follow him now; let him e'en go and hang. Pr'ythee, help to truss me a little. He does so vex me—

Brain. You'll be worse vexed when you are trussed, Master Stephen; best keep unbraced, and walk yourself till you be cold, your choler may founder you else.

Step. By my faith, and so I will, now thou tell'st me on't. How dost thou like my leg, Brainworm?

Brain. A very good leg, Master Stephen; but the woollen stocking does not commend it so well.

Step. Foh! the stockings be good enough, now summer is coming on, for the dust: I'll have a pair of silk against the winter, that I go to dwell i'the town. I think my leg would shew in a silk hose.

Brain. Believe me, Master Stephen, rarely well.

Step. In sadness, I think it would; I have a reasonable good leg.

Brain. You have an excellent good leg, Master Stephen; but I cannot stay to praise it longer now; I am very sorry for't. [*Exit.*

Step. Another time will serve, Brainworm. Gramercy, for this.

Re-enter YOUNG KNO'WELL.

Young K. Ha, ha, ha!

Step. 'Slid! I hope he laughs not at me; an' he do—(*Aside.*)

Young K. Here was a letter, indeed, to be intercepted by a man's father! He cannot but think most virtuously both of me and the sender, sure, that make the careful coster-monger of him in our familiar epistles. I wish I knew the end of it, which now is doubtful, and threatens—What, my wise cousin? Nay, then I'll furnish our feast with one gull more toward the mess. He writes to me of a brace, and here's one, that's three; oh! for a fourth! Fortune, if ever thou'lt use thine eyes, I entreat thee—(*Aside.*)

Step. Oh! now I see who he laughs at. He laughs at somebody in that letter. By this good light, an' he had laughed at me—(*Aside.*)

Young K. How now, cousin Stephen, melancholy?

Step. Yes, a little. I thought you had laughed at me, cousin.

Young K. Why, what an' I had, coz, what would you ha' done?

Step. By this light, I would ha' told mine uncle.

Young K. Nay, if you would ha' told your uncle, I did laugh at you, coz.

Step. Did you, indeed?

Young K. Yes, indeed.

Step. Why, then—

Young K. What then?

Step. I am satisfied; it is sufficient.

Young K. Why, be so, gentle coz. And I pray you, let me entreat a courtesy of you. I am sent for this morning, by a friend i'the Old-jewry, to come to him; it's but crossing over the fields to Moorgate: will you bear me company? I protest it is not to draw you into bond, or any plot against the state, coz.

Step. Sir, that's all one, an' 'twere; you shall command me twice so far as Moorgate to do you good in such a matter. Do you think I would leave you? I protest—

Young K. No, no, you shall not protest, coz.

Step. By my fackins! but I will, by your leave; I'll protest more to my friend than I'll speak of at this time.

Young K. You speak very well, coz.

Step. Nay, not so, neither; you shall pardon me: but I speak to serve my turn.

Young K. Your turn, coz! Do you know what you say? A gentleman of your sort, parts, carriage, and estimation, to talk o'your turn i'this company, and to me alone, like a water-bearer at a conduit! Come, come, wrong not the quality of your desert with looking downward, coz; but hold up your head so; and let the idea of what you are, be pourtrayed i'your face, that men may read i'your physiognomy,—"here, within this place, is to be seen, the true and accomplished monster," or "miracle of nature," which is all one. What think you of this, coz?

Step. Why, I do think of it; and I will be more proud, and melancholy, and gentleman-like, than I have been, I'll assure you.

Young K. Why, that's resolute, Master Stephen! Now, if I can but hold him up to his height, as it is happily begun, it will do well for a suburb humour: we may hap have a match with the city, and play him for forty pounds. (*Aside.*) Come, coz.

Step. I'll follow you.

Young K. Follow me! you must go before.

Step. Nay, an' I must, I will. Pray you, shew me, good cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Street before Cob's house.*

Enter MASTER MATTHEW.

Mat. I think this be the house. What, hoa!

Enter COB, *from the house.*

Cob. Who's there? Oh! Master Matthew, gi' your worship good morrow.

Mat. What, Cob! How dost thou, good Cob? Dost thou inhabit here, Cob?

Cob. Ay, sir; I and my lineage ha' kept a poor house here in our days.

Mat. Cob, canst thou shew me of a gentleman, one Captain Bobadil, where his lodging is?

Cob. Oh! my guest, sir, you mean.

Mat. Thy guest! alas!—Ha, ha!

Cob. Why do you laugh, sir? do you not mean Captain Bobadil?

Mat. Cob, pray thee, advise thyself well; do not wrong the gentleman and thyself too. I dare be sworn, he scorns thy house. He! he lodge in such a base, obscure place as thy house! Tut! I know his disposition so well, he would not lie in thy bed, if thou'dst gi' it him.

Cob. I will not give it him, though, sir. Mass! I thought somewhat was in't, we could not get him to bed all night. Well, sir, though he lie not o' my bed, he lies o'my bench. An't please you to go up, sir, you shall find him with two cushions under his head, and his cloak wrapped about him, as though he had neither won nor lost; and yet, I warrant, he ne'er cast better in his life, than he has done to-night.

Mat. Why, was he drunk?

Cob. Drunk, sir! you hear not me say so. Perhaps he swallowed a tavern-token, or some such device, sir; I have nothing to do withal. I deal with water, and not with wine. Gi' me my bucket there, hoa! God b'wi'you, sir, it's six o'clock; I should ha' carried two turns by this. What, hoa! my stopple, come!

Mat. Lie in a water-bearer's house! A gentleman of his havings! well, I'll tell him my mind. (*Aside.*)

Enter TIB.

Cob. What, Tib, shew this gentleman up to the Captain. [*Tib shews Master Matthew into the house.*] You should ha' some now, would take this Mr.

Matthew to be a gentleman at the least. His father is an honest man, a worshipful fishmonger, and so forth; and now does he creep and wriggle into acquaintance with all the brave gallants about the town, such as my guest is. Oh! my guest is a fine man! he does swear the legiblest of any man christened: by Saint George—the foot of Pharaoh—the body of me—as I am a gentleman and a soldier—such dainty oaths! And, withal, he does take this same filthy roguish tobacco, the finest and cleanliest! it would do a man good to see the fume come forth out at's tonnels! Well, he owes me forty shillings, my wife lent him out of her purse by sixpence a time, besides his lodging: I would I had it. I shall ha' it, he says, the next action. Helter-skelter, hang sorrow, care'll kill a cat, uptails all, and a louse for the hangman! [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*A Room in Cob's house.*

Captain Bobadil *discovered upon a bench. Enter* Tib.

Capt. B. Hostess, hostess!

Tib. What say you, sir?

Capt. B. A cup o'thy small beer, sweet hostess.

Tib. Sir, there's a gentleman below would speak with you.

Capt. B. A gentleman! Odso! I am not within.

Tib. My husband told him you were, sir.

Capt. B. What a plague—what meant he?

Mat. (*Within.*) Captain Bobadil!

Capt. B. Who's there? Take away the basin, good hostess. Come up, sir.

Tib. He would desire you to come up, sir. You come into a cleanly house here. [*Exit.*

Enter Master Matthew.

Mat. Save you, sir; save you, Captain.

Capt. B. Gentle Master Matthew, is it you, sir? Please you, sit down.

Mat. Thank you, good Captain; you may see I am somewhat audacious.

Capt. B. Not so, sir. I was requested to supper last night, by a sort of gallants, where you were wished for, and drunk to, I assure you.

Mat. Vouchsafe me, by who, good Captain.

Capt. B. Marry, by young Wellbred and others. Why, hostess, a stool here for this gentleman.

Mat. No haste, sir; 'tis very well.

Capt. B. Body o'me! it was so late ere we parted last night, I can scarcely open my eyes yet; I was but newly risen as you came. How passes the day abroad, sir? you can tell.

Mat. Faith! some half-hour to seven. Now, trust me, you have an exceedingly fine lodging here; very neat and private.

Capt. B. Ay, sir; sit down. I pray you, Master Matthew, in any case, possess no gentlemen of our acquaintance with notice of my lodging.

Mat. Who, I, sir? No.

Capt. B. Not that I need to care who know it, for the cabin is convenient; but in regard I would not be too popular and generally visited, as some are.

Mat. True, Captain; I conceive you.

Capt. B. For, do you see, sir? by the heart of valour in me, except it be to some peculiar and choice spirits, to whom I am extraordinarily engaged, as yourself, or so, I could not extend thus far.

Mat. Oh, lord! sir, I resolve so. (*Pulls out a paper, and reads.*)

Capt. B. I confess, I love a cleanly and quiet privacy, above all the tumult and roar of fortune. What new piece ha' you there? Read it.

Mat. (*Reads.*)

"*To thee, the purest object of my sense,*
The most refined essence heaven covers,
Send I these lines, wherein I do commence
The happy state of turtle-billing lovers."

Capt. B. 'Tis good; proceed, proceed. What's this?

Mat. This, sir? a toy o'mine own, in my nonage; the infancy of my muses. But, when will you come and see my study? Good faith! I can shew you some very good things I have done of late.—That boot becomes your leg passing well, Captain, methinks. [use.

Capt. B. So, so; it's the fashion gentlemen now

Mat. Troth, Captain, and now you speak o'the fashion, Master Wellbred's elder brother and I are fallen out exceedingly: this other day I happened to enter into some discourse of a hanger, which I assure you, both for fashion and workmanship, was most peremptory beautiful and gentleman-like; yet he condemned, and cried it down, for the most pied and ridiculous that ever he saw.

Capt. B. 'Squire Downright, the half-brother, was't not?

Mat. Ay, sir, George Downright.

Capt. B. Hang him, rook! He! Why, he has no more judgment than a malt-horse. By St. George! I wonder you'd lose a thought upon such an animal! The most peremptory, absurd clown of Christendom, this day, he is holden. I protest to you, as I am a gentleman and a soldier, I ne'er changed words with his like. By his discourse, he should eat nothing but hay. He was born for the manger, pannier, or pack-saddle. He has not so much as a good phrase in his belly, but all old iron and rusty proverbs; a good commodity for some smith to make hob-nails of.

Mat. Ay, and he thinks to carry it away with his manhood still; where he comes, he brags he will gi' me the bastinado, as I hear.

Capt. B. How? He the bastinado? How came he by that word, I trow?

Mat. Nay, indeed, he said, cudgel me; I termed it so, for my more grace.

Capt. B. That may be; for I was sure it was none of his word. But when? when said he so?

Mat. Faith! yesterday, they say; a young gallant, a friend of mine, told me so.

Capt. B. By the foot of Pharaoh! an' 'twere my case now, I should send him a challenge presently. The bastinado! a most proper and sufficient dependence, warranted by the great Caranza. Come hither, you shall challenge him. I'll shew you a trick or two, you shall kill him with at pleasure; the first stoccata, if you will, by this air.

Mat. Indeed, you have absolute knowledge i'the mystery, I have heard, sir.

Capt. B. Of whom? of whom ha' you heard it, I beseech you?

Mat. Troth, I have heard it spoken of by divers, that you have very rare and un-in-one-breath-utterable skill, sir.

Capt. B. By heaven! no, not I; no skill i'the earth; some small rudiments i'the science, as to know my time, distance, or so. I have professed it more for noblemen and gentlemen's use than mine own practice, I assure you. I'll give you a lesson. Look you, sir! exalt not your point above this state, at any hand; so, sir, come on! Oh! twine your body more about, that you may fall to a more sweet, comely, gentleman-like guard. So, indifferent. Hollow your body more, sir, thus. Now, stand fast o'your left leg; note your distance; keep your due proportion of time. Oh! you disorder your point most irregularly! Come, put on your cloak, and we'll go to some private place, where you are acquainted, some tavern or so—and have a bit—What money ha' you about you, Mr. Matthew?

Mat. Faith! I ha' not past a two shillings, or so.

Capt. B. 'Tis somewhat with the least; but come, we will have a bunch of radishes, and salt, to taste our wine; and a pipe of tobacco to close

the orifice of the stomach; and then we'll call upon young Wellbred. Perhaps we shall meet the Coridon, his brother, there, and put him to the question. Come along, Mr. Matthew. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Warehouse belonging to Kitely.*

Enter KITELY, CASH, *and* DOWNRIGHT.

Kite. Thomas, come hither.
There lies a note within, upon my desk;
Here, take the key—It is no matter, neither.
Where is the boy?
Cash. Within, sir, i'the warehouse.
Kite. Let him tell over straight that Spanish gold,
And weigh it with the pieces of eight. Do you
See the delivery of those silver stuffs
To Mr. Lucar. Tell him, if he will,
He shall ha' the grograns at the rate I told him;
And I will meet him on the Exchange anon.
Cash. Good, sir. [*Exit.*
Kite. Do you see that fellow, brother Downright?
Down. I, what of him?
Kite. He is a jewel, brother.
I took him of a child, up, at my door,
And christened him: gave him my own name, Thomas;
Since bred him at the hospital; where proving
A toward imp, I call'd him home, and taught him
So much, as I have made him my cashier;
And find him, in his faith, so full of faith,
That I durst trust my life into his hands.
Down. So would not I, in any bastard's brother,
As it is like he is, although I knew
Myself his father. But you said you'd somewhat
To tell me, gentle brother. What is't? what is't?
Kite. Faith! I am very loath to utter it,
As fearing it may hurt your patience;
But that I know your judgment is of strength
Against the nearness of affection—
Down. What need this circumstance? Pray you, be direct. Come to the matter, the matter!
Kite. Then, without further ceremony, thus:
My brother Wellbred, sir, I know not how,
Of late is much declin'd in what he was,
And greatly alter'd in his disposition.
When he came first to lodge here in my house,
Ne'er trust me, if I were not proud of him:
But now his course is so irregular,
So loose, affected, and depriv'd of grace;
He makes my house here common as a mart,
A theatre, a public receptacle
For giddy humour, and diseased riot;
And here, as in a tavern or a stew,
He and his wild associates spend their hours
In repetition of lascivious jests;
Swear, leap, drink, dance, and revel night by night;
Control my servants, and indeed what not.
Down. 'Sdains! I know not what I should say to him i'the whole world! He values me at a cracked three-farthings, for aught I see. It will never out o'the flesh that's bred i'the bone! I have told him enough, one would think, if that would serve. Well! he knows what to trust to, for George. Let him spend and spend, and domineer, till his heart-ache; an' he thinks to be relieved by me, when he is got into one o'your city pounds, the counters, he has the wrong sow by the ear, i'faith! and claps his dish at a wrong man's door. I'll lay my hand on my halfpenny, ere I part with't to fetch him out, I'll assure him.
Kite. Nay, good brother, let it not trouble you thus.
Down. 'Sdeath! he made me—I could eat my very spur-leathers for anger! But, why are you so tame? Why do you not speak to him, and tell him how he disquiets your house?
Kite. Oh! there are divers reasons to dissuade, brother;
But, would yourself vouchsafe to travail in it,
(Though but with plain and easy circumstance,)
It would both come much better to his sense,
And savour less of stomach or of passion.
You are his elder brother, and that title
Both gives and warrants you authority:
Whereas, if I should intimate the least,
It would but add contempt to his neglect:
Nay, more than this, brother, if I should speak,
He would be ready, from his heat of humour,
And overflowing of the vapour in him,
To blow the ears of his familiars
With the false breath of telling what disgraces
And low disparagements I had put on him:
Whilst they, sir, to relieve him in the fable,
Make their loose comments upon ev'ry word,
Gesture, or look, I use; mock me all o'er;
And, out of their impetuous, rioting phant'sies,
Beget some slander that shall dwell with me.
And what would that be, think you? Marry, this:
They would give out, because my wife is fair,
Myself but newly married, and my sister
Here sojourning a virgin in my house,
That I were jealous; nay, as sure as death,
That they would say. And how that I had quarrell'd
My brother purposely, thereby to find
An apt pretext to banish them my house.
Down. Mass! perhaps so: they're like enough to do it.
Kite. Brother, they would believe it: so should I
Try experiments upon myself:
Lend scorn and envy opportunity
To stab my reputation and good name.

Enter MASTER MATTHEW *and* CAPTAIN BOBADIL.

Mat. I will speak to him—
Capt. B. Speak to him! Away! by the foot of Pharaoh! you shall not; you shall not do him that grace.
Kite. What's the matter, sirs?
Capt. B. The time of day to you, gentleman o'the house. Is Mr. Wellbred stirring?
Down. How then? what should he do?
Capt. B. Gentleman of the house, it is you: is he within, sir?
Kite. He came not to his lodging to-night, sir, I assure you.
Down. Why, do you hear, you?
Capt. B. The gentlemau-citizen hath satisfied me, I'll talk to no scavenger. [*Exit with Matthew.*
Down. How, scavenger? Stay, sir, stay!
Kite. Nay, brother Downright.
Down. 'Heart! stand you away, an' you love me.
Kite. You shall not follow him now, I pray you, brother; good faith! you shall not. I will overrule you.
Down. Ha! scavenger! Well, go to, I say little; but, by this good day, (God forgive me I should swear) if I put it up so, say I am the rankest coward ever lived. 'Sdains! an' I swallow this, I'll ne'er draw my sword in the sight of Fleet-street again, while I live; I'll sit in a barn with Madge Howlet, and catch mice first. Scavenger! [on't.
Kite. Oh! do not fret yourself thus, never think
Down. These are my brother's comforts, these! these are his comrades, his walking mates! he's a gallant, a cavaliero, too; right, hangman, cut! Let me not live, an' I could not find in my heart to swinge the whole gang of 'em, one after another, and begin with him first. I am grieved it should be said he is my brother, and take these courses. Well, as he brews, so he shall drink, for George again. Yet he shall hear on't, and that tightly, too, an' I live, i'faith!
Kite. But, brother, let your reprehension, then,

Run in an easy current; not o'er-high
Carried with rashness, or devouring choler;
But rather use the soft persuading way,
More winning than enforcing the consent.

Down. Ay, ay, let me alone for that, I warrant you. (*Bell rings.*) [fast.

Kite. How now? Oh! the bell rings to break-
Brother, I pray you, go in, and bear my wife
Company till I come: I'll but give order
For some despatch of business to my servant.

Down. I will. Scavenger, scavenger! [*Exit.*

Kite. Well, though my troubled spirit's somewhat eas'd,
It's not repos'd in that security
As I could wish; but I must be content,
Howe'er I set a face on't to the world.
Would I had lost this finger, at a venture,
So Wellbred had ne'er lodg'd within my house.
Why 't cannot be, where there is such resort
Of wanton gallants and young revellers,
That any woman should be honest long.
Well, to be plain, if I but thought the time
Had answer'd their affections, all the world
Should not persuade me but I were a cuckold!
Marry, I hope they ha' not got that start;
For opportunity hath balk'd 'em yet,
And shall do still, while I have eyes and ears
To attend the impositions of my heart.

Enter Dame Kitely.

Dame K. Sister Bridget, pray you, fetch down the rose-water above in the closet. Sweetheart, will you come in to breakfast?

Kite. An' she overheard me now! (*Aside.*)

Dame K. I pray thee, good Muss, we stay for you.

Kite. By heav'n! I would not for a thousand angels. (*Aside.*)

Dame K. What ails you, sweetheart? are you not well? Speak, good Muss.

Kite. Troth, my head aches extremely, on a sudden.

Dame K. Oh, the lord!

Kite. How now? what?

Dame K. Alas! how it burns! Muss, keep you warm; good truth, it is this new disease; there's a number are troubled withal. For love's sake, sweetheart, come in out of the air.

Kite. How simple and how subtle are her answers!
A new disease, and many troubled with it!
Why, true! she heard me, all the world to nothing. (*Aside.*)

Dame K. I pray thee, good sweetheart, come in; the air will do you harm, in troth.

Kite. I'll come to you presently; 'twill away, I hope.

Dame K. Pray heav'n it do! [*Exit.*

Kite. A new disease! I know not, new or old,
But it may well be call'd poor mortals' plague;
For, like a pestilence, it doth infect
The houses of the brain. Well, I will once more strive,
In spite of this black cloud, myself to be,
And shake the fever off, that thus shakes me. [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*Moorfields.*

Enter Brainworm, *disguised as a soldier.*

Brain. 'Slid! I cannot choose but laugh to see myself translated thus. Now must I create an intolerable sort of lies, or my present profession loses the grace; and yet the lie to a man of my coat, is as ominous a fruit as the fico. Oh! sir, it holds for good polity ever to have that outwardly in vilest estimation that inwardly is most dear to us. So much for my borrowed shape. Well, the truth is, my old master intends to follow my young, dry foot, over Moorfields to London this morning: now I, knowing of this hunting-match, or rather conspiracy, and to insinuate with my young master, (for so must we that are blue waiters, and men of hope and service do,) have got me afore in this disguise, determining here to lie in ambuscade, and intercept him in the midway. If I can but get his cloak, his purse, his hat, nay, anything to cut him off, that is, to stay his journey—"*Veni, vidi, vici,*" I may say with Captain Cæsar; I am made for ever, i'faith! Well, now must I practise to get the true garb of one of those lance-knights, my arm here, and my—young master, and his cousin, Mr. Stephen, as I am a true counterfeit man of war, and no soldier! (*Retires.*)

Enter Young Kno'well *and* Master Stephen.

Young K. So, sir, and how, then, coz?

Step. 'Sfoot! I have lost my purse, I think.

Young K. How? lost your purse? Where? when had you it?

Step. I cannot tell: stay.

Brain. 'Slid! I am afraid they will know me: would I could get by them! (*Aside.*)

Young K. What! ha' you it?

Step. No, I think I was bewitched, I—

Young K. Nay, do not weep the loss; hang it! let it go.

Step. Oh! it's here. No, an' it had been lost, I had not cared, but for a jet ring mistress Mary sent me.

Young K. A jet ring! Oh! the poesy, the poesy!

Step. Fine, i'faith! "Though fancy sleep, my love is deep;" meaning that though I did not fancy her, yet she loved me dearly.

Young K. Most excellent!

Step. And then I sent her another, and my poesy was, "The deeper the sweeter, I'll be judged by St. Peter." [that.

Young K. How by St. Peter? I do not conceive

Step. Marry, St. Peter, to make up the metre.

Young K. Well, there the saint was your good patron; he helped you at your need: thank him, thank him.

Brain. I cannot take leave of 'em so; I will venture, come what will. (*Aside. Comes forward.*) Gentlemen, please you change a few crowns for a very excellent good blade, here. I am a poor gentleman, a soldier, that in the better state of my fortunes, scorned so mean a refuge, but now it is the humour of necessity to have it so. You seem to be, gentlemen, well affected to martial men, else I should rather die with silence than live with shame; however, vouchsafe to remember, it is my want speaks, not myself. This condition agrees not with my spirit.

Young K. Where hast thou served?

Brain. May it please you, sir, in all the late wars of Bohemia, Hungaria, Dalmatia, Poland; where not, sir? I have been a poor servitor by sea and land, any time this fourteen years, and followed the fortunes of the best commanders in Christendom. I was twice shot at the taking of Aleppo; once at the relief of Vienna. I have been at Marseilles, Naples, and the Adriatic gulf; a gentleman-slave in the galleys thrice, where I was most dangerously shot in the head, through both thighs, and yet, being thus maimed, I am void of maintenance; nothing left me but my scars, the noted marks of my resolution.

Step. How will you sell this rapier, friend?

Brain. Generous sir, I refer it to your own judgment; you are a gentleman, give me what you please.

Step. True, I am a gentleman, I know that, friend; but what though, I pray you say, what would you ask?

Brain. I assure you the blade may become the side or thigh of the best prince in Europe.

Young K. Ay, with a velvet scabbard.

Step. Nay, and it be mine, it shall have a velvet scabbard, coz, that's flat: I'd not wear it as 'tis, an' you would give me an angel.

Brain. At your worship's pleasure, sir; nay, 'tis a most pure Toledo.

Step. I had rather it were a Spaniard. But tell me what shall I give you for it? An' it had a silver hilt—

Young K. Come, come, you shall not buy it. Hold! there's a shilling, fellow, take thy rapier.

Step. Why, but I will buy it now, because you say so; and there's another shilling, fellow; I scorn to be outbidden. What, shall I walk with a cudgel, like a higginbottom, and may have a rapier for money?

Young K. You may buy one in the city.

Step. Tut! I'll buy this i'the field, so I will; I have a mind to't, because 'tis a field rapier. Tell me your lowest price.

Young K. You shall not buy it, I say.

Step. By this money but I will, though I give more than 'tis worth.

Young K. Come away; you are a fool. [*Exit.*

Step. Friend, I am a fool, that's granted; but I'll have it for that word's sake. Follow me for your money. He says I am a fool. [*Exit.*

Brain. The gentleman seems to know you, sir. I follow. [*Exit.*

Enter KNO'WELL.

Kno. I cannot lose the thought yet of this letter
Sent to my son; nor leave to admire the change
Of manners and the breeding of our youth,
Within the kingdom, since myself was one.
When I was young, he liv'd not in the stews,
Durst have conceiv'd a scorn, and utter'd it,
On a grey head; and a man had then
A certain rev'rence paid unto his years
That had none due unto his life.
But now we are fall'n; youth from their fear,
And age from that which bred it, good example.

Re-enter BRAINWORM.

Brain. My master! Nay, faith! have at you; I am fleshed now, I have sped so well; though I must attack you in a different way. (*Aside.*) Worshipful sir, I beseech you respect the state of a poor soldier! I am ashamed of this base course of life, (God's my comfort,) but extremity provokes me to't—what remedy?

Kno. I have not for you now.

Brain. By the faith I bear unto truth, gentleman, it is no ordinary custom in me, but only to preserve manhood. I protest to you, a man I have been, a man I may be, by your sweet bounty.

Kno. Pr'ythee, good friend, be satisfied.

Brain. Good sir, by that hand, you may do the part of a kind gentleman, in lending a poor soldier the price of two cans of beer, a matter of small value; the king of heaven shall pay you, and I shall rest thankful: sweet worship—.

Kno. Nay, an' you be so importunate—

Brain. Oh! tender sir, need will have its course: I was not made to this vile use. Well, the edge of the enemy could not have abated me so much. (*Weeps.*) It's hard, when a man has served in his prince's cause, and be thus—Honourable worship, let me derive a small piece of silver from you; it shall not be given in the course of time. By this good ground, I was fain to pawn my rapier last night for a poor supper; I had sucked the hilts long before, I am a pagan else, sweet honour.

Kno. Believe me, I am taken with some wonder,
To think a fellow of thy outward presence,
Should, in the frame and fashion of his mind,
Be so degenerate and sordid base!
Art thou a man, and sham'st thou not to beg?
To practise such a servile kind of life?
Why, were thy education ne'er so mean,
Having thy limbs, a thousand fairer courses
Offer themselves to thy election;
Either the wars might still supply thy wants,
Or service of some virtuous gentleman,
Or honest labour.

Brain. Faith! sir, I would gladly find some other course, if so—

Kno. Ay, you'd gladly find it, but you will not seek it.

Brain. Alas! sir, where should a man seek? In the wars there's no ascent by desert in these days, but—and for service, would it were as soon purchased as wished for!—The air's my comfort.—I know what I would say.

Kno. What's thy name?

Brain. Please you, Fitz-sword, sir.

Kno. Fitz-sword,
Say that a man should entertain thee now,
Wouldst thou be honest, humble, just, and true?

Brain. Sir, by the place and honour of a soldier—

Kno. Nay, nay, I like not those affected oaths!
Speak plainly, man; what think'st thou of my words?

Brain. Nothing, sir, but wish my fortunes were as happy, as my service should be honest.

Kno. Well, follow me; I'll prove thee, if thy deeds will carry a proportion to thy words. [*Exit.*

Brain. Yes, sir, straight; I'll but garter my hose.—Oh! that my belly were hooped now, for I am ready to burst with laughing! Never was bottle or bagpipe fuller. 'Slid! was there ever seen a fox in years to betray himself thus! Now I shall be possessed of all his counsels; and by that conduct my young master. Well, he is resolved to prove my honesty: faith! and I am resolved to prove his patience. Oh! I shall abuse him intolerably! It's no matter; let the world think me a bad counterfeit, if I cannot give him the slip at an instant. Why, this is better than to have staid his journey. Well, I'll follow him. Oh! how I long to be employed!
With change of voice, these scars, and many an oath,
I'll follow son and sire, and serve 'em both. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Stocks-market.*

Enter MASTER MATTHEW, WELLBRED, *and* CAPTAIN BOBADIL.

Mat. Yes, faith! sir, we were at your lodging to seek you, too.

Well. Oh! I came not there to-night.

Capt. B. Your brother delivered us as much.

Well. Who? My brother Downright?

Capt. B. He. Mr. Wellbred, I know not in what kind you hold me, but let me say to you this: as sure as honour, I esteem it so much out of the sunshine of reputation to throw the least beam of regard upon such a—

Well. Sir, I must hear no ill words of my brother.

Capt. B. I protest to you, as I have a thing to be saved about me, I never saw any gentleman-like part—

Well. Good Captain, (*faces about*) to some other discourse.

Capt. B. With your leave, sir, an' there were no more men living upon the face of the earth, I should not fancy him, by St. George.

Mat. Troth! nor I; he is of a rustical cut, I know not how; he doth not carry himself like a gentleman of fashion.

Well. Oh! Mr. Matthew, that's a grace peculiar but to few.

Enter Young Kno'well *and* Master Stephen.

Ned Kno'well! by my soul, welcome! How dost thou, sweet spirit, my genius? 'Slid! I shall love Apollo, and the mad Thespian girls, the better while I live for this, my dear fury. Now I see there's some love love in thee. Sirrah, these be the two I writ to you of. Nay, what a drowsy humour is this now? Why dost thou not speak?

Young K. Oh! you are a fine gallant; you sent me a rare letter.

Well. Why, was't not rare?

Young K. Yes, I'll be sworn, I was never guilty of reading the like. But I marvel what camel it was that had the carriage of it; for doubtless he was no ordinary beast that brought it.

Well. Why?

Young K. Why, sayest thou? Why, dost thou think that any reasonable creature, especially in the morning, the sober time of the day, too, could have mistaken my father for me?

Well. 'Slid! you jest, I hope.

Young K. Indeed, the best use we can turn it to, is to make a jest on't now; but I'll assure you my father had the full view o'your flourishing style, before I saw it.

Well. What a dull slave was this! But, sirrah, what said he to it, i'faith?

Young K. Nay, I know not what he said; but I have a shrewd guess what he thought.

Well. What, what?

Young K. Marry, that thou art some strange, dissolute, young fellow, and I not a grain or two better for keeping thee company.

Well. Tut! that thought is like the moon in her last quarter, 'twill change shortly. But, sirrah, I pray thee, be acquainted with my two hang-hys here; thou wilt take exceeding pleasure in 'em, if thou hearest 'em once go: my wind-instruments. I'll wind 'em up. But what strange piece of silence is this? The sign of the dumb man?

Young K. Oh! sir, a kinsman of mine, one that may make your music the fuller, an' he please; he has his humour, sir.

Well. Oh! what is't, what is't?

Young K. Nay, I'll neither do your judgment, nor his folly that wrong, as to prepare your apprehensions. I'll leave him to the mercy o'your search, if you can take him so.

Well. Well, Captain Bobadil, Mr. Matthew, I pray you, know this gentleman here: he is a friend of mine, and one that will deserve your affection. I know not your name, sir, but shall be glad of any occasion to render me more familiar to you. (*To Master Stephen.*)

Step. My name is Mr. Stephen, sir; I am this gentleman's own cousin, sir: his father is mine uncle, sir. I am somewhat melancholy; but you shall command me, sir, in whatsoever is incident to a gentleman.

Capt. B. I must tell you this, I am no general man; but for Mr. Wellbred's sake, (you may embrace it at what height of favour you please,) I do communicate with you, and conceive you to be a gentleman of some parts. I love few words.

Young K. And I fewer, sir. I have scarce enow to thank you.

Mat. But are you, indeed, sir, so given to it? (*To Master Stephen.*)

Step. Ay, truly, sir, I am mightily given to melancholy.

Mat. Oh! 'tis your only fine humour, sir; your true melancholy breeds you perfect fine wit, sir. I am melancholy myself divers times, sir; and then I do no more but take a pen and paper presently, and overflow you half-a-score or a dozen of sonnets at a sitting.

Step. Cousin, it is well; am I melancholy enough? (*Apart to Young Kno'well.*)

Young K. Oh! ay, excellent!

Well. Captain Bobadil, why muse you so?

Young K. He is melancholy, too.

Capt. B. Faith! sir, I was thinking of a most honourable piece of service was performed to-morrow, being St. Mark's day, shall be some ten years now.

Young K. In what place, Captain?

Capt. B. Why, at the beleag'ring of Strigonium, where, in less than two hours, seven hundred resolute gentlemen, as any were in Europe, lost their lives upon the breach. I'll tell you, gentlemen, it was the first, but the best leagure that I ever beheld with these eyes, except the taking of—what do you call it? last year, by the Genoese; but that (of all others) was the most fatal and dangerous exploit that ever I was ranged in, since I first bore arms before the face of the enemy, as I am a gentleman and a soldier.

Step. So I had as lief as an angel, I could swear as well as that gentleman. (*Aside.*)

Young K. Then you were a servitor at both, it seems; at Strigonium, and What-do-you-call-it?

Capt. B. Oh, lord, sir! by St. George! I was the first man that entered the breach: had I not effected it with resolution, I had been slain, if I had had a million of lives.

Young K. 'Twere pity you had not ten; a cat's and your own, i'faith! But was it possible?

Capt. B. I assure you, upon my reputation, 'tis true, and yourself shall confess.

Young K. You must bring me to the rack first.

Capt. B. Observe me judicially, sweet sir: they had planted me three demi-culverins, just in the mouth of the breach: now, sir, as we were to give on, their master-gunner (a man of no mean skill and mark, you must think) confronts me with his linstock, ready to give fire: I, spying his intendment, discharged my petrionel in his bosom, and with these single arms, my poor rapier, ran violently upon the Moors that guarded the ordnance, and put them all pell-mell to the sword.

Well. To the sword! to the rapier, Captain.

Young K. Oh! it was a good figure observed, sir. But did you all this Captain, without hurting your blade?

Capt. B. Without any impeach o'the earth. You shall perceive, sir. It is the most fortunate weapon that ever rid on poor gentleman's thigh. Shall I tell you, sir? You talk of Morglay, Excalibur, Durindina, or so—Tut! I lend no credit to that is fabled of 'em; I know the virtue of mine own, and, therefore, I dare the bolder maintain it.

Step. I marvel whether it be a Toledo or no?

Capt. B. A most perfect Toledo, I assure you, sir.

Step. I have a countryman of his here.

Mat. Pray you, let's see, sir. Yes, faith! it is.

Capt. B. This a Toledo? Pish! (*Bends the blade double.*)

Step. Why do you pish, Captain?

Capt. B. A Fleming, by heaven! I'll buy them for a guilder a-piece, an' I would have a thousand of them.

Young K. How say you, cousin? I told you thus much.

Well. Where bought you it, Mr. Stephen?

Step. Of a scurvy rogue soldier; he swore it was a Toledo.

Capt. B. A poor provant rapier, no better.

Mat. Mass! I think it be, indeed, now I look on't better.

Young K. Nay, the longer you look on't the worse. Put it up, put it up.

Step. Well, I will put it up; but by—I ha' forgot the Captain's oath—I thought to ha' sworn by it—(*aside*)—an' e'er I meet him—

Well. Oh! 'tis past help now, sir; you must ha' patience.

Step. I could eat the very hilts for anger.

Young K. A sign of good digestion; you have an ostrich stomach, cousin.

Step. A stomach! I would I had him here, you should see an' I had a stomach.

Well. It's better as it is. Come, gentlemen, shall we go?

Enter BRAINWORM.

Young K. A miracle, cousin! look here, look here!

Step. Oh, god'slid! by your leave, do you know me, sir?

Brain. Ay, sir, I know you by sight.

Step. You sold me a rapier, did you not?

Brain. Yes, marry, did I, sir.

Step. You said it was a Toledo, eh?

Brain. True, I did so.

Step. But it is none.

Brain. No, sir, I confess it is none.

Step. Do you confess it? Gentlemen, bear witness he has confessed it. By God's will, an' you had not confessed it—

Young K. Oh! cousin, forbear, forbear!

Step. Nay, I have done, cousin.

Well. Why, you have done like a gentleman; he has confessed it; what would you more?

Step. Yet, by his leave, he is a rascal, under his favour, do you see?

Young K. Ay, by his leave he is, and under favour. Pretty piece of civility! Sirrah, how dost thou like him? (*Apart to Wellbred.*)

Well. Oh! it's a most precious fool! make much on him. I can compare him to nothing more happily than a drum; for every one may play upon him. (*Apart.*)

Young K. No, no; a child's whistle were far the fitter. (*Apart.*)

Brain. Sir, shall I entreat a word with you? (*To Young Kno'well.*)

Young K. With me, sir? You have not another Toledo to sell, ha' you?

Brain. You are conceited, sir. Your name is Mr. Kno'well, as I take it?

Young K. You are i'the right. You mean not to proceed in the catechism, do you?

Brain. No, sir, I am none of that coat.

Young K. Of as bare coat, though. Well, say, sir.

Brain. Faith! sir, I am but a servant to the drum extraordinary; and, indeed, this smoky varnish being washed off, and three or four patches removed, I appear your worship's in reversion, after the decease of your good father—Brainworm.

Young K. Brainworm! 'Slight! what breath of a conjurer hath blown thee hither in this shape?

Brain. The breath o'your letter, sir, this morning: the same that blew you to the Windmill, and your father after you.

Young K. My father!

Brain. Nay, never start; 'tis true: he has followed you over the fields by the foot, as you would do a hare i'the snow.

Young K. Sirrah, Wellbred, what shall we do, sirrah? My father is come over after me.

Well. Thy father! Where is he?

Brain. At Justice Clement's house here, in Coleman-street, where he but stays my return, and then—

Well. Who's this? Brainworm?

Brain. The same, sir.

Well. Why, how, i'the name of wit, comest thou transmuted thus?

Brain. Faith! a device, a device! Nay, for the love of reason, gentlemen, and avoiding the danger, stand not here: withdraw, and I'll tell you all.

Young K. Come, cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Warehouse.*

Enter KITELY *and* CASH.

Kite. What says he, Thomas? Did you speak with him?

Cash. He will expect you, sir, within this half-hour.

Kite. Has he the money ready, can you tell?

Cash. Yes, sir, the money was brought in last night.

Kite. Oh! that's well: fetch me my cloak, my cloak.
Stay, let me see: an hour to go and come;
Ay, that will be the least; and then 'twill be
An hour before I can despatch him,
Or very near: well, I will say two hours.
Two hours! Ha! things, never dreamt of yet,
May be contriv'd, ay, and effected too,
In two hours' absence. Well, I will not go.
Two hours! no, fleering opportunity,
I will not give your subtlety that scope.
Who will not judge him worthy to be robb'd,
That sets his doors wide open to a thief,
And shews the felon where his treasure lies?
Again, what earthly spirit but will attempt
To taste the fruit of beauty's golden tree,
When leaden sleep seals up the dragon's eyes?
I will not go. Business, go by for once.
No, beauty, no; you are too, too precious
To be left so, without a guard, or open.
You then must be kept up close, and well watch'd!
For, give you opportunity, no quicksand
Devours or swallows swifter! He that lends
His wife, if she be fair, or time, or place,
Compels her to be false. I will not go.
The dangers are too many. I am resolv'd for that.
Carry in my cloak again. Yet stay—yet do, too.
I will defer going on all occasions.

Cash. Sir, Snare, your scrivener, will be there with the bonds.

Kite. That's true. Fool on me! I had clean forgotten it. I must go. What's o'clock?

Cash. Exchange time, sir.

Kite. 'Heart! then will Wellbred presently be here, too,
With one or other of his loose consorts.
I am a knave if I know what to say,
What course to take, or which way to resolve.
My brain, methinks, is like an hour-glass,
Wherein my imagination runs, like sands
Filling up time; but then are turn'd and turn'd;
So that I know not what to stay upon,
And less to put in act. It shall be so.
Nay, I dare build upon his secrecy,
He knows not to deceive me. (*Aside.*) Thomas!

Cash. Sir?

Kite. Yet now I have bethought me, I will not. (*Aside.*)
Thomas, is Cob within?

Cash. I think he be, sir.

Kite. But he'll prate, too; there's no speech of him.
No, there were no man o'the earth to Thomas,
If I durst trust him; there is all the doubt.
But should he have a chink in him, I were gone,
Lost i'my fame for ever; talk for th' Exchange.
The manner he hath stood with, till this present,
Doth promise no such change. What should I fear, then?
Well, come what will, I'll tempt my fortune once. (*Aside.*)

Thomas, you may deceive me, but I hope—
Your love to me is more—
Cash. Sir, if a servant's
Duty, with faith, may be call'd love, you are
More than in hope; you are possess'd of it.
Kite. I thank you heartily, Thomas; gi' me your hand.
With all my heart, good Thomas. I have, Thomas,
A secret to impart to you—but
When once you have it, I must seal your lips up.
So far I tell you, Thomas.
Cash. Sir, for that—
Kite. Nay, hear me out. Think I esteem you, Thomas,
When I will let you in thus to my private.
It is a thing sits nearer to my crest
Than thou'rt aware of, Thomas. If thou shouldst
Reveal it, but—
Cash. How! I reveal it?
Kite. Nay,
I do not think thou wouldst; but if thou shouldst,
'Twere a great weakness.
Cash. A great treachery.
Give it no other name.
Kite. Thou wilt not do't, then?
Cash. Sir, if I do, mankind disclaim me ever.
Kite. He will not swear; he has some reservation,
Some conceal'd purpose, and close meaning, sure;
Else, being urg'd so much, how should he choose
But lend an oath to all this protestation?
He's no fanatic; I have heard him swear.
What should I think of it? Urge him again,
And by some other way? I will do so. (*Aside.*)
Well, Thomas, thou hast sworn not to disclose—
Yes, you did swear.
Cash. Not yet, sir, but I will,
Please you—
Kite. No, Thomas, I dare take thy word;
But if thou wilt swear, do, as thou think'st good:
I am resolv'd without it, at thy pleasure.
Cash. By my soul's safety, then, sir, I protest
My tongue shall ne'er take knowledge of a word,
Deliver'd me in nature of your trust.
Kite. It's too much; these ceremonies need not;
I know thy faith to be as firm as rock.
Thomas, come hither, near; we cannot be
Too private in this business. So it is.
Now he has sworn, I dare the safelier venture:
I have of late, by divers observations—
But whether his oath can bind him, there it is.
I will bethink me ere I do proceed. (*Aside.*)
Thomas, it will be now too long to stay,
I'll spy some fitter time soon, or to-morrow.
Cash. Sir, at your pleasure.
Kite. I will think. Give me my cloak. And, Thomas,
I pray you, search the books, 'gainst my return,
For the receipts 'twixt me and Traps.
Cash. I will, sir.
Kite. And, hear you; if your mistress' brother, Wellbred,
Chance to bring hither any gentlemen
Ere I come back, let one straight bring me word—
Cash. Very well, sir.
Kite. To the Exchange; do you hear?
Or here in Coleman-street, to Justice Clement's;
Forget it not, nor be out of the way.
Cash. I will not, sir.
Kite. I pray you, have a care on't.
Or whether he come or no, if any other
Stranger, or else, fail not to send me word.
Cash. I shall not, sir.
Kite. Be't your special business
Now to remember it.
Cash. Sir, I warrant you.
Kite. But, Thomas, this is not the secret, Thomas,
I told you of.
Cash. No, sir, I do suppose it.
Kite. Believe me, it is not.
Cash. Sir, I do believe you.
Kite. By heaven, it is not! That's enough. But, Thomas,
I would not you should utter it, do you see?
To any creature living; yet I care not.
Well, I must hence. Thomas, conceive thus much;
It was a trial of you, when I meant
So deep a secret to you: I meant not this,
But that I have to tell you. This is nothing, this.
But, Thomas, keep this from my wife, I charge you.
Lock'd up in silence, midnight, buried here,
No greater hell than to be slave to fear. [*Exit.*
Cash. Lock'd up in silence, midnight, buried here!
Whence should this flood of passion, trow, take head, eh?
Best dream no longer of this running humour,
For fear I sink. But soft,
Here is company; now must I— [*Exit.*

Enter Wellbred, Young Kno'well, Brainworm, Master Matthew, Master Stephen, *and* Captain Bobadil.

Well. Beshrew me, but it was an absolute good jest, and exceedingly well carried.
Young K. Ay, and our ignorance maintained it as well, did it not?
Well. Yes, faith! But was't possible thou shouldst not know him? I forgive Mr. Stephen, for he is stupidity itself. Why, Brainworm, who would have thought thou hadst been such an artificer?
Young K. An artificer! an architect! Except a man had studied begging all his life-time, and been a weaver of language from his infancy, for the clothing of it, I never saw his rival.
Well. Where got'st thou this coat, I marvel?
Brain. Of a Houndsditch man, sir; one of the devil's near kinsmen; a broker.

Re-enter Cash.

Cash. Francis! Martin! Ne'er a one to be found now? What a spite's this?
Well. How now, Thomas, is my brother Kitely within?
Cash. No, sir; my master went forth e'en now: but Master Downright is within. Cob! What, Cob! Is he gone, too?
Well. Whither went your master, Thomas; canst thou tell?
Cash. I know not; to Justice Clement's, I think, sir. Cob! [*Exit.*
Young K. Justice Clement! What's he?
Well. Why, dost thou not know him? He is a city magistrate, a justice here; an excellent good lawyer, and a great scholar; but the only mad and merry old fellow in Europe! I shewed you him the other day.
Young K. Oh! is that he? I remember him now. Good faith! and he has a very strange presence, methinks; it shews as if he stood out of the rank from other men. I have heard many of his jests i'the university. They say, he will commit a man for taking the wall of his horse.
Well. Ay, or wearing his cloak on one shoulder, or serving of God. Anything, indeed, if it come in the way of his humour.

Re-enter Cash.

Cash. Gasper, Martin, Cob! 'Heart! where should they be, I trow?

Capt. B. Master Kitely's man, pr'ythee, vouchsafe us the lighting of this match.

Cash. Fire on your match! no time but now to vouchsafe? Francis! Cob! [*Exit.*

Capt. B. Body of me! Here's the remainder of seven pounds since yesterday was seven-night. 'Tis your right Trinadado! Did you never take any, Master Stephen?

Step. No, truly, sir! but I'll learn to take it now, since you recommend it so.

Capt. B. Sir, believe me, upon my relation, for what I tell you the world shall not reprove. I have been in the Indies, where this herb grows, where neither myself, nor a dozen gentlemen more, of my knowledge, have received the taste of any other nutriment in the world for the space of one-and-twenty weeks, but the fume of this simple only. Therefore it cannot be but 'tis most divine, especially your Trinidado. Your Nicotian is good, too. I do hold it, and will affirm it before any prince in Europe, to be the most sovereign and precious weed that ever the earth tendered to the use of man.

Young K. This speech would have done decently in a tobacco-trader's mouth. (*Aside.*)

Re-enter CASH, *with* COB.

Cash. At Justice Clement's he is, in the middle of Coleman-street.

Cob. Oh, ho!

Capt. B. Where's the match I gave thee, Master Kitely's man?

Cash. Here it is, sir.

Cob. By God's-me! I marvel what pleasure or felicity they have in taking this roguish tobacco! It's good for nothing but to choke a man, and fill him full of smoke and embers. (*Captain Bobadil beats Cob with a cudgel; Matthew runs away.*)

All. Oh, good captain! hold, hold!

Capt. B. You base scullion, you.

Cash. Come, thou must need be talking, too; thou'rt well enough served.

Cob. Well, it shall be a dear beating, an' I live! I will have justice for this.

Capt. B. Do you prate? Do you murmur? [*Beats Cob off.*

Young. K. Nay, good Captain, will you regard the humour of a fool?

Capt. B. A whoreson, filthy slave, a dung-worm, an excrement! Body o'Cæsar, but that I scorn to let forth so mean a spirit, I'd have stabbed him to the earth

Well. Marry, the law forbid, sir.

Capt. B. By Pharaoh's foot, I would have done it. [*Exit.*

Step. Oh! he swears admirably! By Pharaoh's foot, body of Cæsar; I shall never do it, sure; upon mine honour, and by St. George; no I ha'n't the right grace. (*Aside.*)

Well. But soft, where's Mr. Matthew—gone?

Brain. No, sir; they went in here.

Well. Oh! let's follow them: Master Matthew is gone to salute his mistress in verse. We shall have the happiness to hear some of his poetry now. He never comes unfurnished. Brain-worm!

Step. Brainworm! Where is this Brainworm?

Young K. Ay, cousin, no words of it, upon your gentility.

Step. Not I, body of me! by this air, St. George, and the foot of Pharaoh!

Well. Rare! your cousin's discourse is simply drawn out with oaths.

Young K. 'Tis larded with 'em: a kind of French dressing, if you love it. Come, let's in; come, cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Hall in Justice Clement's house.*

Enter KITELY *and* COB.

Kite. Ah! How many are there, say'st thou?

Cob. Marry, sir, your brother, Master Well-bred—

Kite. Tut! beside him: what strangers are there, man?

Cob. Strangers! let me see; one, two—Mass! I know not well, there are so many.

Kite. How, so many?

Cob. Ay, there's some five or six of them at the most.

Kite. A swarm, a swarm!
Spite of the devil, how they sting my head
With forked stings, thus wide and large! But, Cob,
How long hast thou been coming hither, Cob?

Cob. A little while, sir.

Kite. Didst thou come running?

Cob. No, sir.

Kite. Nay, then I am familiar with thy haste!
Bane to my fortunes. What meant I to marry?
I, that before was rank'd in such content;
My mind at rest, too, in so soft a peace,
Being free master of my own free thoughts,
And now become a slave? What, never sigh!
Be of good cheer, man, for thou art a cuckold.
'Tis done! 'tis done! Nay, when such flowing store,
Plenty itself falls into my wife's lap,
The cornucopia will be mine, I know. But, Cob,
What entertainment had they? I am sure
My sister and my wife would bid them welcome, eh!

Cob. Like enough, sir; yet I heard not a word of it.

Kite. No; their lips were seal'd with kisses, and the voice,
Drown'd in a flood of joy at their arrival,
Had lost its motion, state, and faculty,
Cob, which of them was't that first kiss'd my wife?
My sister, I should say—my wife, alas!
I fear not her. Ha! Who was it, say'st thou?

Cob. By my troth, sir, will you have the truth of it?

Kite. Ay, good Cob, I pray thee heartily.

Cob. Then I am a vagabond, and fitter for Bridewell than your worship's company, if I saw anybody to be kissed, unless they would have kissed the post in the middle of the warehouse; for there I left them all at their tobacco, with a plague.

Kite. How! were they not gone in, then, ere thou cam'st?

Cob. Oh! no, sir.

Kite. Spite o'the devil! What do I stay here, then? Cob, follow me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Kitely's house.*

Enter DOWNRIGHT *and* DAME KITELY.

Down. Well, sister, I tell you true; and you'll find it so in the end.

Dame K. Alas! brother, what would you have me to do? I cannot help it. You see my brother brings 'em in here; they are his friends.

Down. His friends! his friends! 'Slud, they do nothing but haunt him up and down, like a sort of unlucky spirits, and tempt him to all manner of villany that can be thought of. Well, by this light, a little thing would make me play the devil with some of 'em. And 'twere not more for your husband's sake, than anything else, I'd make the house

too hot for the best of 'em. They should say, and swear, hell were broken loose ere they went hence. But, by God's will, 'tis nobody's fault but your's; for an' you had done as you might have done, they should have been parboiled and baked too, every mother's son, ere they should ha' come in, e'er a one of 'em.

Dame K. God's my life! did you ever hear the like? What a strange man is this! Could I keep out all them, think you? I should put myself against half a dozen men, should I? Good faith, you'd mad the patientest body in the world to hear you talk so, without any sense or reason.

Enter Bridget, Master Matthew, Wellbred, Stephen, Young Kno'well, Captain Bobadil, *and* Cash.

Brid. Servant, in troth, you are too prodigal
Of your wit's treasure, thus to pour it forth
Upon so mean a subject as my worth.

Mat. You say well, mistress; and I mean as well.

Down. Heyday, here is stuff!

Well. Oh! now stand close. Pray heaven she can get him to read; he should do it of his own natural impudence.

Brid. Servant, what is this same, I pray you?

Mat. Marry, an elegy! an elegy! an odd toy—I'll read it, if you please.

Brid. Pray you do, servant.

Down. Oh! here's no foppery. Death! I can endure the stocks better.

Young K. What ails thy brother? Can he not bear the reading of a ballad? (*To Wellbred.*)

Well. Oh! no; a rhyme to him is worse than cheese, or a bagpipe. But mark, you lose the protestation.

Capt. B. Master Matthew, you abuse the expectation of your dear mistress and her fair sister. Fie! while you live, avoid this prolixity.

Mat. I shall, sir. (*Reads.*)

"*Rare creature, let me speak without offence;*
Would heav'n my rude words had the influence
To rule thy thoughts, as thy fair looks do mine;
Then shouldst thou be his prisoner, who is thine."

(*Master Stephen shakes his head.*)

Young K. 'Slight, he shakes his head like a bottle, to feel an' there be any brain in it!

Well. Sister, what ha' you here? verses? Pray you, let's see. Who made these verses? They are excellently good.

Mat. Oh! Master Wellbred, 'tis your disposition to say so, sir. They were good i'the morning; I made 'em extempore this morning.

Well. How, extempore?

Mat. I would I might be hanged else; ask Captain Bobadil; he saw me write them at the—the Star yonder.

Step. Cousin, how do you like this gentleman's verses?

Young K. Oh, admirable! the best that ever I heard, coz.

Step. Body o'Cæsar! they are admirable! The best that ever I heard, as I am a soldier.

Down. I am vexed; I can hold ne'er a bone of me still! 'Heart, I think they mean to build and breed here. (*Aside.*)

Well. Sister Kitely, I marvel you get you not a servant that can rhyme and do tricks, too.

Down. Oh, monster! Impudence itself! Tricks! Come, you might practise your ruffian tricks somewhere else, and not here, I wuss. This is no tavern, nor drinking-school, to vent your exploits in.

Well. How now! Whose cow has calved?

Down. Marry, that has mine, sir. Nay, boy, never look askance at me for the matter; I'll tell you of it; ay, sir, you and your companions! Mend yourselves, when I ha' done!

Well. My companions?

Down. Yes, sir, your companions; so I say. I am not afraid of you nor them neither, your hanghys here. You must have your poets and your potlings, your soldados and foolados, to follow you up and down the city; and here they must come to domineer and swagger. Sirrah, you ballad-singer, and slops, your fellow there, get you out; get you home; or, by this steel, I'll cut off your ears, and that presently.

Well. 'Slight! stay, and let's see what he dare do. Cut off his ears! cut a whetstone. You are an ass, do you see; touch any man here, and by this hand, I'll run my rapier to the hilts in you.

Down. Yea, that would I fain see, boy. (*They all draw, and they of the house part them.*)

Dame K. Oh, Jesu! Murder! Thomas! Gasper!

Brid. Help, help! Thomas!

Young K. Gentlemen, forbear, I pray you.

Capt. B. Well, sirrah! you Holofernes! By my hand, I will pink your flesh full of holes with my rapier, for this; I will, by this good heaven. Nay, let him come, gentlemen, by the body of St. George, I'll not kill him. (*They offer to fight again, and are parted.*)

Cash. Hold, hold! good gentlemen.

Down. You whoreson, bragging coistril.

Enter Kitely.

Kite. Why, how now! what's the matter? What's the stir here?
Put up your weapons, and put off this rage.
My wife and sister, they're the cause of this.
What, Thomas; where is the knave?

Cash. Here, sir.

Well. Come, let's go; this is one of my brother's ancient humours, this.

[*Exeunt Master Matthew, Capt. Bobadil, Young Kno'well, and Wellbred.*

Step. I am glad nobody was hurt by his ancient humour. [*Exit.*

Kite. Why, how now, brother; who enforced this brawl?

Down. A sort of lewd rake. And they must come here to read ballads, and roguery, and trash! I'll mar the knot of 'em ere I sleep, perhaps; especially Bob there, he that's all manner of shapes; and songs and sonnets, his fellow. But I'll follow 'em. [*Exit.*

Brid. Brother, indeed you are too violent,
Too sudden in your humour.
There was one, a civil gentleman,
And very worthily demean'd himself.

Kite. Oh! that was some love of your's, sister.

Brid. A love of mine? I would it were no worse, brother! You'd pay my portion sooner than you think for. [*Exit.*

Dame K. Indeed, he seemed to be a gentleman of exceeding fair disposition, and of very excellent parts. What a coil and stir is here! [*Exit.*

Kite. Her love, by heav'n! my wife's minion!
Death, these phrases are intolerable!
Well, well, well, well, well, well!
It is too plain, too clear. Thomas, come hither.
What, are they gone?

Cash. Ay, sir, they went in.
My mistress and your sister—

Kite. Are any of the gallants within?

Cash. No, sir, they are all gone.

Kite. Art thou sure of it?

Cash. I can assure you, sir.

Kite. What gentleman was it that they praised so, Thomas?

Cash. One, they call him Master Kno'well, a handsome young gentleman, sir. [much.

Kite. Ay, I thought so. My mind gave me as

I'll die, but they have hid him in the house
Somewhere; I'll go and search. Go with me, Thomas;
Be true to me, and thou shalt find me a master.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Moorfields.*

Enter YOUNG KNO'WELL, WELLBRED, *and* BRAINWORM.

Young K. Well, Brainworm, perform this business happily, and thou makest a purchase of my love for ever.

Well. I'faith, now let thy spirits use their best faculties; but at my hand, remember the message to my brother; for there's no other means to start him out of his house.

Brain. I warrant you, sir; fear nothing. I have a nimble soul has waked all forces of my phantasy by this time, and put 'em in true motion. What you have possessed me withal, I'll discharge it amply, sir; make it no question. [*Exit.*

Well. Forth, and prosper, Brainworm. Faith! Ned, how dost thou approve of my abilities in this device?

Young K. Troth, well, howsoever; but it will come excellent if it take.

Well. Take, man! Why, it cannot choose but take, if the circumstances miscarry not. But tell me ingenuously, dost thou affect my sister Bridget, as thou pretendest?

Young K. Friend, am I worthy of belief?

Well. Come, do not protest. In faith, she is a maid of good ornament, and much modesty; and, except I conceived very worthily of her, thou shouldst not have her.

Young K. Nay, that I'm afraid will be a question yet, whether I shall have her or no.

Well. 'Slid, thou shalt have her; by this light thou shalt.

Young K. I am satisfied; and do believe thou wilt omit no offered occasion to make my desires complete.

Well. Thou shalt see and know I will not.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter FORMAL *and* KNO'WELL.

For. Was your man a soldier, sir?

Kno. Ay, a knave; I took him begging o'the way,
This morning, as I came over Moorfields.

Re-enter BRAINWORM.

Oh! here he is.—You have made fair speed, believe me;
Where i'the name of sloth could you be thus—

Brain. Marry, peace be my comfort, where I thought I should have had little comfort of your worship's service.

Kno. How so?

Brain. Oh, sir! your coming to the city, your entertainment of me, and your sending me to watch—indeed, all the circumstances either of your charge, or any employment, are as open to your son as to yourself.

Kno. How should that be, unless that villain, Brainworm,
Have told him of the letter, and discovered
All that I strictly charged him to conceal! 'Tis so!

Brain. I am partly o'that faith; 'tis so, indeed.

Kno. But how should he know you to be my man?

Brain. Nay, sir, I cannot tell; unless it be by the black art! Is not your son a scholar, sir?

Kno. Yes; but I hope his soul is not allied
Unto such hellish practice; if it were,
I had just cause to weep my part in him,
And curse the time of his creation.
But where didst thou find them, Fitz-sword?

Brain. You should rather ask where they found me, sir; for I'll be sworn, I was going along in the street, thinking nothing, when, of a sudden, a voice calls, "Mr. Kno'well's man!" another cries, "soldier!" and then, half a dozen of 'em, till they had called me within a house, where I no sooner came, but out flew all their rapiers at my bosom, with some three or four score oaths to accompany 'em; and all to tell me, I was a dead man if I did not confess where you were, and how I was employed, and about what; which, when they could not get out of me, as I protest they must have dissected me, and made an anatomy of me first, and so I told 'em, they locked me up into a room i'the top of a high house; whence, by great miracle, having a light heart, I slid down by a bottom of packthread into the street, and so escaped. But, sir, thus much I can assure you, for I heard it while I was locked up, there were a great many rich merchants' and brave citizens' wives with 'em at a feast; and your son, Mr. Edward, withdrew with one of 'em, and has 'pointed to meet her anon, at one Cob's house, a water-bearer, that dwells by the wall. Now, there your worship shall be sure to take him; for there he preys, and fail he will not.

Kno. Nor will I fail to break his match, I doubt not.
Go thou along with Justice Clement's man,
And stay there for me. At one Cob's house say'st thou?

Brain. Ay, sir, there you shall have him. [*Exit Kno'well.*] Yes! Invisible! Much wench, or much son! 'Slight! when he has staid there three or four hours, travailing with the expectation of wonders, and at length be delivered of air! Oh! the sport that I should then take to look on him, if I durst! But now I mean to appear no more before him in this shape. I have another trick to act yet. (*Aside.*) Sir, I make you stay somewhat long.

For. Not a whit, sir.
You have been lately in the wars, sir, it seems?

Brain. Marry have I, sir, to my loss, and expense of all, almost—

For. Troth, sir, I would be glad to bestow a bottle o'you, if it please you to accept it—

Brain. Oh! sir—

For. But to hear the manner of your services and your devices in the wars; they say they be very strange, and not like those a man reads in Roman histories, or sees at Mile-end.

Brain. No, I assure you, sir; why, at any time when it pleases you, I shall be ready to discourse with you all I know—and more too, somewhat. (*Aside.*)

For. No better time than now, sir. We'll go to the Windmill; there we shall have a cup of neat grist, as we call it. I pray you, sir, let me request you to the Windmill.

Brain. I'll follow you, sir; and make grist o'you, if I have good luck. (*Aside.*) [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter YOUNG KNO'WELL, *with* MASTER MATTHEW, CAPTAIN BOBADIL, *and* STEPHEN.

Mat. Sir, did your eyes ever taste the like clown of him, where we were to-day, Mr. Wellbred's half-brother? I think the whole earth cannot shew his parallel, by this day-light.

Young K. We are now speaking of him. Captain Bobadil tells me he is fallen foul o'you, too.

Mat. Oh! ay, sir! he threatened me with the bastinado.

Capt. B. Ay, but I think I taught you prevention this morning for that. You shall kill him, beyond question, if you be so generously minded.

Mat. Indeed, it is a most excellent trick.

Capt. B. Oh! you do not give spirit enough to your motion; you are too tardy, too heavy! Oh! it must be done like lightning, boy! Tut! 'tis nothing, an't be not done in a punto.

Young K. Captain, did you ever prove yourself upon any of our masters of defence here?

Mat. Oh, good sir! yes, I hope he has!

Capt. B. I will tell you, sir. They have assaulted me some three, four, five, six of them together, as I have walked alone in divers skirts o'the town, where I have driven them before me the whole length of a street, in the open view of all our gallants, pitying to hurt them, believe me. Yet all this lenity will not overcome their spleen; they will be doing with the pismire, raising a hill a man may spurn abroad with his foot at pleasure. By myself I could have slain them all; but I delight not in murder. I am loath to bear any other than this bastinado for 'em; yet I hold it good policy not to go disarmed; for though I be skilful, I may be oppressed with multitudes.

Young K. Ay, believe me, may you, sir; and, in my conceit, our whole nation should sustain the loss by it, if it were so.

Capt. B. Alas! no. What's a peculiar man to a nation? Not seen.

Young K. Oh! but your skill, sir!

Capt. B. Indeed, that might be some loss; but who respects it? I will tell you, sir, by the way of private, and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself; but were I known to his majesty and the lords, observe me, I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of his subjects in general, but to save the one half, nay, three parts of his yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you?

Young K. Nay, I know not; nor can I conceive.

Capt. B. Why, thus, sir: I would select nineteen more to myself, throughout the land; gentlemen they should be; of a good spirit, and able constitution; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have; and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your punto, your reverso, your stoccata, imbroccata, your passada, your montanto; till they could all play very near, or altogether as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong; we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March, or thereabouts, and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not in their honour refuse us. Well, we would kill them; challenge twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them, too; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a day, that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred; two hundred a day, five days a thousand; forty thousand; forty times five, five times forty; two hundred days kills them all by computation. And this I will venture to my poor gentleman-like carcass to perform, provided there be no treason practised upon us, by fair and discreet manhood; that is, civilly by the sword.

Young K. Why, are you so sure of your hand, Captain, at all times.

Capt. B. Tut! never miss thrust, upon my reputation with you.

Young K. I would not stand in Downright's state then, an' you meet him, for the wealth of any one street in London.

Capt. B. Why, sir, you mistake. If he were here now, by this welkin, I would not draw my weapon on him! Let this gentleman do his mind; but I will bastinado him, by the bright sun, wherever I meet him.

Mat. Faith, and I'll have a fling at him, at my distance.

Enter Downright, *walking over the stage.*

Young K. God's so! Lookye where he is; yonder he goes.

Down. What peevish luck have I; I cannot meet with these bragging rascals!

Capt. B. It's not he, is it?

Young K. Yes, faith, it is he.

Mat. I'll be hanged, then, if that were he.

Young K. I assure you that was he.

Step. Upon my reputation, it was he.

Capt. B. Had I thought it had been he, he must not have gone so; but I can hardly be induced to believe it was he yet.

Young K. That I think, sir. But see, he is come again!

Re-enter Downright.

Down. Oh! Pharaoh's foot, have I found you? Come, draw; to your tools. Draw, gipsy, or I'll thrash you.

Capt. B. Gentleman of valour, I do believe in thee, hear me—

Down. Draw your weapon, then.

Capt. B. Tall man, I never thought on't till now, body of me! I had a warrant of the peace served on me even now, as I came along, by a water bearer; this gentleman saw it, Mr. Matthew. (*Downright beats Captain Bobadil; Matthew runs away.*)

Down. 'Sdeath! you will not draw, then?

Capt. B. Hold, hold! under thy favour, forbear.

Down. Prate again, as you like this, you whoreson foist you. You'll control the point, you? Your consort is gone; had he staid, he had shared with you, sir. [*Exit.*

Young K. Twenty, and kill them; twenty more, kill them, too—ha, ha!

Capt. B. Well, gentlemen, bear witness; I was bound to the peace, by this good day.

Young K. No, faith, it's an ill day, Captain, never reckon it other; but say you were bound to the peace, the law allows you to defend yourself; that will prove but a poor excuse.

Capt. B. I cannot tell, sir. I desire good construction, in fair sort. I never sustained the like disgrace, by heaven. Sure, I was struck with a planet.

Step. No, Captain, you was struck with a stick.

Young K. Ay, like enough; I have heard of many that have been beaten under a planet. Go, get you to a surgeon. 'Slid! and these be your tricks, your passados and your montantos, I'll none of them.

Capt. B. I was planet-struck certainly. [*Exit.*

Young K. Oh, manners! that this age should bring forth such creatures! that nature should be at leisure to make 'em! Come, coz.

Step. Mass! I'll have this cloak.

Young K. God's will, 'tis Downright's.

Step. Nay, it's mine now; another might have ta'en it up as well as I. I'll wear it, so I will.

Young K. How, an' he see it? He'll challenge it, assure yourself.

Step. Ay, but he shall not ha't; I'll say I bought it.

Young. K. Take heed you buy it not too dear, coz. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*A Chamber in Kitely's house.*

Enter Kitely *and* Cash.

Kite. Art thou sure, Thomas, we have pried into all and every part throughout the house? Is there no by-place, or dark corner, has escaped our searches?

Cash. Indeed, sir, none; there's not a hole or nook unsearched by us, from the upper loft unto the cellar.

Kite. They have conveyed him then away, or hid him in some privacy of their own. Whilst we were searching of the dark closet by my sister's chamber, didst thou not think thou heard'st a rustling on the other side, and a soft tread of feet?

Cash. Upon my truth, I did not, sir; or if you did, it might be only the vermin in the wainscot; the house is old, and over-run with 'em.

Kite. It is indeed, Thomas. We should bane these rats. Dost thou understand me? We will—they shall not harbour here; I'll cleanse my house from 'em, if fire or poison can effect it: I will not be tormented thus. They gnaw my brain, and burrow in my heart: I cannot bear it.

Cash. I do not understand you, sir. Good now, what is't disturbs you thus? Pray, be composed. These starts of passion have some cause, I fear, that touches you more nearly.

Kite. Sorely, sorely, Thomas. It cleaves too close to me—oh, me! (*Sighs.*) Lend me thy arm—so, good Cash.

Cash. You tremble and look pale! Let me call assistance.

Kite. Not for ten thousand worlds! Alas, alas! 'tis not in medicine to give me ease—here, here it lies.

Cash. What, sir?

Kite. Why—nothing, nothing. I am not sick, yet more than dead; I have a burning fever in my mind, and long for that, which, having, would destroy me.

Cash. Believe me, 'tis your fancy's imposition. Shut up your generous mind from such intruders. I'll hazard all my growing favour with you; I'll stake my present, my future welfare, that some base whispering knave—nay, pardon me, sir—hath, in the best and richest soil, sown seeds of rank and evil nature! Oh! my master, should they take root—(*Laughing within.*)

Kite. Hark, hark! Dost thou not hear? What think'st thou now? Are they not laughing at me? They are, they are! They have deceived the wittol, and thus they triumph in their infamy. This aggravation is not to be borne. (*Laughing again.*) Hark, again! Cash, do thou unseen steal in upon 'em, and listen to their wanton conference.

Cash. I shall obey you, though against my will. [*Exit.*

Kite. Against his will! Ha! it may be so. He's young, and may be bribed for them; they've various means to draw the unwary in. If it be so, I'm lost, deceived, betrayed, and my bosom, my full-fraught bosom, is unlocked and opened to mockery and laughter! Heaven forbid! He cannot be that viper; sting the hand that raised and cherished him! Were this stroke added, I should be cursed. But it cannot be; no, it cannot be.

Re-enter CASH.

Cash. You are musing, sir.

Kite. I ask your pardon, Cash. Ask me not why—
I have wronged you, and am sorry. 'Tis gone.

Cash. If you suspect my faith—

Kite. I do not—say no more; and for my sake let it die and be forgotten. Have you seen your mistress, and heard whence was that noise?

Cash. Your brother, Master Wellbred, is with 'em, and I found them throwing out their mirth on a very truly ridiculous subject: it is one Formal, as he styles himself, and he appertains, so he phrases it, to Justice Clement, and would speak with you.

Kite. With me? Art thou sure it is the Justice's clerk? Where is he?

Enter BRAINWORM, *as Formal.*

Who are you, friend?

Brain. An appendix to Justice Clement, vulgarly called his clerk.

Kite. What are your wants with me?

Brain. None.

Kite. Do you not want to speak with me?

Brain. No, but my master does.

Kite. What are the Justice's commands?

Brain. He doth not command, but entreats Master Kitely to be with him directly, having matters of some moment to communicate unto him.

Kite. What can it be? Say I'll be with him instantly; and if your legs, friend, go not faster than your tongue, I shall be there before you.

Brain. I will. *Vale.* [*Exit.*

Kite. 'Tis a precious fool, indeed! I must go forth. But first come hither, Thomas: I have admitted thee into the close recesses of my heart, and shewed thee all my frailties, passions, everything.
Be careful of thy promise, keep good watch.
Wilt thou be true, my Thomas?

Cash. As truth's self, sir.
But be assur'd you're heaping care and trouble
Upon a sandy base; ill-plac'd suspicion
Recoils upon yourself. She's chaste as comely;
Believe't she is. Let her not note your humour;
Disperse the gloom upon your brow, and be
As clear as her unsullied honour.

Kite. I will then, Cash—thou comfort'st me: I'll drive these
Fiend-like fancies from me, and be myself again.
Think'st thou she has perceiv'd my folly? 'Twere
Happy, if she had not—she has not:
They who know no evil, will suspect none.

Cash. True, sir; nor has your mind a blemish now.
This change has gladden'd me. Here's my mistress,
And the rest; settle your reason to accost 'em.

Kite. I will, Cash, I will.

Enter WELLBRED, DAME KITELY, *and* BRIDGET.

Well. What are you a plotting, brother Kitely,
That thus of late you muse alone, and bear
Such weighty care upon your pensive brow?
(*Laughs.*)

Kite. My care is all for you, good sneering brother,
And well I wish you'd take some wholesome counsel,
And curb your headstrong humours; trust me, brother,
You were to blame to raise commotions here,
And hurt the peace and order of my house.

Well. No harm done, brother, I warrant you.
Since there is no harm done, anger costs
A man nothing, and a brave man is never
His own man till he be angry. To keep
His valour in obscurity, is to keep himself,
As it were, in a cloak-bag. What's a brave
Musician, unless he play?
What's a brave man, unless he fight?

Dame K. Ay, but what harm might have come of it, brother?

Well. What, school'd on both sides! Pr'ythee, Bridget, save me from the rod and lecture. (*Bridget and Wellbred retire.*)

Kite. With what a decent modesty she rates him!
My heart's at ease, and she shall see it is. (*Aside.*)
How art thou, wife? Thou look'st both gay and comely;
In troth, thou dost. I'm sent for out, my dear,
But I shall soon return. Indeed, my life,
Business that forces me abroad grows irksome.
I could content me with less gain and vantage,
To have thee more at home, indeed I could.

Dame K. Your doubts, as well as love, may breed these thoughts.

Kite. That jar untunes me. (*Aside.*)
What dost thou say? Doubt thee?
I should as soon suspect myself. No, no;
My confidence is rooted in thy merit,
So fix'd and settled, that wert thou inclin'd
To masks, to sports, and balls, where lusty youth
Lead up the wanton dance, and the rais'd pulse
Beats quicker measures, yet I could with joy,
With heart's ease and security—not but
I had rather thou shouldst prefer thy home
And me, to boys and such like vanities.

Dame K. But sure, my dear,
A wife may moderately use these pleasures,
Which numbers and the time give sanction to,
Without the smallest blemish on her name.

Kite. And so she may; and I'll go with thee, child;
I will, indeed; I'll lead thee there myself,
And be the foremost reveller. I'll silence
The sneers of envy, stop the tongue of slander;
Nor will I more be pointed at, as one
Disturb'd with jealousy—

Dame K. Why, were you ever so?

Kite. What?—Ha! never—ha, ha, ha!
She stabs me home. (*Aside.*) Jealous of thee!
No, do not believe it. Speak low, my love,
Thy brother will overhear us. No, no, my dear,
It could not be, it could not be—for—for—
What is the time now? I shall be too late—
No, no; thou may'st be satisfied
There's not the smallest spark remaining—
Remaining! What do I say? There never was,
Nor can, nor ever shall be—so be satisfied.
Is Cob within there? Give me a kiss,
My dear; there, there, now we are reconcil'd—
I'll be back immediately. Good b'ye, good b'ye!
Ha, ha! jealous, I shall burst my sides with laughing.
Ha, ha! Cob, where are you, Cob? Ha, ha!

[*Exit. Wellbred and Bridget come forward.*

Well. What have you done to make your husband part so merry from you? He has of late been little given to laughter.

Dame K. He laughed, indeed, but seemingly without mirth. His behaviour is new and strange. He is much agitated, and has some whimsy in his head, that puzzles mine to read it.

Well. 'Tis jealousy, good sister; and writ so largely, that the blind may read it; have you not perceived it yet?

Dame K. If I have, 'tis not always prudent that my tongue should betray my eyes; so far my wisdom tends, good brother, and little more I boast. But what makes him ever calling for Cob so? I wonder how he can employ him.

Well. Indeed, sister, to ask how he employs Cob, is a necessary question for you that are his wife, and a thing not very easy for you to be satisfied in. But this I'll assure you, Cob's wife is an excellent procuress, sister, and oftentimes your husband haunts her house: marry to what end, I cannot altogether accuse him—imagine you what you think convenient—but I have known fair hides have foul hearts, ere now, sister.

Dame K. Never said you truer than that, brother; so much I can tell you for your learning. Oh, oh! is this the fruits of his jealousy? I thought some game was in the wind, he acted so much tenderness but now; but I'll be quit with him. Thomas!

Re-enter Cash.

Fetch your hat, Thomas, and go with me. [*Exit. Cash.*] I would to fortune I could take him there, I'd return him his own, I warrant him! I'd fit him for his jealousy! [*Exit.*

Well. Ha, ha! so e'en let 'em go; this may make sport anon.—What, Brainworm!

Enter Brainworm.

Brain. I saw the merchant turn the corner, and come back to tell you all goes well; wind and tide, my master.

Well. But how got'st thou this apparel of the Justice's man?

Brain. Marry, sir, my proper fine penman would needs bestow the grist o'me at the Windmill, to hear some marshal discourse, where I so marshalled him, that I made him drunk with admiration; and because too much heat was the cause of his distemper, I stripped him stark naked as he lay along asleep, and borrowed his suit to deliver this counterfeit message in, leaving a rusty armour, and an old brown bill, to watch him till they return; which shall be, when I have pawned his apparel, and spent the better part of the money, perhaps.

Well. Well, thou art a successful, merry knave, Brainworm; his absence will be subject for more mirth. I pray thee, return to thy young master, and will him to meet me and my sister Bridget at the Tower instantly; for here, tell him, the house is so stored with jealousy, there is no room for love to stand upright in. We must get our fortunes committed to some large prison, say: and then the Tower, I know no better air, nor where the liberty of the house may do us more present service. Away. [*Exit Brainworm.*

Brid. What, is this the engine that you told me of? What further meaning have you in the plot?

Well. That you may know, fair sister-in-law, how happy a thing it is to be fair and beautiful.

Brid. That touches not me, brother.

Well. Well, there's a dear and well respected friend of mine, sister, stands very strongly and worthily affected towards you, and hath vowed to inflame whole bonfires of zeal at his heart, in honour of your perfections. I have already engaged my promise to bring you where you shall hear him confirm much more. Ned Knowell is the man, sister. There's no exception against the party. What say you, sister? On my soul, he loves you; will you give him this meeting?

Brid. 'Faith, I had very little confidence in my own constancy, brother, if I durst not meet a man; but this motion of your's savours of an old knight adventurer's servant a little too much, methinks.

Well. What's that, sister?

Brid. Marry, of the go be-tween.

Well. No matter if it did; I would be such an one for my friend. But see, who is returned to hinder us.

Re-enter Kitely.

Kite. What villany is this? Called out on a false message! This was some plot. I was not sent for. Bridget, where's your sister?

Brid. I think she be gone forth, sir.

Kite. How! Is my wife gone forth? Whither, for heaven's sake?

Brid. She's gone abroad with Thomas.

Kite. Abroad with Thomas! Oh! that villain cheats me!
He hath discover'd all unto my wife:
Beast that I was to trust him. (*Aside.*) Whither, I pray
You, went she?

Brid. I know not, sir.

Well. I'll tell you, brother, whither I suspect she's gone.

Kite. Whither, good brother?

Well. To Cob's house, I believe; but keep my counsel.

Kite. I will, I will.—To Cob's house! Does she haunt there?

She's gone on purpose now to cuckold me,
With that lewd rascal, who, to win her favour,
Hath told her all. Why would you let her go?

Well. Because she's not my wife; if she were, I'd keep her to her tether.

Kite. So, so! now 'tis plain. I shall go mad
With my misfortunes, now they pour in torrents.
I'm bruted by my wife, betray'd by my servant,
Mock'd at by my relations, pointed at by my neighbours,
Despis'd by myself—There is nothing left now
But to revenge myself first, next hang myself;
And then—all my cares will be over. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Stocks-market.*

Enter MASTER MATTHEW *and* CAPTAIN BOBADIL.

Mat. I wonder, Captain, what they will say of my going away, eh?

Capt. B. Why, what should they say? but as of a discreet gentleman; quick, wary, respectful of nature's fair lineaments, and that's all.

Mat. Why so? but what can they say of their beating?

Capt. B. A rude part, a touch with soft wood, a kind of gross battery used, lain on strongly, borne most patiently, and that's all. But wherefore do I wake their remembrance? I was fascinated, by Jupiter! fascinated! but I will be unwitched, and revenged by law.

Mat. Do you hear? Is't not best to get a warrant, and have him arrested, and brought before Justice Clement?

Capt. B. It were not amiss; would we had it!

Mat. Why, here comes his man, let's speak to him.

Capt. B. Agreed. Do you apeak.

Enter BRAINWORM, *as Formal.*

Mat. Save you, sir.

Brain. With all my heart, sir.

Mat. Sir, there is one Downright hath abused this gentleman and myself, and we determine to make ourselves amends by law; now if you would do us the favour to procure a warrant to bring him before your master, you shall be well considered of, I assure you, sir.

Brain. Sir, you know my service is my living; such favours as these, gotten of my master, is his only preferment, and therefore you must consider me, as I may make benefit of my place.

Mat. How is that, sir?

Brain. 'Faith, sir, the thing is extraordinary, and the gentleman may be of great account. Yet, be what he will, if you will lay me down a brace of angels in my hand, you shall have it, otherwise not.

Mat. How shall we do, Captain? He asks a brace of angels. You have no money. (*Apart to Capt. B.*)

Capt. B. Not a cross, by fortune. (*Apart.*)

Mat. Nor I, as I am a gentleman, but twopence left of my two shillings in the morning for wine and radish. Let's find him some pawn. (*Apart.*)

Capt. B. Pawn! We have none to the value of his demand. (*Apart.*)

Mat. Oh! yes, I can pawn my ring here. (*Apart.*)

Capt. B. And, harkye, he shall have my trusty Toledo, too; I believe I shall have no service for it to-day. (*Apart.*)

Mat. Do you hear, sir? We have no store of money at this time, but you shall have good pawns. Look you, sir; I will pledge this ring, and that gentleman his Toledo, because we would have it despatched.

Brain. I am content, sir; I will get you the warrant presently. What's his name, say you? Downright?

Mat. Ay, ay, George Downright.

Brain. Well, gentlemen, I'll procure you the warrant presently. But who will you have to serve it?

Mat. That's true, Captain; that must be considered.

Capt. B. Body o'me, I know not! 'Tis service of danger!

Brain. Why, you were best get one of the varlets o'the city; a sergeant; I'll appoint you one, if you please.

Mat. Will you, sir? Why, we can wish no better.

Capt. B. We'll leave it to you, sir.

[*Exit with Matthew.*

Brain. This is rare! Now will I go pawn this cloak of the Justice's man's, at the broker's for a varlet's suit, and be the varlet myself, and so get money on all sides. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Street before Cob's house.*

Enter KNO'WELL.

Kno. Oh! here it is; I have found it now. Hoa! who is within here? (TIB *appears at the window.*)

Tib. I am within, sir. What's your pleasure?

Kno. To know who is within besides yourself.

Tib. Why, sir, you are no constable, I hope?

Kno. Oh! fear you the constable? Then I doubt not you have some guests within deserve that fear. I'll fetch him straight.

Tib. For heaven's sake, sir—

Kno. Go to! Come, tell me, is not young Kno'well here?

Tib. Young Kno'well! I know none such, sir, o'my honesty.

Kno. Your honesty, dame! It flies too lightly from you. There is no way but fetch the constable.

Tib. The constable! the man is mad, I think.

Enter CASH *and* DAME KITELY.

Kno. Oh! this is the female copesmate of my son.
Now shall I meet him straight. (*Aside.*)

Dame K. Knock hard, Thomas.

Cash. Hoa, good wife!

Tib. Why, what's the matter with you?

Dame K. Why, woman, grieves it you to ope the door?
Belike you get something to keep it shut.

Tib. What mean these questions, pray you?

Dame K. So strange you make it! Is not my husband here?

Kno. Her husband! (*Aside.*)

Dame K. My tried and faithful husband, Master Kitely.

Tib. I hope he needs not be tried here.

Dame K. Come hither, Cash. I see my turtle coming to his haunts. Let us retire. (*They retire.*)

Kno. This must be some device to mock me withal.
Soft—who is this? Oh! 'tis my son disguis'd.
I'll watch him and surprise him.

Enter KITELY, *muffled in a cloak.*

Kite. 'Tis truth, I see: there she skulks.
But I will fetch her from her hold—I will—

I tremble so, I scarce have power to do the justice
Her infamy demands.

(*As Kitely goes forward, Dame Kitely and Kno'well lay hold of him.*)

Kno. Have I trapped you, youth? You cannot escape me now.

Dame K. Oh, sir! have I forestall'd your honest market?
Found your close walks? You stand amaz'd
Now, do you? Ah! hide, hide your face for shame!
I'faith, I am glad I've found you out at last.

Kno. What mean you, woman? Let go your hold.
I see the counterfeit. I am his father,
And claim him as my own.

Kite. (*Discovers himself.*) I am your cuckold, and claim my vengeance.

Dame K. What, do you wrong me, and insult me too?
Thou faithless man!

Kite. Out on thy more than strumpet's impudence!
Steal'st thou thus to thy haunts? And have I taken
Thy bawd and thee, and thy companion,
This hoary-headed lecher, this old goat,
Close at your villany, and wouldst thou excuse it
With this stale harlot's jest, accusing me?
Oh! old incontinent, dost thou not shame
To have a mind so hot, and to entice
And feed the enticement of a lustful woman?

Dame K. Out! I defy thee, thou dissembling wretch!

Kite. Defy me, strumpet! Ask thy pander here; Can he deny it, or that wicked elder?

Kno. Why, hear you, sir—

Cash. Master, 'tis in vain to reason while these passions blind you. I'm grieved to see you thus.

Kite. Tut, tut! never speak; I see through every Veil you cast upon your treachery; but I have
Done with you, and root you from my heart for ever.
For you, sir, thus I demand my honour's due;
Resolv'd to cool your lust, or end my shame.

(*Draws.*)

Kno. What lunacy is this? Put up your sword, and undeceive yourself. No arm that e'er poised weapon can affright me; but I pity folly, nor cope with madness.

Kite. I will have proofs—I will—so you, good wife-bawd, Cob's wife; and you, that make your husband such a monster; and you, young pander, an old cuckold-maker; I'll ha' you every one before the justice. Nay, you shall answer it; I charge you go. Come forth, thou bawd. (*Goes into the house, and brings out* Tib.)

Kno. Marry, with all my heart, sir; I go willingly.
Though I do taste this as a trick put on me,
To punish my impertinent search, and justly;
And half forgive my son for the device.

Kite. Come, will you go?

Dame K. Go, to thy shame believe it.

Kite. Though shame and sorrow hath my heart betide,
Come on—I must and will be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*Stocks-market.*

Enter Brainworm.

Brain. Well, of all my disguises yet, now am I most like myself, being in this sergeant's gown. A man of my present profession never counterfeits till he lays hold upon a debtor, and says he 'rests him; for then he brings him to all manner of unrest. A kind of little kings we are, bearing the diminutive of a mace, made like a young artichoke, that always carries pepper and salt in itself. Well, I know not what danger I undergo by this exploit; pray heaven, I come well off!

Enter Captain Bobadil *and* Master Matthew.

Mat. See, I think yonder is the varlet, by his gown. 'Save you, friend; are not you here by appointment of Justice Clement's man?

Brain. Yes, an' please you, sir, he told me two gentlemen had willed him to procure a warrant from his master, which I have about me, to be served on one Downright.

Mat. It is honestly done of you both; and see where the party comes you must arrest. Serve it upon him quickly, before he be aware.

Enter Master Stephen, *in Downright's cloak.*

Capt. B. Bear back, Master Matthew.

Brain. Master Downright, I arrest you i'the queen's name, and must carry you before a justice, by virtue of this warrant.

Step. Me, friend; I am no Downright, I. I am Master Stephen; you do not well to arrest me, I tell you truly. I am in nobody's bonds or books, I would you should know it. A plague on you heartily, for making me thus afraid before my time.

Brain. Why, now you are deceived, gentlemen!

Capt. B. He wears such a cloak, and that deceived us. But see, here he comes, indeed! This is he, officer.

Enter Downright.

Down. Why, how now, seignior Gull? Are you turned filcher of late? Come, deliver my cloak.

Step. Your cloak, sir! I bought it even now in open market.

Brain. Master Downright, I have a warrant I must serve upon you, procured by these two gentlemen.

Down. These gentlemen! These rascals!

Brain. Keep the peace, I charge you in her majesty's name.

Down. I obey thee. What must I do, officer?

Brain. Go before Master Justice Clement, to answer what they can object against you, sir. I will use you kindly, sir.

Mat. Come, let's before, and make the Justice, Captain— [*Exit.*

Capt. B. The varlet's a tall man, before heaven! [*Exit.*

Down. Gull, you'll gi' me my cloak?

Step. Sir, I bought it, and I'll keep it.

Down. You will?

Step. Ay, that I will.

Down. Officer, there's thy fee; arrest him.

Brain. Master Stephen, I must arrest you.

Step. Arrest me! I scorn it; there, take your cloak, I'll none on't.

Down. Nay, that shall not serve your turn now, sir. Officer, I'll go with thee to the Justice's. Bring him along.

Step. Why, is not here your cloak; what would you have?

Down. I'll ha' you answer it, sir.

Brain. Sir, I'll take your word, and this gentleman's too, for his appearance.

Down. I'll ha' no words taken. Bring him along.

Brain. (*Aside.*) So, so, I have made a fair mash on't.

Step. Must I go?

Brain. I know no remedy, Master Stephen.

Down. Come along before me here. I do not love your hanging-look behind.

Step. Why, sir, I hope you cannot hang me for it. Can he, fellow?

Brain. I think not, sir. It is but whipping matter, sure!

Step. Why, then, let him do his worst, I am resolute. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in Justice Clement's house.*

Enter JUSTICE CLEMENT, KNO'WELL, KITELY, DAME KITELY, TIB, CASH, COB, *and Servants.*

Just. C. Nay, but stay, stay, give me leave. My chair, sirrah. You, Master Kno'well, say you went thither to meet your son?

Kno. Ay, sir.

Just. C. But who directed you thither?

Kno. That did mine own man, sir.

Just. C. Where is he?

Kno. Nay, I know not now; I left him with your clerk, and appointed him to stay for me.

Just. C. My clerk! About what time was this?

Kno. Marry, between one and two, as I take it.

Just. C. And what time came my man with the false message to you, Master Kitely?

Kite. After two, sir.

Just. C. Very good; but, Mrs. Kitely, how chance it that you were at Cob's, eh?

Dame K. An' please you, sir, I'll tell you. My brother Wellbred told me, that Cob's house was a suspected place—

Just. C. So it appears, methinks: but on.

Dame K. And that my husband used thither daily.

Just. C. No matter, so he used himself well, mistress.

Dame K. True, sir; but you know what grows by such haunts, oftentimes.

Just. C. I see rank fruits of a jealous brain, Mistress Kitely. But did you find your husband there, in that case, as you suspected?

Kite. I found her there, sir.

Just. C. Did you so? That alters the case. Who gave you knowledge of your wife's being there?

Kite. Marry, that did my brother Wellbred.

Just. C. How! Wellbred first tell her, then tell you after! Where is Wellbred?

Kite. Gone with my sister, sir, I know not whither.

Just. C. Why, this is a mere trick, a device; you are gulled in this most grossly, all! Alas, poor wench! wert thou suspected for this?

Tib. Yes, an't please you.

Just. C. I smell mischief here; plot and contrivance, Master Kitely. However, if you will step into the next room with your wife, and think coolly of matters, you'll find some trick has been played you. I fear there have been jealousies on both parts, and the wags have been merry with you.

Kite. I begin to feel it: I'll take your counsel. Will you go in, dame?

Dame K. I will have justice, Mr. Kitely.

[*Exit with Kitely.*

Just. C. You will be a woman, Mrs. Kitely, that I see. How now, what's the matter?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a gentleman i'the court without desires to speak with your worship.

Just. C. A gentleman! What is he?

Serv. A soldier, sir, he says.

Just. C. A soldier! My sword, quickly. A soldier speak with me! Stand by; I will end your matters anon. Let the soldier enter. Now, sir, what ha' you to say to me?

Enter CAPTAIN BOBADIL *and* MASTER MATTHEW.

Capt. B. By your worship's favour—

Just. C. Nay, keep out, sir, I know not your pretence; you send me word, sir, you are a soldier? Why, sir, you shall be answered here; here be them that have been among soldiers. Sir, your pleasure?

Capt. B. Faith! sir, so it is: this gentleman and myself have been most uncivilly wronged and beaten by one Downright, a coarse fellow about the town here; and, for my own part, I protest, being a man in no sort given to this filthy humour of quarrelling, he hath assaulted me in the way of my peace; despoiled me of mine honour; disarmed me of my weapons; and rudely laid me along in the open streets, when I not so much as once offered to resist him.

Just. C. Oh, God's precious! is this the soldier? Lie there, my sword, 'twill make him swoon, I fear; he is not fit to look on't, that will put up a blow.

Mat. An't please your worship, he was bound to the peace.

Just. C. Why, an' he were, sir, his hands were not bound, were they?

Serv. There's one of the varlets of the city, sir, has brought two gentlemen here; one upon your worship's warrant.

Just. C. My warrant?

Serv. Yes, sir; the officer says, procured by these two.

Just. C. Bid him come in. Set by this picture. What, Mr. Downright, are you brought at Mr. Freshwater's suit here?

Enter DOWNRIGHT, MASTER STEPHEN, *and* BRAINWORM.

Down. I'faith, sir! And here's another brought at my suit.

Just. C. What are you, sir?

Step. A gentleman, sir. Oh! uncle.

Just. C. Uncle! Who, Master Kno'well?

Kno. Ay, sir, this is a wise kinsman of mine.

Step. Uncle, I am wronged here monstrously; he charges me with stealing of his cloak; and would I might never stir, if I did not find it in the street by chance.

Down. Oh! did you find it, now? You said you bought it ere-while.

Step. And you said I stole it. Nay, now my uncle is here, I'll do well enough with you.

Just. C. Well, let this breathe awhile. You that have cause to complain there, stand forth. Had you my warrant for this gentleman's apprehension?

Capt. B. Ay, an't please your worship.

Just. C. Nay, do not speak in passion so. Where had you it?

Capt. B. Of your clerk, sir.

Just. C. That's well, an' my clerk can make warrants, and my hand not at 'em! Where is the warrant? Officer, have you it?

[*Capt. B. and Matthew steal off.*

Brain. No, sir; your worship's man, Master Formal, bid me do it for these gentlemen, and he would be my discharge.

Just. C. Why, Master Downright, are you such a novice to be served, and never see the warrant?

Down. Sir, he did not serve it on me.

Just. C. No; how then?

Down. Marry, sir, he came to me, and said he must serve it, and he would use me kindly, and so—

Just. C. Oh, God's pity! was it so, sir? He must serve it! Give me a warrant; I must serve one, too. You knave, you slave, you rogue! do you say you must, sirrah? Away with him to gaol. I'll teach you a trick for your must, sir.

Brain. Good sir, I beseech you, be good to me.

Just. C. Tell him he shall to the gaol; away with him, I say.

Brain. Ay, sir, if you will commit me, it shall be for committing more than this. I will not lose by my travel any grain of my fame certain. (*Throws off his disguise.*)

Just. C. How is this?

Kno. My man, Brainworm!

Step. Oh! yes, uncle, Brainworm has been with my cousin Edward and I all this day.

Just. C. I told you all there was some device.

Brain. Nay, excellent Justice, since I have laid myself thus open to you, now stand strong for me, both with your sword and your balance.

Just. C. Body o'me! a merry knave! Give me a bowl of sack. (*A Servant brings it him.*) If he belongs to you, Master Kno'well, I bespeak your patience.

Brain. That is it I have most need of. Sir, if you'll pardon me only, I'll glory in all the rest of my exploits.

Kno. Sir, you know I love not to have my favours come hard from me. You have your pardon; though I suspect you shrewdly for being of counsel with my son against me.

Brain. Yes, 'faith! I have, sir; though you retained me doubly this morning for yourself; first, as Brainworm; after, as Fitz-sword. I was your reformed soldier. 'Twas I sent you to Cob's upon the errand without end.

Kno. Is it possible? Or that thou shouldst disguise thyself so as I should not know thee?

Brain. Oh! sir, this has been the day of my metamorphoses; it is not that shape alone that I have run through to-day. I brought Master Kitely a message, too, in the form of Master Justice's man here, to draw him out o'the way, as well as your worship; while Master Wellbred might make a conveyance of Mistress Bridget to my young master.

Just. C. But, I pray thee, what hast thou done with my man, Formal?

Brain. 'Faith! sir, after some ceremony past, as making him drunk, first with story, and then with wine, but all in kindness, and stripping him to his shirt, I left him in that cool vein, departed, sold your worship's warrant to these two, pawned his livery for that varlet's gown to serve it in; and thus have brought myself, by my activity, to your worship's consideration.

Just. C. And I will consider thee in a cup of sack. Here's to thee; (*drinks*) which having drank off, this is my sentence, pledge me. Thou hast done, or assisted to nothing, in my judgment; but deserves to be pardoned for the wit o'the offence. Go into the next room; let Master Kitely into this whimsical business; and if he does not forgive thee, he has less mirth in him than an honest man ought to have. [*Exit Brainworm.*] Call Master Kitely and his wife there.

Re-enter Kitely *and* Dame Kitely.

Did not I tell you there was a plot against you? Did not I smell it out, as a wise magistrate ought? Have not you traced, have you found it, eh! Master Kitely?

Kite. I have; I confess my folly, and own I have deserved what I have suffered for it. The trial has been severe, but it is past. All I have to ask now is, that as my folly is cured, and my persecutors forgiven, my shame may be forgotten.

Just. C. That will depend upon yourself, Master Kitely; do not you yourself create the food for mischief, and the mischievous will not prey upon you. But come, let a general reconciliation go round, and let all discontents be laid aside. You, Mr. Downright, put off your anger; you, Master Kno'well, your cares; and do you, Master Kitely and your wife, put off your jealousies.

Kite. Sir, thus they go from me: kiss me, my wife;

See what a drove of horns fly in the air,
Wing'd with my cleansed and my credulous breath;
Watch 'em, suspicious eyes, watch where they fall;
See, see, on heads that think they've none at all.
Oh! what a plenteous world of this will come,
When air rains horns, all may be sure of some.

[*Exeunt.*

FALSE IMPRESSIONS;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



Act I.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

SIR OLIVER MONTRATH	SIMON SINGLE	LADY CYPRESS
ALGERNON	ISAAC	EMILY FITZALLAN
SCUD	PETER	MRS. BUCKRAM
EARLING	FRANK	RACHEL WILLIAMS
FARMER GAWDRY	JACK	JENNY SCUD

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in Scud's house.*

Enter SCUD.

Scud. Ha, ha! very good, very good! Here I am again. No bad night's work; pretty fairish job. Patient none the better, myself none the worse. Tipped two guineas for sitting up with old Lady Cypress; slept comfortably in an easy chair; nibbled a cold chicken with my lady's woman; tiffed a can of flip with the old butler; cribbed a kiss or two from the sweet lips of Mrs. Rachel, and gave her a box of cardamoms and a bottle of elder-flower water in return for the favour. So far, so good. Well done, Jerry Scud!—Hallo! Jack, boy, puppy! where are you?

Enter JACK.

Jack. Here am I, master.

Scud. Fetch my slippers, sirrah! Take off my boots.—[*Exit Jack.*]—My dear Jenny can't abide boots; very right, very reasonable; soil the carpet, daub her petticoats, annoy her olfactories. No wonder; delicate darling, my Jenny; sweet, pretty creature; perfect posy of a woman.

Re-enter JACK.

So, so, so! Take hold, sirrah! poll away! That will do, that will do! Set my slippers—red morroccos. Stockings not soiled; pretty well off there. Now, puppy Jack, where's your mistress?

Jack. Don't know.

Scud. How does she do?

Jack. Can't tell.

Scud. Is she at home?

Jack. A'n't sure.

Scud. Was she at home last night, or was she out?

Jack. Both: sometimes in, sometimes out.

Scud. You're a fool. Had she company?

Jack. No, no; no company.

Scud. Poor, dear Jenny!—What, quite alone?

Jack. No, no; not quite alone.

Scud. Jackanapes! didn't you tell me she had no company?

Jack. Yes, I did; because why? she bade me let no company in. Yet she wasn't quite alone by herself, because young 'squire Algernon was alone with her.

Scud. The devil and his dam! I'm done for. Get out of my sight! begone! away with you!—[*Exit Jack.*]—Ah! Jenny, Jenny, Jenny! you are bent upon sending your poor husband to heaven some day other, when it rains while the sun shines. How now, Peter!

Enter PETER.

Peter. Is there any alteration to be made in Lady Cypress's medicines?

Scud. None at all, none. Draughts, *sicut ante.*

Peter. They do no good.

Scud. They do no harm.

Peter. They are a mere chip in porridge: conserve of roses will never cure an asthma.

Scud. I know it: what then? A patient cured is a customer lost. In one word, therefore, *repetatur haustus.*

Peter. Be it so? Let nature do the work herself; our practice won't puzzle her. [*Exit.*

Scud. Miserable man that I am! my Jenny *tête-à-tête* with Harry Algernon! A rake, a rogue, a rantipole! Ha! here she comes.

Enter Mrs. Scud.

Light of my eyes, joy of my heart, fair as a lily, come to my arms! Out all night—sighed for my darling—counted the minutes—terrible long absence—how did you bear it? Doubt you've been lonesome.

Jenny. Not at all; far from it. Harry Algernon has been here.

Scud. What does he want?—Nothing to say to him.

Jenny. But you'll hear what he has to say to you.

Scud. Let him say it to me only. Not fit company for jewel Jenny.

Jenny. Ridiculous! He only wants a little of your interest with Lady Cypress.—Apropos, he brought you half a buck.

Scud. Let him take his half buck home again. Wouldn't name his name to Lady Cypress for all the venison in his father's park.

Jenny. Haven't you named his name to Lady Cypress? I doubt you have, Jerry, oftener than you ought, and in a way you should be ashamed of.

Scud. Only said what lawyer Earling said,—always had the law on my side.

Jenny. On which side was truth? on which side was gratitude? Recollect yourself.

Scud. What should I recollect?

Jenny. I'll tell you:—your adventure at Barnstaple races; when, in the pride of your heart, you must shew off in your new gig, forsooth. And where would you have been now, if the very man you have defamed hadn't saved your life at the peril of his own?

Scud. He did, he did; I don't deny it. Tit ran restive; tipped me over a wheelbarrow—tumbled under his heels—might have been kicked to atoms—surgeon's work as it was—snapped my arm—well it was not my neck—much obliged to Harry Algernon—never spoke against him since.

Jenny. Speak for him, man; it isn't enough you do not speak against him. Liberate your conscience.

Scud. Jenny, Jenny, liberate my conscience, as you call it, and I shall liberate my customers. If Harry Algernon will be a rantipole; if his women and his wine, his racing and his revelling, have crossed him out of the old lady's books, how am I to blame?

Jenny. Well, well; it isn't your business to set the worst side of his character to view; you have benefited by his courage and humanity; why don't you talk of them, and hold your tongue about his frailties?

Scud. My tongue can do nobody any harm. I tell you it is all up with him: lawyer Earling has done his business. If ever he enter my lady's doors, or touch a shillling of her fortune while he breathes, set me down for a fool and a false prophet.

Jenny. Suppose he does not aim at touching a shilling of her fortune; suppose he only wants—but here he comes, and will tell you what he wants.

Enter Algernon.

Alg. Ah! Jerry, my worthy fellow, give me your hand, give me your help. No, no; that's not the point at present; take your fingers off my pulse.

Scud. Very high, let me tell you—very full—gallops at a furious rate.

Alg. Expectation raises it, hope quickens it. Love is my disease; and if you don't stand my friend, disappointment will be my death.

Scud. Love! can't cure love; troubled enough to cure the consequences of it.

Alg. Harkye! Jerry, you are an intimate of Lady Cypress; I, though her nearest of kin, am an exile. Within her castle lives the idol of my soul, Emily Fitzallan; obtain for me an interview with her; and, though you can't cure love, you may rescue me from death, and then you may fairly boast of having saved one man's life by your practice.

Scud. Can't do't—not possible. Fair Emily never goes out of the castle.

Alg. Therefore it is I want to go into it.

Scud. Hopeless case—not upon the chances. Old lady won't bear to look upon you.

Alg. I'll excuse her if I may but look upon the young one. Manage that for me, my good fellow! Nobody knows me; nobody can find me out; I'm a stranger to the whole family.

Scud. And so you are likely to remain.

Jenny. Come, come, Jerry, cast about; be good-natured, and contrive some errand or pretence to introduce him. If there be a little danger, surely you may risk it for the preserver of your life.

Scud. Foolish scheme, jewel Jenny! foolish scheme—won't do.

Alg. Have you no medicines to send in? Can't I personate your pestle and mortar man?

Scud. Not you; I keep no such pestle and mortar man in my shop.

Alg. But you keep a heart in your body, and a memory in your brains; therefore, you must stand for me as I have stood for you.

Jenny. Hush! here comes Simon Single, the keeper of the castle. Leave me with him, and I warrant I have a key to his castle.

Alg. Angel of my hope, into your hands I commit my cause.

Scud. Ay, ay; leave your cause, and quit your company. [*Exit with Algernon.*

Enter Simon Single *and* Jenny Scud.

Jenny. Welcome, welcome, my good friend!

Simon. Glad to see you, pretty Mrs. Jane.

Jenny. So, you are taking your rounds this fair morning, Mr. Simon.

Simon. Better take them than Jerry's doses.

Jenny. I agree with you.

Simon. So would not they, perhaps.

Jenny. And how are all cronies at the castle? How does the venerable virgin, Mrs. Buckram, pretty Rachel Williams, and the rest of the fair nuns?

Simon. Name 'em not; you have not left your fellow. What is Rachel Williams? a baby.

Jenny. Well, but Mrs. Buckram, she's no baby.

Simon. No; on my word, she is of the race of the Anakims.

Jenny. No matter for that, friend Simon; you'll marry Buckram.

Simon. No, no; that buckram shall never stick in my skirts. Harapha of Gath wouldn't marry her. I am no knight-errant to encounter giants.

Jenny. I should think so; for if you were a true knight, you would not sleep before you had set free your lovely prisoner, Emily Fitzallan.

Simon. There's one a-coming will do that. Fair Emily will be a wife before you'll be a widow. Young Montrath is the man for her; he's expected every day with his uncle Sir Oliver. It is all agreed upon, and my lady's whole fortune will be settled on Miss Emily. There's a start for you! there's a sally from dependance to prosperity; from wanting everything to possessing all.

Jenny. And nothing left to Harry Algernon?

Simon. Yes; patience, if he possess it; and an ill-name, whether he merit it or not.

Jenny. Well, I can't see the justice of all this.

Simon. Who can, where lawyer Earling is concerned? That puppy of an attorney lords it over the whole castle; and now we are in the bustle of setting out Miss Emily in a style before Sir Oliver

arrives. There are fine dresses to be made, fine apartments to be furnished, and fresh servants to be hired for the heiress.

Jenny. Say you so? Fresh servants? Are you full? If not, I can recommend you such a lackey—the very man of men—Jerry shall bring him to you.

Simon. Bring him yourself: lead him over in a white bridle, and let me judge of his points and his paces.

Jenny. You shall. My life for yours, Miss Emily will be charmed with him.

Simon. Adieu! Time flies when I am with you. Once more, adieu! I shall expect you. I hope you are happy with your little doctor; but I must think you were much too a fine flower, to be plucked by an apothecary, and stuck into a gallipot. [*Exit.*

Jenny. He's off; you may come out of your hiding-hole; the coast is clear.

Enter ALGERNON, *followed by* SCUD.

Alg. Now, my fair advocate, what have you done for me? Is there any hope?

Jenny. Of the old lady's fortune, none; your aunt has not left you a shilling.

Alg. I'm glad of it.

Scud. I wonder why.

Jenny. Miss Emily is to have the whole.

Alg. I'm sorry for it.

Scud. I wonder wherefore.

Alg. I'll tell you, then. Had my aunt bequeathed to me her fortune, she would have probably restricted me from marrying Emily; having given it to Emily, she has doubtless tied her up from marrying me: had she done neither one nor the other, I have enough to maintain her, and the prize had been my own.

Jenny. And so she shall; I've a project for your meeting.

Alg. I doubt if I ought to seek it.

Scud. Very true; lay it aside altogether: it will bring a plaguy deal of mischief upon me, and do no good to you.

Alg. Tell it me, however.

Jenny. You'll comprehend it at once. There is a proper valet to be hired for the heiress, fit to wait upon her person, and grace the back of her chair at table.

Alg. I can't do it; I am not equal to the task; I can't approach so near, and yet refrain. When she spoke to me, I should be lost; when she looked on me, I should betray myself; and when I handed her the plate, I should present it on my knee.

Scud. Ay, then you would be vollied out of the window, and I kicked out of the doors. Now, silly Jenny, what's become of your project?

Alg. Hold there! though dangerous in the extreme, it is not altogether desperate. If I cannot undertake the offices you describe, I may yet present myself as a candidate for her service; and, in that character, perhaps, obtain an interview with my charmer. That hope is worth an effort.

Scud. It isn't worth a farthing, and will be pounds and pounds out of my way. Cursed scrape, foolish Jenny; cursed scrape!

Alg. But where shall I get a proper dress to appear in?

Scud. No where; you can't appear at all.

Jenny. Fear nothing; I'll provide you with a dress.

Scud. Egad! she has a provision for everything.

Alg. Who but must conquer that is armed by the fair? There is a rascal in the family, Earling by name, who has slanderously defamed me: I'll wring his ears from his head.

Scud. Take care: Earling is an attorney; and if he have any ears you will pay for wringing them; if he have none, you'll be puzzled to lay hold of them.

Alg. Come, Jerry, I see what staggers you; you are afraid of losing the old lady's custom.

Scud. You are right; I am. She takes physic, and you take pleasure.

Alg. Mark me! I'll not promise you to swallow as many medicines as she does; but, come what will, I'll guarantee you against all losses incurred on my account; so, fear nothing, but come on. Discretion I can't boast of, but in honour I will never be found wanting.

Scud. That's enough, that's enough! Deal upon honour, and I am with you. I love to do a good-natured action, when there's nothing to be lost by it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Lady Cypress's castle.*

Enter LADY CYPRESS, *followed by* EARLING.

Lady C. Enter, enter, Mr. Earling. You come upon a wish.

Earl. Ever prompt to approve myself your ladyship's most devoted and most absolute humble servant, upon a wish I come, upon a word I vanish.

Lady C. I am satisfied with your diligence; you may spare yourself the trouble of describing it.

Earl. I am dumb.

Lady C. Have you the memorandum about you that I dictated?

Earl. If my tears have not defaced them. Believe me, gracious lady, when I saw my own name set down to a bequest so munificent, I was covered with blushes, I was choked with gratitude.

Lady C. Out with it, then; out with your name, if such is the effect, and write in Algernon's: I warrant gratitude will not choke him.

Earl. Good, very good! Your ladyship has the gift of rallying me in the most pleasant way out of my metaphors. Choke is a figure somewhat of the strongest.

Lady C. Why, yes; and I should think you may venture upon the legacy, and risk the effects of it; so copy out your paper when you please.

Earl. I'll set my clerks upon it out of hand.

Lady C. You'll set the world upon it when I'm out of it; for you have totally cashiered Harry Algernon, and he is the son of my sister.

Earl. And your sister was the wife of his father, and his father was your unremitting persecutor, who vexed you with a suit in chancery for ten long years; and ten might have been added to ten, had it not been that I—I speak modestly of myself—I am no egotist—I speak simply of number one, and nobody else, for your barrister was a cipher—

Lady C. But a cipher put to number one adds no trifle to its value; so the upshot is, you gained the suit, and I paid the costs; a victory little to be envied: and, after all, is it just and equitable, that the son should suffer for the father's faults?

Earl. O jus et æquum! as if he had not faults enough of his own to warrant your exclusion of him!

Lady C. I have heard enough of his faults, I confess, if you are correct in describing them. If you have deceived me—

Earl. I! I deceive you! I defame your nephew! I who have never spoken of his offences but with regret and sorrow; never brought a story to your ears, but with the view of intercepting malice and softening down impressions. I deceive you! Then where is truth and virtue?

Lady C. Both in sight, as I should hope; for Emily appears.

Enter EMILY FITZALLAN.

Earl. I humbly take my leave. Miss Emily, I'm yours. Humph! not a word? Your faithful friend to serve you. Not a look?—Upstart! I'll marry the old lady, and cut her out of every shilling, I will. [*Aside, and exit.*

Lady C. Approach, my dear! Come near me. I must talk with you. Well, you have been to see the apartment I have newly furnished; and do you like it, Emily?

Emily. 'Tis elegant in the extreme; 'tis sumptuous.

Lady C. 'Tis your's, my dear; it is to grace my Emily that I have decked it out.

Emily. For me such finery?

Lady C. Child of my heart, for you. All I possess is your's.

Emily. I hope you will not tempt me to forget that I was poor and humble.

Lady C. I hope not. Nature has endowed you with admirable qualities; prosperity, I trust, will not pervert them. It does not quite come on you by surprise: you could not well suppose I should adopt the son of my most unrelenting persecutor.

Emily. I did not dare to reason in that case.

Lady C. But you must know how worthless in himself, how undeserving of my favour is he who, in respect of consanguinity, is the only person that could supersede you.

Emily. You speak of Mr. Algernon.

Lady C. I do; I speak of him, whom no one speaks of but with reproach and scorn.

Emily. I do confess I've heard much evil speaking; but 'twas from one who should have more respect for truth and decency than to traduce the nephew to the aunt.

Lady C. What do you mean? Would you defend a libertine?

Emily. No, madam; I defend no libertine. But you will not be angry if I avow that I detest a libeller. If he, who thus has poisoned your opinion, knows not the character, the manners, habits, sentiments, connections, perhaps not even the outward form and feature of the man whose fame he mangles, can I be to blame if I implore you, for the love of justice, to hear before you strike?

Lady C. What is this, Emily? What is this warmth?

Emily. Honest, not prudent; out of time and place; but still sincere, though rash.

Lady C. You call on me to hear before I strike; I now demand if you that strike have heard?—Do you know Algernon? Have you conversed with him?

Emily. Madam, I have.

Lady C. You have! When, where? He comes not hither; never was admitted, never will be, within these doors. Astonishing! that you should dare to tell me you have made acquaintance with this profligate.

Emily. Hear my defence. You gave me leave to pass a little time, for change of air, after my late confinement, at your Hill-farm. One evening I had rambled about a mile from home, when, upon entering a little copse, through which my footpath led, judge of my horror, when a villain, such I must call him, surprised me, seized me; and, in spite of my cries, prayers, and entreaties—

Lady C. Merciful Providence! what do you tell me?

Emily. A dreadful tale I should have had to tell, or died ere I could tell it, had not heaven sent me a rescue, a brave, brave preserver! who, with a soul all fire, and motion quick as lightning, sprung on the assailant, grasped him in his arms; and, after a contention, furious though short, hurled him to the ground, breathless and maimed with bruises. Which of these merit the name of profligate? Not he that saved me—It was Algernon.

Lady C. Algernon, do you say? My worthless nephew Algernon! Take care!

Emily. Renounce me if I tell you an untruth.

Lady C. I'm all astonishment. Who was the assailant?

Emily. Madam, I know not. Your heroic nephew bore me half dead and fainting to my house; 'twas not till then I knew him to be Algernon. He staid with me no longer than till the care of the good people had recovered me. The next morning I returned to the castle, fearing to remain any longer in so solitary a place. Of Algernon I saw no more. Now suffer me to ask, if this be the conduct of a profligate?

Lady C. 'Tis a strange story.

Emily. 'Tis a true one, madam.

Lady C. Why have you kept it to yourself thus long? You've been returned two days.

Emily. Because until this hour I have not seen your spirits in a state to bear the slightest agitation.

Lady C. And do you think the agitation slight that I now suffer? No, I see your danger, Emily; I see your weak credulity, and much I fear you'll find yourself the dupe of Algernon. What business could he have at my Hill-farm?

Emily. Madam, your tenant's wife nursed Mr. Algernon.

Lady C. She never should have nursed you, Emily, or harboured you one moment, had I known it.

Emily. That's hard; but I must suffer and be silent.

Lady C. Be silent, then, and go to your chamber; there you may meditate on what you have been, and call to mind, with timely recollection, what you may be again. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*The Castle Hall.*

Simon Single, Farmer Gawdry, *and his Son* Isaac, *discovered.*

Simon. Master Gawdry, Master Gawdry, have I not said the word? and will not the word that I have said, serve and suffice to put thee out of doubt, that Isaac thy son, thy son Isaac, will not do?

Gawd. I pray you, now, Master Simon Single, be kind-hearted, and consider of it. I should be main proud to have him in my lady's livery; he's a docile lad, and can turn his hand, as I may say, to anything.

Simon. Let him turn it to the plough. He's a bumpkin. Let him drive the team, and dung the land; he's born to them. Let him ring the hogs, and tend the stye, and toil in the drudgery of his vocation. Nature never fashioned him to be the lackey of a lady. You are answered, Farmer Gawdry.

Gawd. Ay, master, I am answered; but I am not heard. I hann'a told you half the things my boy can do.

Simon. What can he do? Unfold.

Gawd. A power—Speak for yourself, Isaac; tell the gentleman what you can do.

Isaac. A'looks so grave, a'daunts me.

Gawd. What should daunt thee, boy? Don't hang thy head; but up, and tell him boldly what canst do.

Isaac. I wull, father, I wull. I can sing psalms, shoot flying, worm the puppies, cut capons, climb the rookeries, and make gins for polecats.

Simon. Wonderful! And can't you eat and drink, and sleep and snore abundantly? Can't you wench when you have an opportunity, swear now and then upon occasion, and lie a little when it serves your purpose?

Isaac. Ees, ees; I know something of all these matters.

Gawd. I told you he was fit to wait upon any lady in the land.

Simon. Upon any lady but the Lady Cypress he is welcome; upon her he may wait long enough before he get any other answer than I've given to you. *Dictum est.* Good morning to you.

Gawd. Good morning to me, indeed! How long, I trow, have you been this great man, to carry

yourself in your geers so stately? I can call to mind the day when you came into this family as mere a bumpkin as you think my boy to be.

Simon. Keep your temper, neighbour Gawdry, keep your temper! Mount your steed, amble homewards; visit your oxes and your boxes; comfort your good dame, and present my humble service to her.

Gawd. I won't comfort her; I won't present your humble service to her: I don't find you are so willing to do her any service; and, as for humble, it don't belong to you. But mark my words—time is at hand—county election's coming on—ask me for a plumper, then, do; ask me, I say, for a plumper, and mind where I'll direct you to look for it. Come along, Isaac, come along!

[*Exit with Isaac.*

Simon. We men in power, when we have a place to give away, make nine enemies to one friend; and 'tis nine to one if that friend don't turn an enemy before he is well warm in office.—Ah! doctor, is it you?

Enter SCUD.

Scud. Your servant, your servant! I have brought you the young man Jenny recommended.

Simon. Have you so, have you so? Where did you fall in with him?

Scud. Crossed upon him by mere chance—clever fellow—wants a place—think he'll suit Miss Emily—no objection, dare say, on his part—won't haggle for wages—Will you see him?

Simon. Hold a moment! Has he got a character?

Scud. Two; a good one and a bad one; but the good one is what he would prefer being known by.

Simon. I give him credit for that. What name does he bear?

Scud. Henry, alias Harry; you may take your choice.

Simon. He has two of them, it seems. Very good! What besides?

Scud. Scudamore.

Simon. A branch of the Scuds we'll suppose.—But we'll see him. Where does he come from?

Saud. T'other side of the country.—Better let him answer questions for himself. Come in, young man; present yourself to Mr. Simon Single, the respectable major domo of this illustrious family.

Enter ALGERNON.

Simon. So, so! What's here? This is no drudge for all work and all weathers. This is a thing for Sundays and for holydays! As clean a peg to hang a livery on as heart could wish. (*Aside.*)—Well, Henry Scudamore, you're for a place; and, I conclude, one there's least to do will please you most. You are not used to labour.

Alg. I am not.

Simon. Nor ever mean to be, I dare believe.

Scud. Oh, fie! you'll put him down: he's modest to a fault.

Simon. If that be his only fault, we'll overlook it. What can you do?

Alg. My best to please my mistress, and something, I should hope, to gain your favour.

Simon. Egad! you've found the way to that already. I like your manners, countenance, deportment; and I am no mean judge, although I say it.

Alg. Sir, you have all the right in life to say it; for if none else will give us a good word, we must e'en praise ourselves.

Simon. A sharp wit, let me tell you.—Harkye! Henry, your name I know; the place from whence you come I do not know; your qualifications remain to be proved, and your character, I dare say, if it be of your own giving, will be an excellent good one.

Alg. With your leave, I should prefer to speak upon all these points with the lady I aspire to serve.

Simon. Aspire to serve! Sir, your most obedient humble servant. I shall aspire to ask you no further questions; but turn you over for examination to the lady of the house.

Alg. Is this the lady of the house now approaching?

Enter MRS. DOROTHY BUCKRAM.

Simon. Of the lower house she is the lady. Make your best bow to Mrs. Dorothy Buckram; but don't be too aspiring; if you offer to salute her, you are a lost man; that blessing don't fall to my lot above once in a twelvemonth, and some would not aspire even to that.

Mrs. B. What is this ribaldry that you are talking? and who is this young man?

Simon. A youth of promise; a candidate for service; one that aspires to the supreme delight of carrying clogs, and combing lap-dogs, for the lady heiress.

Mrs. B. What is his name?

Simon. Henry.

Mrs. B. A gentle name, soothing and soft. I much approve of Henry; I've ever had a prejudice for Henry.

Simon. Simon is sweeter.

Scud. Jerry is more brisk.

Simon. Sweet Simon, simple Simon! Why, 'tis music; it is a lute. [pet.

Scud. But Jerry sounded in F sharp, is a trum-

Mrs. B. Yes, truly, in the ears of a hen-pecked husband when his partlet cackles. But can't this youngster speak? Henry should speak like Henry: let us hear you. Were I the mistress you aspired to serve, what would you say to me?

Alg. Silence becomes a servant; 'tis a virtue; but if I were your equal and your lover—

Mrs. B. Ah! then what would you say?

Alg. Then if you stood all tempting as you are, full in my sight, and cheered your happy swain with smiles so lovely, so languishing, so alluring—

Mrs. B. What would you do?

Alg. I'd snatch you to my heart, press you, caress you, smother you with fondness—

Mrs. B. And so you will. Let go, or I'll scream out.

Simon. Bravo! you'll do. A very good rehearsal.

Scud. A very villanous one, if my Jenny have had a part in it.

Simon. I give you joy, young man; your fortune's made.

Mrs. B. I wonder who has taught him this assurance!

Scud. Oh! madam, he's a pupil of my Jenny's; I've nothing to do with him.

Simon. Come, come; there's no offence; 'twas a fair challenge, and no true Englishman would have refus'd it. Courage, my lad! you'll never want a service. Let us adjourn. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY CYPRESS *and* EARLING.

Lady C. Well, now you've heard the story, what do you say to it?

Earl. Nothing. [lieve it.

Lady C. What, nothing? Then you don't be-

Earl. Pardon me, madam; I believe it happened just as Miss Emily relates it to you; I do believe there was a man set on to frighten her, and that he took a drubbing from her hero, for which I also perfectly believe he was well paid.

Lady C. Why should you not suppose it might be real? There are such drunken fellows up and down.

Earl. But sober men will not be taken in by such stale stricks. You meet the same, or something very like it, in every paltry novel that you read. The man's escaped; you'll never hear of him; his bargain was not made to go to prison.

Lady C. I see it now; I see through the contrivance.

Earl. Yes, madam; and you may also see which way your property will go, if ever miss have the disposal of it.

Lady C. I'll never sign those deeds in her behalf till she consent to marry as I'd have her. Indeed, indeed, you have saved me, my good sir, from a most rash and inconsiderate measure.

Earl. Now is the time; I'll seize the happy moment. My ever honoured lady, I but live to save and serve you: my whole life has been devoted to your happiness. Thr founder of your fortune, I have fought your battles manfully, and stood a siege as long as that of Troy in your defence; ay, and would die in it, if need required.

Lady C. There is no need; I know your services; and, at my death, you'll find I have not under-rated them.

Earl. She melts—I'll strike! (*Aside.*)—Not at your death, dear lady, (may that be far, far off!) but with your life reward me.—Ha! that tells she yields to the impression. (*Aside.*)

Lady C. How with my life? You have my good opinion, you have my friendship; what more can I do for you?

Earl. Think of me only as I think of you. Why should a thankless girl engross your fortune? Use it, employ it; many happy days are yet in store for you. When the Lord Cypress married you, he was your senior by a pretty many years more than your ladyship is mine.

Lady C. Your inference from that?

Earl. I dare not quite reveal it. I would wish your ladyship to take it to your thoughts. A hint, a word, a look, so it were kind, would greatly help me to declare it to you.

Lady C. We'll talk no more at present, if you please; you will remember you're my agent, sir, and I will not forget your services. Good day.

Earl. May every day and every hour be happy as I could wish them, and you will be blessed.—'Twill do; her pride is dropping from the perch; she totters; I shall catch her. [*Aside, and exit.*

Enter Simon Single.

Lady C. How now, Simon! Have you found a proper lad amongst the tenants' sons to serve Miss Emily?

Simon. Of them not one, so help me, honoured lady—I cannot recommend them; they are boors, clowns, clodpates.

Lady C. What is to be done?

Simon. There is a youth attending; doctor Scud speaks in his favour.

Lady C. Scud's a babbler.—What do you say?

Simon. He is above the level of these indigenous smock-frocks and hob-nails. I should advise your ladyship to see him.

Lady C. By all means; let him enter.

Simon. Henry, you are permitted to approach; the Lady Cypress deigns to look upon you. Make your obeisance.

Enter Algernon.

Lady C. So, this is the young man; Henry you call him. What other name belongs to him?

Simon. Scudamore, an please you; so he gives in himself.

Lady C. No vulgar name; and, so far as appearances bespeak, no vulgar person. Well, Henry Scudamore, you want a place.

Alg. I wish to serve your ladyship.

Lady C. Have you been in service?

Alg. Never.

Lady C. So I should guess. What leads you now to seek it?

Alg. The ambition of belonging to your ladyship: but I would answer more directly, might I presume—

Lady C. I understand you. Simon, leave the room.—[*Exit Simon.*]—You seem embarrassed. Was it not your wish to speak to me in private?

Alg. Madam, it was.

Lady C. And what have you to impart, that one, who possibly may be your follow-servant, might not be privy to?

Alg. Madam, I am a gentleman by birth; that being known amongst my fellow-servants might chance to raise an evil mind against me, and make my humble station painful to me: your candour will not think the worse of me because I am unfortunate.

Lady C. No, not the worse in charity of thought; but I cannot employ you in my service. No gentleman must wait upon that lady, to whom, I else, perhaps, had destined you; no gentleman, at least, of your appearance.

Alg. I'm sorry for it; but it is my fate to be judged by appearances, and condemned by reports.

Lady C. If you have fallen into this decay by mere misfortune, or injurious treatment, I can pity you; nay, Henry Scudamore, if that be your name, and if I knew your story, (which, at present, I have not time to hear,) I could do more; I could (and something whispers me I would) consider your necessities, and help you.

Alg. I am the victim, madam, of a villain. My story is soon told, for it is founded on a simple fact, which I can make appear to full conviction, if you will condescend to give me hearing, and suffer me to state such evidence as cannot be opposed by my defamer.

Lady C. I know not what to say to that, young man; I have no strength to spare for others' burthens, and am already loaded with my own, even to the breaking down of my weak frame. If it be a case of pity, I've a hand that's open to your wants without inquiry; if it be a matter of grievance and redress, I would recommend you to state it to my lawyer, Mr. Earling, and he shall see you righted.

Alg. I humbly thank you; I will state it to him, and trust the goodness of your heart will see me righted.

Lady C. Ah! I've no heart, no health, no nerves, to hear you. You must excuse me, Henry Scudamore; I dare not undertake to arbitrate; but wait Sir Oliver Montrath's arrival, and he shall hear you; he's a noble gentleman.

Alg. Where shall I wait the whilst?

Lady C. Where? Let me see—yes, you may stay this night here in the castle. My old servant, Simon, will entertain you at the second table. Does that content you?

Alg. I were most unthankful if it did not.

Lady C. Follow me, then, and I will give my orders. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Emily's Apartment.*

Enter Emily Fitzallan, *followed by* Rachel Williams.

Emily. Rachel!

Rachel. Madam, what are your commands?

Emily. Don't answer me in that style. I have so long been a dependant, and lived in such familiarity with you, my good Rachel, in particular, that, though you are my servant, I don't wish you to use a language to me so submissive.

Rachel. Whatever language you would have me use, so it will but convey the same respect, I will endeavour to conform to it.

Emily. I would fain keep upon such terms with fortune, that I may fall back to my former poverty without a pang; therefore, if ever you perceive me giddy with prosperity, recall my recollection to the low situation I emerged from; and do it honestly, my girl; don't spare me.

Rachel. You'll want no monitor to warn you against pride; and yet, as you require sincerity, there is one warning I conceive is needful just at this crisis.

Emily. State it without reserve.

Rachel. Are you not now in danger of incurring your patroness's most severe displeasure?

Emily. Perhaps I am; but be explicit with me.

Rachel. Your champion, Algernon, has he not left a thorn in that soft heart?

Emily. If you call gratitude a thorn, he has.

Rachel. Are you quite sure 'tis only gratitude? May it not soon be love? Nay, give me leave, is it not love already?

Emily. Well, if it is, how can I strive against it?

Rachel. Prudence will tell how.

Emily. Prudence will tell me an old gossip's tale; but who, that is in love, will hear her out?

Rachel. Are you aware how fatal it will be to all your expectations, if my lady discover your attachment?

Emily. Are you aware how natural it is to love the man who saves you from destruction? My lady gives me riches, Algernon rescues my life and honour: I was lost but for his courage, I am only poor without her bounty; and if she demand that I should sacrifice my heart's affections, she makes conditions that I cannot grant, nor would her fortune bribe me to the attempt.

Rachel. Do you know Mr. Algernon's character?

Emily. Does he that blackens it? What does my lady know but what that lawyer instils into her ear? Infamous man! And why does he defame him? Why, but because he may retain his power in the estate, and garble it at pleasure: besides, he has an ample legacy. Believe me, I hold it a disgrace to read my name in the same page with his; nor would I be his partner in the crime of plundering Algernon; but that I live in hopes the time will come when I may render back the unlawful spoil.

Rachel. Then temporize the whilst, my dearest lady, or that time never will be yours.

Emily. 'Tis right; you counsel well; and now I will confide a secret to you: I have warned Algernon, who is his enemy, and what base stories have been forged against him.—Ah! who is this? 'Tis he, 'tis he himself!

Enter ALGERNON.

Alg. Hush! not so loud.

Emily. Your name was on my lips. How came you here? How did you gain admission, and what have you in view by this disguise? You may disclose; this friendly girl is secret.

Alg. Then let her stay; I would not be surprised in private with you. I am here by sufferance of Lady Cypress: I have seen my aunt for the first time, conversed with her, and lodged a plea for further hearing, when her friend, Sir Oliver Montrath, shall be at leisure: one of his servants is already come; he may be soon expected.

Emily. And his nephew, does he accompany him?

Alg. I did not ask that question of the servant; but, if you wish it, I will make the inquiry.

Emily. No, let it pass. I know your aunt expects him.—Hark! Rachel, somebody is at the door; see who it is.

Rachel. Madam, there's nobody; nor any sound that I can hear.

Emily. Stand where you are, and listen.—What is the meaning of this dress you wear?

Alg. I put it on to counterfeit a servant; or, I should rather say, to ask for service. Will you not try me, Emily? Don't take my character from that attorney; I'll serve you honestly.

Emily. You serve! you're jesting.

Alg. Am I not your servant? I am your faithful servant.

Emily. My heroic preserver! that is your rightful character, and by that title you have a claim upon my gratitude, which only can expire with life: and now inform me what you have in view by this adventure.

Alg. I am not so romantic as to think I can maintain my post longer than till to-morrow, to which time I have a furlough by authority; if fortune stand my friend, I may effect something within that period; but even now am I not supremely blessed to see you, hear you, and behold that face, that was of late so pale and wan with terror, restored to all the lustre of its charms?

Emily. That face, assure yourself, will never be turned from you to league with those who seek to rob you of your fame and fortune.

Alg. I am not robbed of what enriches you.

Emily. The heart, that swells with indignation against all that wrong you, had, but for you, been cold and motionless.

Alg. Oh! Emily, forbear.

Emily. This and no more: I never will be made the slave of interest or dupe of slander. My confidence in you cannot be shaken, my obligations cannot be computed. The life that I possess is of your giving. What can I say, but that I live for you? Now leave me, Henry; not a word, but leave me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter LADY CYPRESS *and Servant.*

Lady C. Hark! 'tis the porter's bell: run to the hall, and tell me if Sir Oliver's arrived.

Serv. Madam, he's here: Sir Oliver is present.

Enter SIR OLIVER MONTRATH.

Lady C. Welcome, most welcome! May I trust my senses? This is above hope, that you and I should live to meet again.

Sir O. My ever dear, my ever honoured lady!

Lady C. Time has gone lightly over you, my friend. You, that have traversed sea and land, are whole; I, that have tempted neither, am become a shattered wreck on shore.

Sir O. Not so, not altogether so, thank heaven! Time is a surly guest, whose courtesy does not improve by long acquaintance with us; but we'll not rail at him, since he permits us once more to meet. And here's the same old castle still unspoiled by modern foppery; ay, and the same old grandsires firm in their frames, with not one wrinkle more than when I parted from them years ago.

Lady C. Ay, years, indeed! but you have filled them up with glory; your's has been a life of themes for future history, a field of laurels to adorn your tomb; mine has been tame and simple vegetation.

Sir O. I have lived a soldier's life; but, heaven be thanked, I've plundered no nabob, stripped no rajah of his pearls and pagodas, nor have I any blood upon my sword, but what a soldier's honour may avow; but you have here a relict of my gallant comrade, Major Antony Fitzallan. He was wounded by my side, carried off the field, and died in my arms. With his last breath he bequeathed ('twas all he had to bestow) a blessing to his daughter, and charged me, if I lived to come to England, to thank you for your charity, and be a friend to her.

Lady C. I trust you will find her worthy of your friendship.

Sir O. Is she good, is she amiable? Has she her father's principles, her mother's purity?

Lady C. See her, and judge; she's naturally sincere: but where is your nephew? where is Mr. Lionel? I reckoned with much pleasure upon seeing him.

Sir O. Ah! my good lady, there I am unfortunate. I have built upon the hopes of presenting him to you; but it cannot be at present, Poor Lionel is indisposed, and must bear his disappointment with what philosophy he can.

Lady C. The disappointment is reciprocal: a little time, I hope, will bring him to us.

Sir O. I wish it may—but, look, who comes—

Lady C. This is my orphan charge. This is our Emily.

Enter Emily Fitzallan.

Sir O. The very image of her lovely mother.

Lady C. My dear, this is Sir Oliver Montrath, mine and your father's friend; as such, you'll honour him.

Sir O. As such, I claim the privilege to embrace and press her to my heart. My child, my charge, devolved upon me by a father's legacy, when breathing out his gallant soul in prayers and blessings for his Emily.

Emily. Oh! sir, were you, were you beside him at that dreadful moment?

Sir O. I was, my child; these arms supported him, covered with wounds, and crowned with victory—alas! how dearly purchased!

Emily. Then let his last commands be ever sacred; if you have any such in charge to give me, impart them, I conjure you.

Sir O. I have none but blessings to impart. In fortune's gifts the hero had no share, in virtue's he abounded. In the care of this, your generous benefactress, he had left you; to that and heaven's protection he bequeathed you.

Emily. I am content; and what before I owed in gratitude to this beneficent and noble lady, I now will pay with filial obedience and duty superadded. Suffer me, dearest madam, from this moment to call myself your daughter.

Lady C. As such I have adopted you; remember now, my child, the duty you have taken on yourself, the authority you have consigned to me. All rights parental centre now in me; your happiness, your credit, your establishments, are trusts for which I am responsible. You have no other task but to obey.

Emily. Obedience, madam, has its limitations; but such as I would render to my father I'll pay to you. Have I your leave to withdraw?

Lady C. You may, my dear; your spirits seem to need it. Go and compose yourself.

[*Exit Emily.*

Sir O. Exquisite creature! I'm enchanted with her. By heaven! 'twould be the height of my ambition, the object I have most at heart in life, to see my Lionel—Oh! that I could! here kneeling at her feet. Born of such parents, trained by such instructions, and graced with charms so lovely, Emily, without a fortune, is a match for princes.

Lady C. If such be your disinterested wish, (and greater happiness I could not pray for,) I trust my fortune thrown into her scale will not make her appear less worthy of your nephew, or cause you to retract your good opinion.

Sir O. No, surely; but I doubt if I should wish your fortune to go out of the right channel even to Emily. We that have never married should regard our nephews as our sons.

Lady C. But does affinity impose on me an obligation to bestow my property on one that merits nothing, to the wrong of her that merits all?

Sir O. Is that the character of Algernon? Is he so undeserving?

Lady C. Ah! there, my friend, there is my terror; the destiny I dread; the man, of all men living, the most dangerous to my peace is Algernon.

Sir O. Indeed!

Lady C. Preserve my Emily from him; save her from Algernon.

Sir O. Is Algernon, then, born to be a curse to both of us?

Lady C. Explain yourself.

Sir O. He is your nephew, therefore I was silent; but if he's dangerous to your peace of mind, to mine he's fatal: in one word, the wound, of which my hapless Lionel now languishes, was given by the hand of Algernon.

Lady C. Horrible wretch! his murderer.

Sir O. I say not that; for modern courtesy gives not that name to duellists, and honour sanctifies their bloody deeds.

Lady C. Away with all such honour! Truth disavows it, nature revolts from it, religion denounces it. Oh! he is born to be my shame and torment.

Sir O. Be patient for awhile; suspend your judgment.

Lady C. No, I regard a duellist with horror; I hold him as an agent of the enemy of mankind, sent to disturb society, and rend the parent's and the widow's hearts asunder: one action, one only action, and that a doubtful one, has met my ear in favour of that wretch whom I call nephew, and henceforth, even that one I totally discredit, and renounce him.

Sir O. Hold, I conjure you. In the midst of wrath let us remember justice. I, like you, abhor a duellist professed; yet I am taught by long experience how to make allowances for younger spirits, and warmer passions, that will not submit to meet the world's contempt, and scorn its prejudices.

Lady C. Away! you talk this language by profession; reason declares against it.

Sir O. Reason demands that we should pause in judgment. When two men draw their swords upon each other, reason will tell us one must be to blame; but ere we fix the blame upon that one, justice decrees that we should hear them both.

Lady C. What says your nephew? He will speak the truth.

Sir O. I should expect he would; yet I'll not wholly trust to any man's report against another in his own cause; and in this sentiment my nephew honourably coincides, for he declines all answer to my questions, and will state nothing to affect or criminate his antagonist. Ha! who is this?

Enter Algernon.

Lady C. Go, go; I did not send for you.

Alg. I know it; but I wish to speak in private with Sir Oliver Montrath.

Sir O. With me? Who is this man? I do not know him. Is he one of your ladyship's domestics?

Lady C. No; he made offer of his services, but upon talking with him I perceived he had a list of grievances to state, and not being then at leisure, I believe I told him he might wait your coming, and make his suit to you.

Sir O. And so he may; his looks plead in his cause. Is it your wish to speak with me, young man?

Alg. It is.

Sir O. Alone?

Alg. Alone, if you'll permit it.

Sir O. Freely; and when I can command my time, it shall be your's. I'll call for you.

Alg. I shall attend your summons. [*Exit.*

Sir O. I'm curious what this man can have to tell me. Do you conjecture?

Lady C. There is a mystery about him. He says he is a gentleman by birth, and so far I believe him. Of what he had to tell besides I waved the hearing, but offered him relief: that did not seem his object, nor was it mine to take a gentleman into my service. But you will know the whole: shall we adjourn, and see what is become of Emily?

Sir O. With all my heart; and I hope the mournful subject of our last interview may be no more revived. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Enter Lawyer Earling *meeting* Algernon.

Earl. So, whence come you? who are you? what's your business?

Alg. Sir, I don't know you.

Earl. Not know me! that's much. You must be new, indeed.

Alg. Are you that worthy gentleman, Mr. Earling?

Earl. I am the very person.

Alg. Heaven reward you! Your fame is sounded forth through all the county.

Earl. Are you not hired to wait on Miss Fitzallan?

Alg. No, sir, my character don't seem to recommend me to the Lady Cypress. If you would speak for me, 'twould make my fortune.

Earl. How can I speak for you, whom I don't know?

Alg. 'Twould be as easy as to speak against me.

Earl. But I do neither; I have no concern with you or with your character.

Alg. Indeed! they told me you were famous for it.

Earl. For what is it I'm famous?

Alg. For speaking about characters you've no concern with; therefore, I pray you, sir, take mine in hand, and do me justice. I suspect some villain has cruelly defamed me. Doesn't an action lie for that at law?

Earl. Go; you're a fool; begone!

Alg. I am a fool, to ask a knave for justice. [*Exit.*

Earl. Knave! do you call me knave? I'll trounce you, sirrah! I'll blow you to the moon, audacious beggar! Ah! master Doctor, do you know that rascal?

Enter SCUD.

Scud. I know several rascals, but which of them do you mean?

Earl. That impudent new comer, that mad fellow, that dares to insult me in my lady's house. Call me a knave, indeed, and to my face! did you ever hear such insolence?

Scud. Never, never. If he had only said it behind your back, why, 'twere but *quid* for *quo;* it would have passed; but to your face! Oh! monstrous!

Earl. I'll set him in the stocks; I'll have his ears nailed to the whipping-post.

Scud. No, don't do that; if whipping-posts had ears, they'd hear the cries of those that are tied to them, and pity them.

Earl. Pooh! you're as great a fool as he, methinks: I've done with you. Look to yourself, Sir Gallipot, your reign will not be long on this ground, take my word for it. [*Exit.*

Scud. There, there, there! I'm blown up, ousted, all is over with me. Thought to have had my lady's custom till her death: perceive now she will be one of the few patients that outlive my prescriptions. Oh! fine work, fine work!

Re-enter ALGERNON.

Alg. How now, friend Scud! what ails you?

Scud. Friend! call me fool. I'm ruined by my friendship. You've played the devil's dance with that d—d lawyer, and set him whip and spur upon my back.

Alg. Why, that's his proper place: back-biting is his trade?

Scud. And what's my trade, do you think? where shall I drive it? my gallipots may grow into the shelves for everlasting, if I'm to be made the cat's-paw of your schemes and foolish Jenny's; but I'll go tell my lady all about you.

Alg. No, no, you'll not do that, my little Scud.

Scud. I'll tell you what I won't do—lose my customer.

Alg. Ay, but consider what an ornament your ears are to your head; and you'll lose them incontinently if you betray me.

Scud. My ears, indeed! look to your own; the lawyer has sworn to nail them to the whipping-post. I've got a wig, so have not you, my master. Besides, I'm not quite certain but my lady's custom will be the greater loss: She takes a world of physic.

Enter SIMON SINGLE.

Simon. Who talks of physic? I've the best of medicines: a case of old canary, which my lady has ordered us to tap, and drink a welcome to our noble guest, Sir Oliver Montrath. I've put my lips to it: 'tis supernaculum.

Scud. I see you have; I see 'tis supernaculum, for some of it has got under your wig already.

Simon. My wig; no, no, Dame Dorothy set that awry with a kind cuff o' the ear.

Scud. You put your lips to her, too, it should seem.

Simon. Perhaps I did, but that's all buckram, Doctor. Ah! Henry, give me your hand. Stand fast, my gallant hearts; lo! where she comes again, a portly sail right on upon our convoy. My life upon't, she's bound to the Canaries.

Enter MRS. BUCKRAM.

Mrs. B. Oh! thou rash youth, thou hast undone thyself. Earling has vowed thy ruin.

Scud. He has vowed my ruin, too, and that is one of the few vows that he will keep religiously.

Mrs. B. Ah! he's a carnal man; he'll swallow up this castle and its fortunes.

Simon. I hope the turrets of it will stick by the way and choke him. He sha'n't swallow the canary in it, however; we'll be beforehand with him at that sport.

Scud. I would I had the cooking of one dose for him! I wish he'd swallow that. It should be a settler.

Mrs. B. What has he done by Harry Algernon? There's malice for you; there's a batch of mischief; blasted his character, garbled his fortune, and turned my lady's heart to stone against him.

Simon. Flint, iron, adamant. I told her so: "Madam," said I, "the gentleman is wronged; the neighbours, where he lives, all give him a good word, the gentry love him, his father doats on him, the poor adore him: there is but one bad character betwixt him and your attorney. Judge you," said I, "which party it belongs to."

Alg. Did you say this?

Simon. I did.

Alg. Then you're an honest fellow.

Simon. I know that well enough. Yes, I did say it.

Scud. How did she take it?

Simon. As she takes your physic: gulped and made wry faces; but it went down.

Scud. I hope 'twill stay by her.

Simon. I hope it will, and when we've drunk confusion to attornies, I'll deal her out another dose a little stronger. D— it!—no, hold, I will not swear; I'll do it coolly: come, we'll call a council in the Canaries.

Scud. Agreed; I'll drink myself into a little courage, and have a word with the old lass myself.

Simon. Come on, my hearts! Henry, conduct the lady. You may solicit her fair hand in safety. Jerry and I have wigs. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

LADY CYPRESS, EMILY, SIR OLIVER MONTRATH, *and* EARLING *discovered.*

Lady C. Now, Emily, you see what misery that wicked man has brought upon us all.

Emily. I am sorry for Sir Oliver's misfortune.

Lady C. I hope you have also pity for the sufferer.

Emily. I trust I have for all that merit it.

Earl. I'm sure Miss Emily will not attempt to extenuate the guilt of such an action.

Emily. You may be sure I never will defend a guilty person, knowing him for such; be you as careful how you criminate an absent man till you have proofs against him. (*To Sir O.*) Sir, you are silent; I should wish to know if you have anything to urge against him.

Sir O. Nothing, my dear, I'm listening with attention, and, therefore, silent. I should be sorry were you less unwilling to give up your opinion of a man who rendered you such service.

Lady C. What service? Earling, you have heard the story; let us hear what you have to say upon it.

Earl. If Miss Fitzallan will suffer me to put a simple question to her.

Emily. By all means; put your question.

Earl. When Mr. Algernon, by happy chance, came in so opportunely to her rescue, can Miss Fitzallan say what brought him thither so far from his own home?

Emily. I never asked what caused him to be there, nor did he tell me.

Earl. We'll call it, then, a very happy chance without a cause, or a most fortunate presentiment that somewhere in that grove there would be found a damsel in the power of some vile ruffian, whom he was doomed to rescue. Some people might suppose this a collusion, but Miss Fitzallan can remove all doubts by telling us who was the villain that offered her that violence.

Sir O. Can you do this, my Emily?

Emily. I cannot.

Earl. Did Mr. Algernon know who he was?

Emily. I do not think he did.

Earl. Did he secure his person?

Emily. No; his care was wholly turned to me; the man he left upon the ground, and, as it seemed, disabled.

Earl. I have done: I leave it to the court to judge.

Lady C. A barefaced trick. It is too palpable.

Sir O. Who can say that? Let Mr. Algernon speak for himself.

Earl. Speak!

Sir O. Ay, you have spoke, and should not he? That's justice, is it not?

Earl. Did you always find it so where you have been, Sir Oliver?

Sir O. Whether I found it so or not, I felt it.

Emily. Now, Mr. Earling, you may put those questions you've pressed on me to Mr. Algernon. Perhaps he'll answer them.

Lady C. Emily, Emily, you forget yourself.

Emily. Madam, I should, if I forbore to speak when charges such as these are urged against an absent, therefore, a defenceless man. You have not allowed him to approach you, madam; this gentleman, equally unknown to him, prejudges him at once; he is ingenious to find out bad motives for good actions; there's not a virtue in the human heart but may be metamorphosed by such cunning into a vice. Sir Oliver has said, and said it in the language of a hero, "Let Mr. Algernon speak for himself."

Sir O. And I repeat those words: let him be heard. However circumstances bear against him, and wretched though he has made me, still I hold it matter of conscience never to prejudge, however strong the grounds of my suspicion.

Lady C. Sir Oliver, we do not think alike, and therefore, with your leave, we'll cut this subject short. Emily will retire; a little recollection will be useful to shew the error of some rash opinions and amend them. Go, child, remember, I have now a right to look for the obedience of a daughter.

Emily. And I to expect the mildness of a mother. [*Exit.*

Lady C. And now, Sir Oliver, with your permission, I will despatch a little business with my agent, and leave you to fulfil your promise to that young man, who, I perceive, is waiting to approach you. Follow me, Mr. Earling. [*Exit with Earling.*

Sir O. See here a sample of the blessings of dependance! Poor orphan Emily! 'tis now my turn to prove that I am worthy to be called the friend of thy gallant father.

Enter ALGERNON.

Oh! come in, come in, young man. I promised you a hearing, and I'll make good my word; but as my mind is pressed with many matters, be short, and to the point.

Alg. I will. Your nephew has had an affair with Mr. Algernon, and is wounded. You have visited him, no doubt. Has he related to you the particulars of that unpleasant business?

Sir O. Before I answer, let me know who it is that questions me.

Alg. My father lives upon the lands of Sir George Algernon, and I have some acquaintance with his son, the person whose unlucky chance it was to wound your nephew.

Sir O. And what's your motive for the question that you now put to me?

Alg. I am no stranger to your character, and if you know the circumstances of that duel, I trust you will not suffer Mr. Earling to misrepresent them to the Lady Cypress.

Sir O. Certainly I should not, if I knew the truth, suffer it to be disguised; but I have no particulars from my nephew. The affair remains a mystery. Can you develope it?

Alg. If Lady Cypress will permit me to stay this night, as she has promised, and you can bring me to an explanation with her in your presence, I can so far elucidate this mystery, that if you still persist to trace it home, you shall have full possession of the means.

Sir O. I hardly should expect it at your hands; nor where my nephew's honour is concerned shall I be easily induced to listen to other evidence than that of facts, incontrovertibly attested, and (I am free to say) admitted on his part.

Alg. 'Tis to such facts and such authorities I shall appeal.

Sir O. And do you mean to criminate my nephew?

Alg. Pardon me, sir, I have no other meaning but to declare the truth.

Sir O. Have you the means to know it? Were you present at the rencontre?

Alg. If it appear that I have not the means to know the truth, or knowingly disguise it, treat me as I deserve; I'm in your hands.

Sir O. Well, sir, I'll urge no farther questions on you, but use my interest with the Lady Cypress to procure you the interview you wish. Now fail not on your part: you know me, sir; I trust to you unknown.

Alg. Poor as I seem, I have a soul within, that never yet was tainted by dishonour. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

LADY CYPRESS, EMILY FITZALLAN, *and* EARLING *discovered.*

Lady C. Well, child, I have here the instrument that makes you rich above the dreams of avarice. I have not executed it, for that depends on you; I have not cancelled it, because this gentleman, your steady friend, has interceded with me to recal you once more to recollection and atonement.

Emily. For what must I atone?

Lady C. For your intemperate defence of Algernon. Guilty or innocent, no more of him. Where I bestow my fortune, I expect to find no opposition to my will in the disposal of it.

Emily. What is your will in that respect?

Lady C. This is my will: if Lionel Montrath survive his wound, he is the man I destine for my heiress. To this, if you declare instant assent, I shall as instantly confirm this paper; if not, I cancel it, and cast you off.

Emily. Not all the world could bribe me to do that, before I know which is the offending party. What baseness, what ingratitude were mine, to give my hand to him that wronged the brave preserver of my life and honour!

Lady C. Obstinate girl! you have no such preserver. Have not I told you, it was mere collusion?

Emily. Madam, you have; but I am not convinced, because you told me so by your attorney, not from your own knowledge and conviction.

Lady C. What will convince you?

Emily. Proof well established, and all parties heard.

Lady C. You to make terms, that called yourself my daughter! Where is your duty?

Emily. Inviolate, unbroken. I shall ever bear you respect and true devotion for your goodness; but no parent, no patroness, not even my father, to whose awful spirit I now appeal, could have the power or could possess the right to tear away affections from my heart, which honour, gratitude, have planted there, or force me to conspire with that bad man in stripping Algernon of fame and fortune, and fixing artifice, deceit, and murder upon a man so near to you in blood, in nature so abhorrent of those crimes.

Lady C. You are mad; I have done with you; I cast you off. Now, Mr. Earling, take away your papers; they, or the thankless object they allude to, must be entirely changed before I sign them. [*Exit.*

Earl. Miss Emily, it grieves me to the heart to have heard what now has passed. Indeed, you wrong me if you suppose I am the author of this fatal breach. I am no otherwise the enemy of Mr. Algernon than as I am your friend; in very truth, I'm not his enemy.

Emily. Sir, for your enmity to Mr. Algernon, and so much of your friendship as flows from it, I pray you, let them go together; I have no use for either.

Earl. Do you scorn me because I pity you?

Emily. You pity me! There cannot be that state of human wretchedness which could reduce me to accept your pity. I wonder you can waste your time with one, who neither courts your favour, fears your power, nor credits your professions.

Earl. Well, haughty madam, I have been a friend, and I can be a foe. [*Exit.*

Enter Algernon.

Alg. My Emily, my angel, what is this I have heard? Discarded, disinherited, and for your generosity to me.

Emily. Yes, Algernon, I'm poor but free. I was a prisoner in a gaudy cage, where they would fain have taught me to call names, and whistle to a tune of Earling's making; but being a bad bird, and obstinate, my keeper let me fly; and now I've got the wide world for my portion, and nothing but my own small wits to trust to for picking up a living.

Alg. Fly to me, perch on my breast, for in my heart you'll find both shelter and affection.

Emily. Ah! that is generous, gallant, like yourself; but 'tis not yet a time for me to hear you. The asylum that you offer is attacked, the very citadel of your life and honour is besieged by assailants, and you must beat them off, my hero, or I have sacrificed myself to ruin without the enjoyment of that honest pride which glories in the cause for which it suffers.

Alg. Doubt me not, Emily, the shield of truth covers my breast, and I'm invulnerable.

Emily. Earling accuses you of a collusion with my unknown assailant in the wood.

Alg. I'm armed against that charge.

Emily. And for your wounding of Montrath, he calls it assassination. There I should fear you are not so well armed, having no seconds to appeal to, and, therefore, more exposed to his attack.

Alg. Let him come on; at all points I defy him. Now, my sweet advocate, repose in peace, and wait the event.

Emily. Farewell! If I am ruined in the cause of truth, I'll not regret the sacrifice. [*Exit.*

Alg. Heroic Emily, how I adore you! Ha! Jerry, whence come you?

Enter Jerry Scud.

Scud, From the Canaries, where the illustrious major-domo governs, and drinking is a duty by the laws of the sage Solon of the cellars, the profound Diogenes of the tubs, of whose academy I am a member.

Alg. You've not betrayed me in your cups, I hope.

Scud. Betrayed you! no; if you had fired the house, burnt the old lady in it, and violated the virgin purity of dame Buckram, I'd not betray you. D— it! I scorn a sneaker; I loath him worse than physic. Go on, my boy, and fear not; I am steady.

Alg. Pretty well for that. You've had a sip or two with honest Simon.

Scud. Simon's a fish; Dame Buckram is a leech, fills where she fastens, and delights in suction: I honour her for her absorbent qualities, and I pronounce that they are silly apes and ignoramusses, that say wine gets into the head; 'tis false, I say it gets into the heart; it drives ill humour, melancholy, treason, and a whole gang of cowardly companions out of a man, as a carminative does crudities and indigestion; it would have set my constitution clear, only there's one thing sticks—

Alg. What's that, my honest fellow? Out with it.

Scud. Why, then, 'tis jealousy; and that, you know, is a confounded spasm.

Alg. Away with it at once! Why, man, you don't know half your happiness; you have the best wife in the country. Oh! if you could have heard her pine for you last night; she wouldn't hear of comfort.

Scud. Indeed, indeed! May I believe you, 'squire? May I be sure I'm not the horned beast?

Alg. None of my making, Jerry, on my honour.

Scud. Oh, jubilate! then I kick the clouds. Good b'ye, good b'ye to you. Let me embrace you. All luck attend you. I'm going to my lady; if I can throw in a provocative to stir her in your favour I will do it; I will upon my soul. Good b'ye to you!

Alg. Stop, Jerry; hold your hand, my gallant fellow! I am too much your friend to let you go to Lady Cypress in your present state. Why, man, you are tipsy.

Scud. Say drunk, and you'll not say more than is true; but then it is I cure my patients; when I am only sober I let them cure themselves. [*Exit.*

Alg. Well, get you gone; I am not bound to find reason for him that will not keep his own. [*Exit.*

Scene II.

Lady Cypress, *and* Rachel Williams *discovered.*

Lady C. Come hither, Rachel, I would speak with you. When I promoted you to be about the person of Miss Emily Fitzallan, it was because I saw you were attached to her, and I was willing to do her a grace by thus preferring you. If you must now fall back into your station, it is not that I have withdrawn my favour from you, but from your mistress.

Rachel. I know it, madam; all your people know it, for Mr. Earling has announced it to us; but I must beg your ladyship to excuse me if I decline all service but Miss Emily's.

Lady C. What should enable her to keep a servant?

Rachel. Then she will stand in the more need of me; I'll work my fingers to the bone to serve her. Your ladyship may turn me from your doors, but I will say that Mr. Earling is a base cruel man, and when he has driven all your relations from you, your ladyship will find your house a desert, and nothing but a villain left within it. [*Exit.*

Lady C. Out of my sight! begone! Such insolence is not to be endured: yet, Earling is to blame to publish this to all my family. So, what comes next?

Enter Mrs. Dorothy Buckram.

Mrs. B. Madam, I've served your ladyship too long to bear the arrogance of Mr. Earling. I beg to be discharged; I'll not live in the house with one who drives Miss Emily out of your doors, tells such monstrous lies of Mr. Algernon, and sets your ladyship against all your friends and relations.

Lady C. Who made you a judge in matters that concern me only? When you are cool, I'll hear you. I know you have been junketing and caballing with Rachel Williams, and the rest of them: pr'ythee, retire.

Mrs. B. That's what I mean to do, and others beside me, or I'm mistaken. We respect your ladyship, but we can't put up with your attorney.

[*Exit.*

Enter Earling.

Lady C. There, Mr. Earling, you hear what is said against you: murmurs, complaints, invectives from all quarters.

Earl. No wonder, when that Henry Scudamore, whom I suspect to be a secret agent of your unworthy nephew's, sets them on to blacken and arraign me. Madam, he has had the insolence to give me the worst of names.

Lady C. Then give him his dismission; send him away at once.

Earl. It shall be done. [*Exit.*

Lady C. Oh! that Sir Oliver had postponed his visit to his nephew but one hour!

Enter Scud.

Ah! pr'ythee, pr'ythee, do not plague me now. What brings you hither?

Scud. Duty, my lady, duty; want to hear how the draughts have agreed.

Lady C. 'Tis plain how your draughts have agreed; the operation's visible; no matter about mine.

Scud. Oh! pardon me, there is great matter: spared for no pains—employed the best of drugs—hope I have given content—but rumours fly—no parrying defamation—a man may be accused behind his back, and who can stand it?

Lady C. What rumours do you allude to? Who has accused you?

Scud. I don't know who may have accused me, my lady; I wish to heaven I could say I have accused nobody.

Lady C. What do you mean?

Scud. Oh dear! madam, I am troubled with the heart-ache; I have a lacerated conscience.

Lady C. You have a loaded head, I perceive; more wine in it than wit.

Scud. True, my lady; it is so full I can no longer hide the truth within it. Out it must come, and true it is, I have slandered Mr. Algernon. He saved my life, and I have stabbed his character.

Lady C. You don't know what you say: you're tipsy.

Scud. I wish I had been tipsy when I spoke of him; then I should have told the truth.

Lady C. Go your ways; get you gone: a man that is in two stories should be credited for neither. You have made him out to me a compound of all vices.

Scud. That was the very vilest compound that ever came out of my hands; but Lawyer Earling put a lie into my mouth, and like a gilded pill of loathsome quality I swallowed it, and now it makes me sick.

Lady C. Begone! I will no longer be insulted with your apothecary's jargon. Never enter my doors again.

Scud. I hope your ladyship will give me leave to enter my own. Oh! honesty, honesty! it's very pleasant to speak the truth, but a man is sure to lose his customers by it. [*Exit.*

Enter Simon Single.

Lady C. Heyday, Simon! and you, too—I'll have my cellar-doors walled up, if I am to be troubled with all the tipsy companions that resort to them.

Simon. Venerable lady, I am not inebriated. What I may be, if you wall up your cellar-doors, and me within them, I can't pretend to say. I may, in that case drink to support life, as I have now been tasting a glass, by your permission, to celebrate this mournful festival.

Lady C. How can it be a festival and mournful? You know not what you say.

Simon. Pardon me, pardon me, most incomparable lady. A festival it must be, because you are pleased to order us to be merry. Mournful it surely is, because your attorney makes us sad.

Lady C. You see he is in my interest, and you are all in league against him.

Simon. No, no, no, my lady; it is not because he is in your interest, we are leagued against him; your interest has been ever dearer to me than my own. If you turn me out of your doors this night, I can lay my hand upon my heart, and appeal to the Giver of it, that I never wronged you of a farthing; and, though a poor servant, scorn to cringe and lie and vilify an absent man, as he has done. Madam, you are abused; the country would rise up against him if they knew what he has said of Mr. Algernon; so much is your nephew beloved.

Lady C. Come, come, I know who tells you so: 'tis Henry Scudamore, and no one else.

Simon. Pray, madam, be no more deceived, but hear and judge for yourself. If it were the last word I had to utter, I would say, and say it to his face, that Lawyer Earling is a falsifier and a defamer.

Lady C. Go, stop him from discharging Henry Scudamore; don't let him leave the house till I have seen him. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

Enter Earling.

Earl. Where is this Henry Scudamore? I've hunted the whole house over for the fellow. If he is not driven out before this night, my post will not be tenable to-morrow; we shall have Algernon brought in in triumph upon the shoulders of his partisans, and all my labour's blasted in a moment. Ha! here's the man of all men for my purpose; this surly fellow has the mastiff's property; shew him his prey, and he will fasten on it.

Enter Frank.

Come hither, Frank; a word with you.

Frank. What is your pleasure, master?

Earl. Do you know a loose fellow, an interloper, that came to seek a place, but brought no character; a vagabond it should seem, that calls himself Henry Scudamore?

Frank. Yes, I know Henry Scudamore.

Earl. Well, honest Frank, you see that he came here for no good purpose; and it is not fit he should be let to stay and take the bread out of the mouths of better than himself.

Frank. There's bread enough for all of us, methinks.

Earl. What then? what then? you're not a man, we'll hope, to be afraid of such a wafer cake as he is, Frank.

Frank. I'm afraid of no man.

Earl. Why, then, my hearty Frank, I give you orders to turn him bodily out of this house, for which I have my lady's authority.

Frank. What has he done that I should turn him out?

Earl. He has insulted me, traduced my character, and set me at defiance.

Frank. Has he done this?

Earl. He has.

Frank. Then let him stay for me: I will not touch him; I honour him for his spirit. They call me surly Frank, and so I am if any man affronts me; but I'll be no attorney's catchpole, lookye! And as for turning out, if that's your game, there's but one man I'll do that office for, and that's yourself, my master. There you have it. [*Exit.*

Earl. Impudent varlet! the contagion's general if he have caught it. The whole swarm's upon me, and I must stand their buzzing; as for their stings, I'm not in fear of them so long as I can keep the queen of the hive in my possession.

Enter ALGERNON.

Oh, ho! I have lit upon you at last. Harkye! sir, you Henry Scudamore, whom nobody knows, decamp, pack up your wallet, and betake yourself nobody cares whither. Off! the Lady Cypress warns you off; begone!

Alg. Go back, and say to Lady Cypress, when she sends her warning by a proper messenger, I will obey her.

Earl. Why, who am I? What do you take me for?

Alg. A wretch beneath my notice: a defamer.

Enter SIMON SINGLE.

Simon. Well met, friend Henry, 'tis my lady's orders that you don't leave the house till she have seen you.

Earl. Sot! you are drunk. You never had such orders.

Simon. I had no orders! very well. And I'm a sot, I'm drunk! why, very well. So much for me, now for yourself: you are no sot; you're sober, Mr. Earling the attorney; you're never drunk, for no man will drink with you; you never make mistakes about your orders, for you are under orders from the old one never to speak the truth, and faithfully adhere to your instructions.

Earl. This to my face?

Simon. Oh! yes, I never saw a face better entitled to the compliment. I only wish to see it face to face with Harry Algernon, and then, perhaps, your face may be promoted, where I may treat it with an egg or two.

Alg. Go, go, unhappy man; it can't be pleasant to hear yourself described so faithfully.

Earl. I'll not go; I summon you before the Lady Cypress; she'll do me justice; she'll avenge my wrongs. Here comes Sir Oliver, I appeal to him.

Enter SIR OLIVER MONTRATH.

Sir O. What is the matter?

Earl. These fellows have insulted me most grossly.

Sir O. You are a lawyer. You have your redress.

Earl. Sir, 'tis above redress by any law.

Sir O. Then put it up, and seek redress from patience. That is a remedy for all complaints.

Earl. I hope I've better remedies than patience; I warrant I'll exterminate these insolents. I'll pluck 'em root and branch out of this house, and hurl 'em to the dunghill that they sprung from.

Sir O. Go, then, and set about it. Leave me, sir, I've business with this gentleman.

Earl. This gentleman, forsooth! this gentleman— [*Exit.*

Simon. Well, he may be a gentleman for me, only he lets the bottle stand too long, and takes no pity on his company, that wish to give it motion; that's not quite like a gentleman, methinks; else he may be a sober sort of a gentleman—but not a lord; no, no; at least, he'll never be as drunk as a lord. [*Exit.*

Sir O. Now, sir, I've seen my nephew since we last conversed. You asked me then if I had been informed of the particulars of that rencontre; and by the motives you assigned for the inquiry, I should suppose you know some circumstances of that dark affair.

Alg. The whole correctly.

Sir O. Indeed! I should hardly have thought that Mr. Algernon would have revealed the whole to any but his nearest and most confidential friend.

Alg. Nor has he; it remains still in his bosom an inviolable secret, though known to me.

Sir O. You mean to say that secrets in your keeping are secure. I have my nephew's story as you have Algernon's, and should be glad, with your consent, to compare them with each other.

Alg. They cannot differ, for my account is drawn up by your nephew, and being signed by him, he neither can nor will depart from it?

Sir O. You much amaze me, sir, that Mr. Algernon should give a paper of such consequence out of his hand. I greatly wish to see it.

Alg. Would it relieve your mind at the same time to see and talk with Algernon himself?

Sir O. Oh! infinitely, if I could obtain it.

Alg. Then with a man of honour 'twould be mean to trifle any longer—I am Algernon.

Sir O. How! Algernon! may I believe you?

Alg. You shall not doubt me. There's your nephew's paper: no eye but your's has seen it from my hand.

Sir O. Sir—Mr. Algernon, I ask your pardon; I am satisfied; but can you be unknown, and in this house?

Alg. I never entered it before this day, nor, to my knowledge ever saw my aunt, till I appeared before her in this habit, which I shall now put off. But hark! we shall be interrupted here. Can't we retire to a more private place?

Sir O. To my apartment, if you'll be pleased to follow me. Ah! sir—ah! Mr. Algernon, how hard to find, now at the close of a long life of services, all its enjoyments, all its labours lost! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Castle-hall.*

Enter JERRY SCUD *and* JENNY.

Scud. Well, well, well! jewel Jenny, here we are for the last time: farewell visits, to be sure, are melancholy matters; but we have many good friends in the castle still, and though I am thrown out of the cabinet, I have kept up my interest in the kitchen.

Jenny. Ay, and in the country, too, when it shall be known that you have forfeited my lady's favour by speaking up for Mr. Algernon; he is so much pitied and beloved by all men, that your neighbours will sham sick on purpose to employ you.

Scud. To say the truth, I have sometimes thought that was my lady's only complaint; but I took care my physic should not cure her of it; and my comfort is that nobody of the faculty will profit by my loss; for when she leaves off my medicines she'll find herself too well to employ a doctor.

Jenny. Come, come, Jerry, she'll not leave off you nor your medicines. If you can get to the speech of her, a little coaxing and a submissive apology, will set all things right.

Scud. No, no, jewel Jenny, she'll hear no apology, and, therefore, I have expressed myself more at large in my bill. Here it is: it's a bouncer, isn't it?

Jenny. Yes, marry, if she have patience to go

through this she'll find you have enough to say for yourself; but I suspect, Jerry, this argument is a little too much on one side.

Scud. Turn over the leaf, and you'll find a great deal more on the other side.

Enter Simon Single *and* Mrs. Dorothy Buckram.

Ah! my good friends, my good friends! this is the most doleful visit I ever made to the castle. Jenny can witness I have passed a sleepless night: that incubus of an attorney rode upon me like the night-mare.

Mrs. B. Rode, indeed! Set a beggar on horse-back, and where will he not ride?

Scud. I attempted to put a cracker under his tail, but it burst in my hand, and I only burnt my own fingers without singing him.

Simon. Let him go; the road he travels is all down-hill, and when he comes to his journey's end he'll find those that will put crackers enough under his tail, I warrant me.

Mrs. B. As for me, a jackdaw in a cage has a better life of it than I have, for he may cry rogue and not be chidden for it. We shall be turned away: I lay my account to be sent going for one.

Simon. Thirty years I have passed within these walls, and I would sooner pass the rest of my days within the walls of a prison than live in a house where scurrility is caressed and plain speaking turned out of doors. Ha! who comes here?

Enter Algernon, *in his own dress.*

Mrs. B. Bless the good mark! our Henry—No —Yes, sure, 'tis Henry; how comes this to pass?

Alg. I'm ordered to attend upon my lady, so I put on my best.

Simon. Harkye! my friend, if it is not your own, bad is your best. Let us have no false feathers. Where did you get this suit?

Alg. 'Tis Harry Algernon's. He and I wear the same clothes; one tailor serves us both. Isn't it true, Jerry?

Scud. It is, it is; and the same measure fits you.

Simon. I don't know what you mean.

Alg. Then I'll inform you. Here are but two of you in company that do not know me; you are both my friends, my generous, zealous friends, for which I thank you, and come in person hither to convince you that Algernon is not that worthless man which calumny has painted him to be.

Mrs. B. Heaven's grace light on you, if, indeed, you are that injured gentleman.

Scud. Oh! by my soul, he is the very man: you may take that upon my word for truth.

Simon. I saw it; I said it; I knew he was a gentleman. Now we have got that attorney in a trap.

Jenny. Yes, yes; he'll make that Earling shrink into his hole.

Simon. Hang him, polecat; I'll smoke him out of it. Oh! the inconceivable lies that miscreant has told of a gentleman he does not know even by sight. I pray you, sir, don't discover yourself to him, till we have had him up before my lady. Methinks I hear her say, "Simon, I am convinced that lawyer is a rascal: turn him out."

Mrs. B. Ay, we'll all lend a helping hand to that.

Scud. Yes, or a helping foot. If that be wanted, I have one at his service.

Simon. Bless you, my worthy master, bless you heartily! I hope I have said nothing to affront you; I was a little by the head just now, but that's over.

Alg. So is not my remembrance. I shall ever prize you as my best of friends.

Simon. Lord love you, we are all your friends; we are all Algernons and anti-Earlings.

Mrs. B. And when the election comes, we'll wear your colours.

Scud. Only put me in office on that day; let me be surgeon-general to the enemy, and I'll engage they shall have more freeholders in the hospital than at the hustings. I'll scour their consciences, I warrant me.

Alg. Now, my good friends, keep secret what has passed, and wait the event in silence. Here comes one, a gentle advocate, whom I would fain speak to apart.

Simon. We are gone, we are gone. All happiness befal you! [*Exeunt all but Alg.*

Enter Emily Fitzallan.

Emily. Bless me! you've changed your habit.

Alg. Yes, my charmer: in chase 'tis lawful to hang out false colours, but when we are cleared and going into action, we must shew what we are.

Emily. Right, and where truth unfolds her standard, victory must follow.

Alg. And what should follow victory? What, but the glorious prize for which I struggle? that prize which fortune, aiming to impoverish, has only made more rich in my esteem; that generous heart, that sacrificed for me interest, for which so many sacrifice themselves. Now call to mind those words so heavenly sweet, which you left with me, whilst the ingenuous blush glowed on your cheek:—"Henry, I live for you!"

Emily. Ah! that was then the only way I had to reinstate you in your property; and, though it cost a blush to say those words, still I could say them, for I scorned to rob you: but to repeat them now would be—Oh, heaven! it would be everything but false, my Henry.

Alg. Then let me take that truth into a heart, of which no human power can dispossess you.

Emily. I hope not, Henry; for take that away, and I am poor, indeed.

Alg. 'Tis your's for ever; and believe me, dear one, if my too credulous aunt have not outlived her reason, she will see the injustice of her own decisions and revoke them. For my exclusion she may have some plea; our families have been at suit for years, and law will cut asunder closer ties than those existing between her and me; but of her motives for discarding you, take my word, Emily, she'll soon repent.

Emily. It is not that I fear her worthless favourite; the wretch has brought a storm upon his head, and has already had some heavy shocks; but my worst fears point to another quarter.

Alg. I understand you. 'Tis Montrath you dread.

Emily. I could not temporize; I spoke too plainly. Indignant of the claim she made upon me, I set her power too boldly at defiance, and challenged her to cancel her bequest.

Alg. You must consult Sir Oliver upon this: I cannot speak upon Montrath's affair even to you.

Emily. I see you either cannot or you will not, therefore I ask no questions, well persuaded you never would take arms against the life of any man and know yourself in fault.

Alg. I hope I sha'n't be found to have so done: but look! here comes Sir Oliver. I'll leave you; he may, perhaps, be less reserved than I am.

[*Exit.*

Enter Sir Oliver Montrath.

Sir O. Was not that Algernon?

Emily. You know him, sir, it seems.

Sir O. I think I do; I have cause to know him.

Emily. Ah! sir, you speak so mournfully, I fear you have found no comfort in your visit to your nephew.

Sir O. Small comfort. Yet the danger of his wound is much abated.

Emily. Then I'm afraid you have, or think you have, some cause of anger against Algernon.

Sir O. No, Emily, no anger against him. You cannot think too well of Algernon, though I could wish you had not put your thoughts in language quite so warm.

Emily. 'Twas indiscreet, but that defamer urged me, and put me off my guard.

Sir O. Couldn't you find another and a stronger cause that put you off your guard? Is there not a certain passion, which our hearts are subjects to, that neither keeps a guard upon itself, nor suffers any to be kept against it?

Emily. If I should answer that as truth would prompt me, shouldn't I expose myself to another reproof for want of caution?

Sir O. No; for so far from thinking with my lady, that you have chosen ill, I think with you that you could nowhere make a better choice: and more than this—were your brave father living, and knew what I know of your Algernon, he would approve your judgment.

Emily. As I am sure you would not give that name but to a sacred truth, what you have said sanctions the character of Algernon; but does it warrant me in suffering him to make a sacrifice of interest by marrying a beggar?

Sir O. You point the question wrong, and should have asked if it exculpates me, your father's friend, for suffering you to call yourself a beggar. No, my dear child, it does not, nor will I permit it to be said, the daughter of the generous Fitzallan, who in the battle found me faint with wounds, and, whilst he covered me, received his death, wanted that dross which I abounded in. This, Emily, this never should be said; so come with me, and don't oppose one word to my resolves; for in an act of honour I will pause at no man's bidding; no, my pretty one, nor yet at any woman's, though graced with all the charms that heaven can give her.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter EARLING.

Earl. Now, fortune, one kind lift, and I am landed. So far success goes with me: I have nothing more to fear from Emily; that pert, proud miss is silenced and thrown by. It now remains to sweep those menial vermin out of my way, those insects that annoy me: old Sir Oliver, that blusters about justice, is a hypocrite; he cannot be a friend to Algernon; and yet he troubles me, takes up my seat at table, occupies the ear of the old lady, and obstructs my suit, which stood so fair, that if I could but seize one lucky moment, one fair opportunity—Ha! I have found it: here she comes alone. Now, impudence befriend me!

Enter LADY CYPRESS.

Lady C. So, Mr. Earling, much as I love peace, I will not purchase it by mean concessions; I will not suffer the gentleman I esteem and trust to be affronted by my saucy servants; they shall atone or troop.

Earl. Most amiable, most excellent of ladies, whom with my heart I serve, honour, obey, and worship, I want words to speak my gratitude. Thus at your feet, in humble adoration, let me seal on this dear hand, the pledge, the sacred pledge, of my unutterable, my unbounded love—

Enter SIMON SINGLE *and* MRS. DOROTHY BUCKRAM.

Simon. Look, Dorothy, the devil's at his prayers.

Mrs. B. I hope they're his last prayers.

Earl. Curse on their coming! what a moment lost! (*Aside.*) Madam, do you permit your menial servants thus to break in upon your private moments?

Lady C. Why not? If you have anything to add to your last speech I shall not interrupt it. You may resume your posture and go on.

Earl. Madam, I cannot.

Lady C. I can help your memory if you have lost the word. 'Twas "Love, unbounded love." When you had gone so far out of all bounds, all measure of respect, can the appearance of these silly people deter you from proceeding?

Earl. Madam, if you're offended, I have done. I'll humbly take my leave.

Lady C. No, sir, I must insist upon your staying. Though you are foiled to add a single word to insolence so perfect and complete, yet you shall not be robbed of your just right, that nature gives you, to be heard in vindication of your own assertions. If you have spoken the truth, and nothing but the truth, of Algernon, his character cannot be rescued, let the fate of your's be what it may.

Simon. Anything the matter, Mr. Attorney? Afraid you are not quite well just now. You look a little pale.

Lady C. Hold your tongue, foolish fellow! you, Simon, in the first place, and you next, mistress, who dare to tell me I am made the dupe of false impressions, are you not both ashamed to look this injured gentleman in the face?

Simon. It is a face to make a man ashamed, and we did blush to see him on his knees before your ladyship.

Lady C, That's my affair, fall down on your's and ask forgiveness of him.

Simon. Pray, madam, don't command me to do that, for fear I never should forgive myself. I ask your pardon for approaching you when I was tipsy, but you bade me drink, and I was over eager to obey you.

Lady C. That's easily forgiven; but your abuse of this gentleman, whom I must still call the friend of truth, is monstrous.

Simon. Madam, if that gentleman is the friend of truth, he makes very free with his friend, truly. I only said he told lies to your ladyship, that's no abuse, for here come those that can prove it.

Enter SIR OLIVER MONTRATH *and* EMILY FITZALLAN.

Earl. My evil genius! what does he do here?

Sir O. Forgive me, my good lady, if I come to atone to you and this fair advocate for my unjust suspicions of your nephew. I have one here waiting, who'll confront that gentleman, his accuser, and, I trust, remove some false impressions that your ladyship may have imbibed from his unfounded charges. Come in, sir, if you please.

Enter ALGERNON.

Lady C. How now! who's this? Henry!

Sir O. I claim your promise to give him hearing.

Earl. I protest against him; that fellow's an impostor: we shall not listen to his evidence.

Lady C. He first came here humbly to ask for service, pleaded decay, and said he was a gentleman by birth; I pitied him, and offered him relief. He now has changed his dress, shifted his character, and claims to be an advocate for Algernon. These are suspicious circumstances, and I should have some better reasons for believing him than I am yet possessed of. Do you know any such, Sir Oliver?

Earl. Ay, sir, do you know who this champion is?

Sir O. Sir, give me leave to ask, do you?

Earl. Not I; I know him not.

Sir O. Yet you know Algernon; are intimate with all his habits, frailties, faults, offences; have looked into his heart, and kindly told the secrets you discovered. Oh, thou slanderer! Now look him in the face, and prove your charge. Well may

you start. Mark his confusion, madam. This is your nephew, this is Algernon.

Emily. Yes, on my honour, and my brave preserver.

Lady C. I am confounded. Where is that defamer?

Simon. Madam, he has stept aside to mend a flaw in his indictment. How do you do, Mr. Attorney? Come forward, if you please, and get acquainted with this gentleman's face. You knew him well enough behind his back.

Lady C. Peace! let me hear what Algernon will say in his own cause.

Sir O. Speak for yourself, brave Algernon.

Alg. I am that exiled man, whom, on the word of this defamer, though unknown to him even by sight, it seems, you have proscribed. Despairing of admission to your presence, and driven, in self-defence, on this resource, I took a counterfeited character, and saw what I had never been allowed to approach—your person. Much I wished to speak in mitigation of your prejudice, and give a plain recital of my wrongs; but you had then no ear for such discourse, and I was told to wait your better leisure.

Lady C. All this is true: proceed.

Alg. A friend here present told me I was accused to you of various crimes and gross enormities. I plead to failings, to the common errors and indiscretions youth is subject to, but, I trust, I have never degraded my character or debased my principles; I am no gamester, as he makes me to be; no dissipater of my paternal fortune, as he insinuates; no libertine, as he asserts; and, let me add, in the hearing of Sir Oliver Montrath, I am no assassin.

Sir O. It is now my duty, and a painful one I feel it, to bring to light, in vindication of an injured character, the guilty person, for whose shameful act no better palliation can be found than temporary madness and intoxication. The monster, from whose brutal violence the purest of heaven's creatures was preserved by Algernon—how shall I speak it without shame and horror!—was Lionel Montrath.

Lady C. I am confounded and amazed. Montrath! This, if not told by you, Sir Oliver, would mock belief.

Sir O. Your nephew was too noble to disclose it, though he has in his hands a written paper signed by the offender for his vindication. This, I believe, he never has discovered, even to that lady, though a party in it.

Emily. Never; but constantly evaded my inquiries.

Sir O. To this, when I shall add that my rash nephew forced the duel on him in consequence of blows exchanged between them, I trust I may with safety rest his cause upon the facts adduced; unless, indeed, this gentleman have any other charge, which in his modesty he will prefer.

Earl. You'll not draw anything from me, Sir Oliver; you may talk on; I prefer silence.

Sir O. You are right; 'tis time your tongue had some repose.

Lady C. Pray, do not keep him longer in my sight. My nephew does not seem to hold him worthy of a retort.

Alg. No, madam, I have nothing to return him for his malicious slander, but my contempt.

Lady C. If he can feel, 'tis punishment enough.

Sir O. Begone! your infamy go with you; and may no part of it adhere to your profession.

Earl. Let my profession look to itself. There are some understandings in this world made, it should seem, by nature to be duped. Had you not been so easy of belief, I had not been so forward to deceive you. Now put what name you will upon my conduct, there are such glaring instances in point, of dealers in seduction, infamy, and false impressions on credulity, as make my shame no wonder. [*Exit.*

Lady C. Now, Henry, you've appealed to me for justice: hear my decree. There is your destiny; that is the prize which you have so nobly earned. My heart, so long estranged, is now your own. You are my son, and Emily my daughter; all I possess is your's. Have I atoned?

Alg. Oh! you have given me that which might atone for all the pains mortality could feel: beauty to charm me, talents to enchant, and truth to fix my happiness secure.

Emily. Oh! Henry, bear me to my benefactress, and let me kneel—

Lady C. Yes, I will let you kneel, my child, for now thou hast a treasure worth thy thanks. Be virtuous, loving, faithful to each other; ape not the fashions of this guilty world; seek pleasures where alone they can be found, in nuptial harmony, domestic duties, and the sweet reflection which fortune well employed is sure to give. Rise, my adopted, rise!

Sir O. Oh! let me add a blessing. May you be—Well, well, it will not forth; my heart's too full; but I will send it up in thought towards heaven. Here, Emily, my love, I'll put the first chain on your bridal arm; they are pure pearls, my child; not spoils of war, but gifts of gratitude for life preserved; wear them for my sake, and when I am dead, cast a kind look upon them, and drop one pearly tear, richer than them all, to the memory of old Oliver.

Emily. Oh! sir, sir, sir! my father and my friend!

Sir O. So, no! no more. Henry, my gallant boy, give me your hand; a soldier's greeting after victory—time was I could have grasped it closer.

Alg. I accept it, and press it to my heart.

Lady C. Where are you all? This is a day of joy. Simon, I look to you to oil the hinges of my castle gates, that they may open freely to the neighbours, the tenants, and the poor.

Simon. I'll make 'em swing, so please you, and for one bad man now gone out of them, a hundred good ones shall come in, I warrant me.

Lady C. You, Dorothy, must set the girls a dancing; and you, Rachel, must lead the ball in honour of your mistress.

Scud *and* Jenny *who had crept in behind the servants, come forward.*

Scud. And when the bumpkins caper and kick shins, may they not want a plaister, good my lady? I'll cure them gratis on this happy night. I have brought a bill, so please you, that will bear some riders on it, and not break its back.

Lady C. We'll have no bills nor bickerings any more; and to cut short all reckonings, I'll establish you apothecary-general to the castle upon a salary fixed.

Simon. Then, Jerry, the less physic you send in the better for yourself.

Scud. And for all parties, my most honoured lady, I hope most heartily, for all your sakes, my place will be as near a sinecure as possible.

Lady C. I hope so, too. You and your fair wife are welcome. She is a child of the castle, and will grace our dance.

Scud. Yes, under favour, Jenny, though I say it, has all the steps that now are thought so graceful: she'll balance on one leg and send the other upon a cruize into her neighbour's pocket; no magnetizing-doctor or dotterell-monger can surpass my Jenny for the fine attitudes.

Lady C. You're a strange mortal; but let mirth go round, and if the humble annals of our castle can cheer one honest, ease one heavy heart, our harmless efforts have not been in vain. [*Exeunt.*

THE FASHIONABLE LOVER;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



Act I.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

LORD ABBERVILLE	COLIN MACLEOD	NAPTHALI	MRS. BRIDGEMORE
DOCTOR DRUID	TYRREL	LA JEUNESSE	LUCINDA BRIDGEMORE
MORTIMER	BRIDGEMORE	VISITORS	MISS AUBREY
AUBREY	JARVIS	SERVANTS	MRS. MACINTOSH

ACT I.—SCENE I.—*A Hall in Lord Abberville's house. Flourish of French horns.*

Enter COLIN MACLEOD.

Colin. Hoot! fellows, hand your honds: pack up your d—d clarinets, and gang your gait for a pair of lubberly minstrels as you are. An you could hondle the bagpipe instead, I would na' say you nay: ah! 'tis an auncient instrument of great melody, and has whastled many a braw lad to his grave; but your holyday horns, there are fit only to play to a drunken city barge, on a swan-hopping party up the Thames. [*Enter* LA JEUNESSE.]

La Jeu. Fidon, Monsieur Colin, for why you have send away the horns? It is very much the ton in this country for the fine gentlemens to have the horns: upon my vord, my lord this day give grand entertainment to very grand company; tous les macaroni below stairs, et toute la coterie above. Hark! who vait dere? My lord ring his bell. Voilà, Monsieur Colin, dere is all the company going to the tea-room.

Colin. (*Looking out.*) Now the de'il burst the weams of you altogether, say I, for a pack of locusts; a cow in a clover-field has more moderation than the best among you; had my Lord Abberville the wealth of Glasgow, you'd swallow it all down before you gee'd over.

La Jeu. Ah, barbare! Here come my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter LORD ABBERVILLE.

Lord A. Colin, see that covers are laid for four-and-twenty, and supper served, at twelve, in the great eating-parlour.

Colin. Ecod! my lord, had you kenn'd the mess of cakes and sweeties that was honded up amougst 'em just now, you would na' think there could be muckle need of supper this night.

Lord A. What, fellow, would you have me starve my guests? [you.

Colin. Troth, an you don't, they'll go nigh to starve

Lord A. Let me hear no more of this, Colin Macleod; I took you for my servant, not for my adviser.

Colin. Right, my lord, you did; but if by advising I can serve you, where's the breach of duty? [*Exit.*

Lord A. What a highland savage it is! My father, indeed, made use of him to pay the servants' wages, and post the tradesmen's accounts; as I never do either, I wish somebody else had him that does.

Enter MORTIMER.

Mort. "*Is this a dinner, this a genial room?*
This is a temple and a hetacomb."

Lord A. What, quoting, Mortimer, and satire too? I thought you need not go abroad for that.

Mort. True; therefore, I'm returning home. Good night to you.

Lord A. What, on the wing so soon! With so much company, can my philosopher want food to feast his spleen upon?

Mort. Food! I revolt against the name; no Bramin could abominate your fleshly meal more than I do; why, Hirtius and Apicius would have blushed for it: Mark Antony, who roasted eight whole boars for supper, never massacred more at a meal than you have done.

Lord A. A truce, good cynic: pr'ythee, now, get thee up stairs, and take my place; the ladies will be glad of you at cards.

Mort. Me at cards! Me at a quadrille-table! Pent in with fuzzing dowagers, gossiping old maids, and yellow admirals: 'sdeath! my Lord Abberville, you must excuse me. [art a traitor to society.

Lord A. Out on thee, unconformable being! thou

Mort. Do you call that society?

Lord A. Yes; but not my society; none such as you describe will be found here; my circle, Mr. Mortimer, is formed by people of the first fashion and spirit in this country.

Mort. Fashion and spirit! Yes; their country's likely to suffer by their fashion more than 'twill ever profit by their spirit.

Lord A. Come, come; your temper is too sour.

Mort. And your's too sweet: a mawkish lump of manna; sugar in the mouth, but physic to the bowels.

Lord A. Mr. Mortimer, you was my father's executor; I did not know your office extended further.

Mort. No: when I gave a clear estate into your hands, I cleared myself of an unwelcome office: I was, indeed, your father's executor; the gentlemen of fashion and spirit will be your lordship's.

Lord A. Pooh! You've been black-balled at some paltry port-drinking club; and set up for a man of wit and ridicule.

Mort. Not I, believe me: your companions are too dull to laugh at, and too vicious to expose. There stands a sample of your choice.

Lord A. Doctor Druid? Where's the harm in him?

Mort. Where is the merit? What one quality does that old piece of pedantry possess to fit him for the liberal office of travelling-preceptor to a man of rank? You know, my lord, I recommended you a friend, as fit to form your manners as your morals; but he was a restraint; and, in his stead, you took that Welshman, that buffoon, that antiquarian, forsooth, who looks as if you had raked him out of the cinders of Mount Vesuvius.

Lord A. And so I did: but, pr'ythee, Mortimer, don't run away; I long to have you meet.

Mort. You must excuse me.

Lord A. Nay, I must have you better friends. Come hither, Doctor; harkye—

Mort. Another time: at present, I am in no humour to stay the discussion of a cockle-shell, or the dissection of a butterfly's-wing. [*Exit.*

Enter Doctor Druid.

Dr. D. Putterflies! Putterflies in your teeth, Mr. Mortimer. What is the surlypoots prabbling about? Cot give her coot luck! will the man never leave off his flings, and his fleers, and his fegaries? packpiting his petters! Coot, my lord, let me call him pack, and have a little tisputes and tisputations with him, d'ye see?

Lord A. Hang him, tedious rogue! let him go.

Dr. D. Tedious! ay, in coot truth is he, as tedious as a Lapland winter, and as melancholy, too; his crotchets and his humours damp all mirth and merriment, as a wet planket does a fire: he is the very night-mare of society.

Lord A. Nay, he talks well sometimes.

Dr. D. Ay, 'tis pig sound and little wit; like a loud pell to a pad dinner.

Lord A. Patience, good Doctor! Another time you shall have your revenge; at present, you must lay down your wrath, and take up your attention.

Dr. D. I've done, my lord, I've done. Laugh at my putterflies, indeed! If he were as pig and as pold as King Gryffyn, Doctor Druid would make free to whisper an oord or two in his ear. [peace!

Lord A. Peace, choleric king of the mountains,

Dr. D. I've done, my lord; I say, I've done.

Lord A. If you have done, let me begin. You must know, then, I expect my city madam from Fish-street-hill.

Dr. D. Ay, ay; the rich pig-pellied fellow's daughter, young madam Pridgemore, my Lady Apperville, that is to be; pless her, and save her, and make her a coot wife, say I.

Lord A. Pr'ythee, good Doctor, don't put a man in mind of his misfortunes. I tell you, she is coming here by appointment, with old Bridgemore and her mother; 'tis an execrable group; and, as I mean to make all things as easy to me as I can, I am going out to avoid being troubled with their impertinence.

Dr. D. Going out, my lord, with your house full of company?

Lord A. Oh! that's no objection; none in the least; fashion reconciles all those scruples: to consult your own ease in all things is the very first article in the recipe for good breeding: when every man looks after himself, no one can complain of neglect; but, as these maxims may not be orthodox on the eastern side of Temple-bar, you must stand gentleman-usher in this spot; put your best face upon the matter, and marshal my citizens into the assembly-room, with as much ceremony as if they came up with an address from the whole company of cordwainers.

Dr. D. Out on it! you've some tevilish oomans in the wind; for when the tice are rattling above, there's nothing but teath, or the tevil, could keep you below.

Lord A. You've guest it: such a divine, delicious, little devil lurks in my heart; Glendower himself could not exorcise her: I am possessed; and from the hour I saw her by surprise, I have been plotting methods how to meet her: a lucky opening offers; the mine is laid, and Bridgemore's visit is the signal for springing it.

Dr. D. Pridgemore's! How so?

Lord A. Why, 'tis with him she lives: what else could make it difficult, and what but difficulty could make me pursue it? They, prudently enough, would have concealed her from me; for who can think of any other, when Miss Aubrey is in sight? But, hark! they're come; I must escape. Now, love and fortune stand my friends! [*Exit.*

Dr. D. Pless us, what hastes and hurries he is in! and all for some young hussy. Ah! he'll never have a proper relish for the venerable antique: I never shall bring down his mercury to touch the proper freezing point, which that of a true virtuoso ought to stand at: sometimes, indeed, he will contemplate a beautiful statue as if it were an ooman; I never could persuade him to look upon a beautiful ooman as if she were a statue.

Enter Bridgemore, Mrs. Bridgemore, *and* Lucinda.

Bridge. Doctor, I kiss your hands; I kiss your hands, good Doctor. How these nobles live! Zooks! what a swinging chamber!

Mrs. B. Why, Mr. Bridgemore, sure, you think yourself in Leathersellers'-hall.

Luc. Pray, recollect yourself, papa; indeed this is not Fish-street-hill.

Bridge. I wish it were; I'd soon unhouse this trumpery; I'd soon furnish it with better goods: why, this profusion, child, will turn your brain.

Mrs. B. La! how you stand and stare at things! stopping in the hall to count the servants; gaping at the lustre there, as if you'd swallow it. I suppose our daughter, when she's a woman of quality, will behave as other women of quality do. Lucinda, this is Doctor Druid, Lord Abberville's travelling tutor; a gentleman of very ancient family in North Wales. [of it.

Luc. So it should seem, if he's the representative

Dr. D. Without flattery, Mrs. Bridgemore, miss, has very much the behaviours of an ooman of quality already. [Abberville will think us late.

Mrs. B. Come, sir, we'll join the company; Lord

Dr. D. Yes, truly, he's impatient for our coming; but you shall find him not at home.

Mrs. B. How! Not at home?

Luc. A mighty proof of his impatience, truly!

Dr. D. Why, 'twas some plaguy business took him out; but we'll despatch it out of hand, and wait upon you quickly.

Bridge. Well, business, business must be done.

Mrs. B. I thought my lord had been a man of fashion, not of business.

Luc. And so he is; a man of the first fashion; you cannot have a fresher sample: the worst gallant in nature is your macaroni; with the airs of a coquette you meet the manners of a clown: fear keeps him in some awe before the men, but not one spark of passion has he at heart, to remind him of the ladies.

Mrs. B. Well, we must make our courtesy above stairs. Our card was from Lady Caroline; I suppose she is not from home, as well as her brother.

Dr. D. Who waits there? shew the ladies up.

Bridge. Ay, ay; go up and shew your clothes; I'll chat with Doctor Druid here below. [*Exeunt Ladies.*] I love to talk with men that know the world: they tell me, sir, you've travelled it all over.

Dr. D. Into a pretty many parts of it.

Bridge. Well, and what say you, sir? you're glad

to be at home; nothing, I warrant, like old England. Ah! what's France, and Spain, and Burgundy, and Flanders? no; old England for my money; 'tis worth all the world besides.

Dr. D. Your pelly says as much; 'twill fill the pot, but starve the prain; 'tis full of corn, and sheep, and villages, and people. England, to the rest of the oorld, is like a flower-garden to a forest.

Bridge. Well, what say you to the people?

Dr. D. Nothing: I never meddle with the human species; man, living man, is no object of my curiosity, nor ooman neither; at least, Mr. Bridgemore, till she shall be made a mummies of.

Bridge. I understand you; you speak in the way of trade: money's your object.

Dr. D. Money and trade! I scorn 'em both; the beaten track of commerce I disdain: I've traced the Oxus and the Po; traversed the Riphæan Mountains, and pierced into the inmost tesarts of Kalmuc Tartary: follow trade, indeed! no; I've followed the ravages of Kouli Chan with rapturous delight: there is the land of wonders; finely depopulated; gloriously laid waste; fields without a hoof to tread 'em; fruits without a hand to gather 'em; with such a catalogue of pats, peetles, serpents, scorpions, caterpillars, toads—Oh! 'tis a recreating contemplation to a philosophic mind!

Bridge. Out on 'em, filthy vermin! I hope you left 'em where you found 'em.

Dr. D. No; to my honour be it spoken, I have imported above fifty different sorts of mortal poisons into my native country.

Bridge. Lack-a-day! there's people enough at home can poison their native country.

Enter MRS. BRIDGEMORE *and* LUCINDA.

So, ladies, have you finished your visit already?

Mrs. B. We paid our respects, and came away.

Dr. D. Marry, the fates and the fortunes forbid that you should go, till my lord comes back.

Luc. Why not? if my lord treats me already with the freedom of a husband, shouldn't I begin to practise the indifference of a wife? [*Exit with Mrs. B.*

Dr. D. Well, but the supper, Mr. Pridgemore; you a citizen, and leave the supper?

Bridge. Your fifty mortal poisons have given me my supper: scorpions, and bats, and toads—Come, let's be gone. [*Exit.*

Dr. D. Would they were in your pelly! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Bridgemore's house.*

Enter MISS AUBREY *and* TYRREL.

Miss A. How I am watched in this house you well know, Mr. Tyrrel; therefore, you must not stay: what you have done and suffered for my sake I never can forget; and 'tis with joy I see you now, at last, surmount your difficulties by the recovery of Lord Courtland. May your life never be again exposed on my account.

Tyr. I glory in protecting you: when he, or any other rake, repeats the like offence, I shall repeat the like correction. I am now going to my uncle Mortimer, who does not know that I am in town. Life is not life without thee; never will I quit his feet, till I have obtained his voice for our alliance.

Miss A. Alas! what hope of that from Mr. Mortimer, whose rugged nature knows no happiness itself, nor feels complacency in that of others?

Tyr. When you know Mr. Mortimer, you'll find how totally the world mistakes him. Farewell, my dear Augusta; backed with thy virtuous wishes, how can I fail to prosper? [*Exeunt.*

The Maid-servant introduces LORD ABBERVILLE.

Serv. All's safe; follow me, my lord; she is in

Lord A. Where? [her bed-chamber.

Serv. There; where you see the light through the glass-door. If I thought you had any wicked designs in your head, I wouldn't have brought you here for the world; I should be murdered if the family were to know it: for pity's sake, my lord, never betray me.

Lord A. Go, get you gone; never talk of treason, my thoughts are full of love. [*Exit Maid-servant.*] First, I'll secure the door: 'twill not be amiss to bar this retreat. [*Locks the door.*] Ay, there she is. How pensive is that posture! Musing on her condition; which, in truth, is melancholy enough—an humble cousin to a vulgar tyrant. 'Sdeath! she cannot choose but jump at my proposals. See, she weeps. I'm glad on't. Grief disposes to compliance: 'tis the very moment to assail her.

Miss A. Who's there? who's at the door? Ah!—

Lord A. Hush, hush! your screams will rouse the house. 'Tis I, Miss Aubrey; 'tis Lord Abberville. Give me your hand. Nay, be composed. Let me set down the candle: you are safe.

Miss A. Safe, my lord. Yes, I'm safe; but you are mistaken; Miss Bridgemore's not at home; or, if she were, this is no place to meet her in.

Lord A. I am glad of that: blessed in Miss Aubrey's company, I wish no interruption from Miss Bridgemore.

Miss A. I should be loath to think so; an avowal of baseness to one woman, should never be taken as flattery by another. My lord, I must entreat you to let the servants shew you to some fitter apartment. I am here in a very particular situation, and have the strongest reasons for what I request.

Lord A. I guess your reasons, but cannot admit them. I love you, madam; let that declaration be my excuse.

Miss A. Nay, now your frolic has the air of insult, and I insist upon your leaving me. (*Knocking.*)

Luc. (*Without.*) Who's within there?

Miss A. Hark, hark! Miss Bridgemore, as I live! Come in. [the door?

Luc. (*Without.*) Come in! Why have you locked

Miss A. Locked! Is it locked? For shame, for shame! thus am I sacrificed to your ungenerous designs! She must come in.

Lord A. Stay, stay; she must not find me here; there's one retreat—your chamber; lock me in there: I may still escape. [brey? Let me in.

Luc. (*Without.*) What are you about, Miss Au-

Miss A. Where shall I turn myself? You've ruined all: if you're discovered, I shall never gain belief.

Lord A. Be advised, then: we have only this chance left. (*Goes to the bed-room door.*)

Luc. (*Without.*) Miss Aubrey, if you don't let me in immediately, I shall call up mamma; so, pray, unlock the door.

Miss A. I scarce know what I do. (*After locking Lord A. in, opens the outer door. Enter* LUCINDA.] There, madam, you're obeyed.

Luc. Why, surely, you affect extraordinary privacy. It seems you've had your Tyrrel in our absence.

Miss A. Yes, Mr. Tyrrel has been here.

Luc. Humph! you're in mighty spirits.

Miss A. No, madam; my poor spirits suit my poor condition: you, I hope, are rich in every sense.

Luc. She's happy, I can see, though she attempts to hide it: I can't bear her. (*Aside.*) Pray, Miss Aubrey, what are your designs—to ruin this young [man?

Miss A. Madam!

Luc. Can you now in your heart suppose that Mortimer will let his nephew marry you? Depend upon't, (I tell you as your friend,) as soon as that old cynic hears of it, (which I have taken care he shall,) your hopes are crushed at once.

Miss A. When were they otherwise?

Luc. I don't know what to make of her; she seems confused; her eyes wander strangely: watching the bed-room door—what is it she looks at? (*Aside.*)

Miss A. Where are you going?

Luc. Going! Nay, no where—she's alarmed—Miss Aubrey, I have a foolish notion in my head, that Mr. Tyrrel's in this house. [your room?

Miss A. No, on my word. Shall I light you to

Luc. So ready! No; your own will serve: I can adjust my head-dress at your glass. Heyday! all's fast! you have locked the door.

Miss A. Have I, indeed?

Luc. Yes, have you, madam; and, if my suspicion's true, your lover's in it. Open it.

Miss A. I beg to be excused.

Luc. Oh! are you caught at last? Admit me.

Miss A. You cannot, sure, be serious—think I've the sanction of a guest. [come to the bell.

Luc. Ridiculous! I'll raise the house: let me

Miss A. Hold, hold! you don't know what you do. For your own sake desist: to save your own confusion, more than mine, desist, and seek no further.

Luc. No, madam; if I spare you, may the shame that waits for you fall on my head.

Miss A. At your own peril, be it then. Look there. (*Opens and discovers Lord A.*)

Luc. Astonishing! Lord Abberville! This is, indeed, extraordinary; this, of all frolics modern wit and gallantry have given birth to, is the newest and the boldest style.

Lord A. Upon my life, Miss Bridgemore, my visit has been entirely innocent.

Luc. Oh, yes! I give you perfect credit for your innocence; the hour, the place, your lordship's character, the lady's composure, all are innocence itself. Can't you affect a little surprise, ma'am, at finding a gentleman in your bed-room, though you placed him there yourself? So excellent an actress might pretend a fit on the occasion. Oh! you have not half your part. [this in too serious a light.

Lord A. Indeed, Miss Bridgemore, you look upon

Luc. No: be assured, I'm charmed with your address; you are a perfect fashionable lover: so agreeable to invite us to your house, so well-bred to be from home, and so considerate to visit poor Miss Aubrey in our absence. I am puzzled which to prefer—your wit, politeness, or your honour.

Miss A. Miss Bridgemore, 'tis in vain to urge my innocence to you; heaven and my own heart acquit me; I must endure the censure of the world.

Luc. Oh! madam, with Lord Abberville's protection you may set that at nought: to him I recommend you: your company in this house will not be very welcome. [*Exit.*

Lord A. (*To Luc.*) Then, madam, she shall come to mine; my house, my arms are open to receive her. Fear nothing: set her at defiance; resign yourself to my protection; you shall face your tyrant, outface her, shine above her, put her down in splendour as in beauty; be no more the servile thing her cruelty has made you; but be the life, the leader of each public pleasure, the envy of all womankind, the mistress of my happiness—

Miss A. And murderer of my own. No, no, my lord, I'll perish first: the last surviving orphan of a noble house, I'll not disgrace it: from these mean, unfeeling people, who to the bounty of my ancestors owe all they have, I shall expect no mercy; but you, whom even pride might teach some virtue, you to tempt me; you, with unmanly cunning, to seduce distress yourself created, sinks you deeper in contempt than heaven sinks me in poverty and shame. [*Exit.*

Lord A. A very unpromising campaign, truly; one lady lost, and the other in no way of being gained. Well, I'll return to my company; there is this merit, however, in gaming, that it makes all losses appear trivial but its own. [*Exit.*

ACT II.—Scene I.—*A Library in Mortimer's house.*

Mortimer *discovered.*

Mort. So, so! another day; another twelve hours' round of folly and extravagance: psha! I am sick on't. What's our men of genius about? Jarring and jangling with each other, while a vast army of vices over-runs the whole country at discretion. [*Enter* Jarvis.] Now, Jarvis, what's your news?

Jar. My morning budget, sir; a breakfast of good deeds; the offerings of a full heart, and the return of an empty purse. There, sir, I've done your errand; and wish hereafter you could find another agent for your charities.

Mort. Why so, Charles?

Jar. Because the task grows heavy; besides, I'm old and foolish, and the sight is too affecting.

Mort. Why doesn't do like me, then? Sheath a soft heart in a rough case, 'twill wear the longer; veneer thyself, good Jarvis, as thy master does, and keep a marble outside to the world. Who dreams that I am the lewd fool of pity, and thou my pander, Jarvis, my provider? You found out the poor fellow, then, the half-pay officer I met last Sunday.

Jar. With difficulty; for he obtruded not his sorrows on the world; but in despair had crept into a corner; and, with his wretched family about him, was patiently expiring.

Mort. Pr'ythee, no more on't: you saved him; you relieved him; no matter how; you made a fellow-creature happy, that's enough.

Jar. I did, sir; but his story's so affecting—

Mort. Keep it to thyself, old man, then; why must my heart be wrung? I, too, am one of nature's spoilt children, and haven't yet left off the tricks of the nursery. *Enter a Servant.*

Serv. Sir, Mr. Tyrrel's come to town, and begs to see you.

Mort. Let him come in. [*Enter* Tyrrel.] So, nephew, what brings you to town? I thought you was a prisoner in the country.

Tyr. I was; but now my Lord Courtland has obtained his liberty, no reason holds why I should not recover mine.

Mort. Well, sir, how have you filled up your time? In practising fresh thrusts, or repenting of that which is past? You've drawn your sword to satisfy one man, now think of satisfying the rest of mankind.

Tyr. You know my story, sir: I drew my sword in the defence of innocence; to punish and repel the libertine attempts of an ennobled ruffian; every man of honour would have done the same.

Mort. Yes, honour! you young men are subtle arguers; the cloak of honour covers all your faults, as that of passion all your follies.

Tyr. Honour is what mankind have made it; and as we hold our lives upon these terms, with our lives it behoves us to defend them.

Mort. You have made it reason, then, it seems; make it religion, too, and put it out of fashion with the world at once; of this be sure, I would sooner cast my guineas in the sea, than give them to a duellist. But, come, Frank, you are one from prejudice, not principle; therefore, we'll talk no more on't. Where are you lodged?

Tyr. At the hotel hard by.

Mort. Then move your baggage hither, and keep house with me: you and I, nephew, have such opposite pursuits that we can never justle; besides, they tell me you're in love; 'twill make a good companion of you; you shall rail at one sex, while I'm employed with t'other; and thus we may both gratify our spleen at once.

Tyr. Oh! sir, unless you can consent to hear the praises of my lovely girl, from hour to hour, in endless repetition, never suffer me within your doors.

Mort. Thy girl, Frank, is everything but rich, and that's a main blank in the catalogue of a lady's perfections. [will do it.

Tyr. Fill it up, then, dear uncle; a word of your's

Mort. True, boy, a word will do it; but 'tis a long word; 'tis a lasting one; it should be, therefore, a deliberate one: but let me see your girl; I'm a sour fellow, so the world thinks me; but it is against the proud, the rich, I war: poverty may be a misfortune to Miss Aubrey, it would be hard to make it an objection.

Tyr. How generous is that sentiment! Let me have your consent for my endeavours at obtaining her's, and I shall be most happy.

Mort. About it, then; my part is soon made ready; your's is the task: you are to find out happiness in marriage; I'm only to provide you with a fortune. [*Exit Tyrrel.*] Well, Frank, I suspected thou hadst more courage than wit, when I heard of thy engaging in a duel; now thou art for encountering a wife, I am convinced of it. A wife! 'sdeath! sure, some planetary madness reigns amongst our

wives; the dog-star never sets, and the moon's horns are fallen on our heads.

Enter COLIN MACLEOD.

Colin. The gude time o'day to you, sair.

Mort. Well, Colin, what's the news at your house?

Colin. Nay, no great spell of news, gude faith; aw things with us gang on after the auld sort. I'm weary of my life amongst 'em; the murrain take 'em all! sic a family of freebooters, Maister Mortimer; an I speak a word to 'em, or preach up a little needful economy, hoot! the whole clan is up in arms. I may speak it in your ear, an the de'il himsel were to turn housekeeper, he could na' pitch upon a fitter set; fellows of all trades, countries, and occupations; a ragamuffin crew; the very refuse of the mob, that canna' count past twa generations, without a gibbet in their scutcheon.

Mort. Ay, Colin, things are miserably changed since your old master died.

Colin. Ah! Maister Mortimer, it makes my heart drop blude to think how much gude counsel I ha' cast away upon my laird; i'faith, I hanna' stinted him o' that; I gec'd him rules and maxims of gude husbandry in plenty, but aw in vain; the dice ha' deafened him.

Mort. Yes, and destroyed; his head, heart, happiness are gone to ruin: the least a gamester loses is his money.

Colin. Ecod! and that's no trifle in this case: last night's performances made no small hole in that.

Mort. Whence learn you that?

Colin. From little Napthali of St. Mary Axe: when a man borrows money of a Jew, 'tis a presumption no Christian can be found to lend him any.

Mort. Is your lord driven to such wretched shifts?

Colin. Hoot! know you not that every losing gamester has his Jew? He is your only doctor in a desperate case; when the regulars have brought you to death's door, the quack is invited to usher you in.

Mort. Your Jew, Colin, in the present case, favours more of the lawyer than the doctor: for, I take it, he makes you sign and seal as long as you have effects.

Colin. You've hit the nail o' the hede; my laird will sign to anything; there's bonds, and blanks, and bargains, and promissory-notes, and a d—d sight of rogueries, depend on't. Ecod! he had a bundle for his breakfast, as big as little Napthali could carry; I would it had braken his bock; and, yet, he is na' half the knave of yon fat fellow upon Fish-street-hill.

Mort. Bridgemore, you mean.

Colin. Ay, ay, he's at the bottom of the plot; this little Hebrew's only his jackall.

Mort. I comprehend you: Bridgemore, under cover of this Jew, has been playing the usurer with Lord Abberville, and means to pay his daughter's portion in parchment; this must be prevented.

Colin. You may spare your pains for that; the match is off.

Mort. Heyday! friend Colin, what has put off that?

Colin. Troth, Maister Mortimer, I canna' satisfy you on that hede; but yesternight, the job was done; methought the business never had a kindly aspect from the first.

Mort. Well, as my lord has got rid of miss, I think he may very well spare her fortune.

Colin. Odzooks! but that's no reason he should lose his own.

Mort. That, Colin, may be past my power to hinder; yet even that shall be attempted: find out the Jew that Bridgemore has employed, and bring him hither, if you can.

Colin. Let me alone for that; there never was a Jew since Samson's time that Colin could na' deal with; an he hangs bock, and will na' follow kindly, troth, I'll lug him to you by the ears; ay, will I, and his maister, the fat fellow, into the bargain.

Mort. No, no; leave me to deal with Bridgemore; I'll scare away that cormorant. If the son of my noble friend will be outdone, it never shall be said he fell without an effort on my part to save him. [*Exit.*

Colin. By heaven, you speak that like a noble gentleman. Ah! Maister Mortimer, in England, he that wants money wants everything; in Scotland, few have it, but every one can do without it. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Bridgemore's house.*

Enter BRIDGEMORE *and* DR. DRUID.

Bridge. But what is all this to me, Doctor? while I have a good house over my head, what care I if the pyramids of Egypt were sunk into the earth? London, thank heaven, will serve my turn.

Dr. D. Ay, ay, lookye, I never said it wasn't coot enough for them that live in it.

Bridge. Good enough? Why, what is like it? Where can you live so well?

Dr. D. No where, coot truth; 'tis all cook-shops and putchers'-shambles; your very streets have savoury names; your Poultry, your Pie-corner, and Pudding-lane, your Bacon-alley, and Fish-street-hill here; o' my oord, the map of London would furnish out an admirable pill of fare for a lord-mayor's dinner.

Bridge. Well, Doctor, I'm contented with Fish-street-hill; you may go seek for lodgings yonder in the ruins of Palmyra.

Dr. D. Ruins, indeed! what are all your new buildings, up and down yonder, but ruins? Improve your town a little further, and you'll drive every man of sense out of it; pless us and save us! by-and-by, not a monument of antiquity will be left standing from London-stone to Westminster-hall.

Bridge. And if the commissioners of paving would mend the streets with one, and present t'other as a nuisance, bone-setters and lawyers would be the only people to complain.

Dr. D. Down with 'em, then, at once; down with everything noble, and venerable, and ancient amongst you; turn the Tower of London into a Pantheon, make a new Adelphi of the Savoy, and bid adieu to all ages but your own; you will then be no more in the way of deriving dignity from your progenitors, than you are of transmitting it to your posterity.

Bridge. Well, Doctor, well; leave me my opinion, and keep your own; you've a veneration for rust and cobwebs; I am for brushing them off wherever I meet them: we are for furnishing our shops and warehouses with good profitable commodities; you are for storing them with all the monsters of the creation. I much doubt if we could serve you with a dried rattlesnake, or a stuffed alligator, in all the purlieus of Fish-street-hill.

Dr. D. A stuffed alligator! A stuffed alderman would be sooner had.

Bridge. May be so; and let me tell you, an antiquarian is as much to seek in the city of London, as an alderman would be in the ruins of Herculaneum: every man after his own way, that's my maxim: you are for the paltry ore, I am for the pure gold: I dare be sworn, now, you are as much at home amongst the snakes and serpents at Don Saltero's, as I am with the Jews and jobbers at Jonathan's.

Dr. D. Coot truth, Mr. Bridgemore, 'tis hard to say which collection is the most harmless of the two.

Enter MRS. BRIDGEMORE.

Mrs. B. I'm out of patience with you, Mr. Bridgemore, to see you stir no brisker in this business; with such a storm about your ears, you stand as idle as a Dutch sailor in a trade-wind.

Bridge. Truly, love, till you came in, I heard nothing of the storm.

Mrs. B. Recollect the misadventure of last night; the wickedness of that strumpet you have harboured in your house; that viper, which would never have had strength to sting, hadn't you warmed it in your bosom.

Dr. D. Faith and truth, now, I haven't heard petter reasoning from an ooman this many a day: you shall know, Mr. Pridgemore, the viperous species love warmth; their sting, lookye, is then more venomous; but draw their teeth, and they are harmless reptiles; the conjurers, in Persia, play a thousand fancies and fagaries with them.

Bridge. But I'm no Persian, Doctor.

Mrs. B. No, nor conjurer, neither; you would not else have been the dupe thus of a paltry girl.

Dr. D. A girl, indeed! why all the European world are made the dupes of girls: the Asiatics are more wise: saving your presence, now, I've seen a Turkish pacha or a Tartar chan rule threescore, ay, three hundred wives, with infinite more ease and quiet, than you can manage one.

Mrs. B. Manage your butterflies, your bats, and beetles, and leave the government of wives to those who have them: we stand on British ground as well as our husbands; magna charta is big enough for us both; our bill of divorce is a full match for their bill of rights, at any time: we have our commons, Doctor, as well as the men; and I believe our privileges are as well managed here at St. Paul's, as their's are yonder at St. Stephen's.

Dr. D. Your privileges, Mrs. Pridgemore, are not to be disputed by any in this company; and, if miss is as well instructed in her's, I wish my Lord Abberville joy of his release, that's all. [*Exit.*

Enter LUCINDA.

Luc. What did the fellow say? Who sent that old mummy hither?

Bridge. He came upon a qualifying message from Lord Abberville, as I believe; but 'tis such an extravagant old blade, he got amongst the pyramids of Egypt, before he could well bring it out.

Mrs. B. I would he were there, and his pupil with him; don't you see what a condition our poor girl is thrown into?

Luc. I into a condition! No; they shall never have to say they threw me into a condition. I may be angry, but I scorn to own I'm disappointed.

Bridge. That's right, child; sure, there are more men in the world besides Lord Abberville.

Luc. La! papa, your ideas are so gross, as if I cared for any of the sex, if he hadn't singled her out from all womankind; but it was ever thus; she's born to be my evil genius. Sure the men are mad—Tyrrel—Lord Abberville—one touched my heart, the other wounds my pride.

Bridge. Why, ay; there is a fine estate, a noble title, great connexions, powerful interest.

Luc. Revenge is worth them all; drive her but out of doors, and marry me to a convent.

Bridge. But let us keep some shew of justice; this may be all a frolic of Lord Abberville's; the girl, perhaps, is innocent.

Luc. How can that be, when I am miserable?

Mrs. B. Come, she's been suffered in your house too long; had I been mistress, she should have quitted it last night upon the instant: would she had never entered it!

Bridge. There you make a bad wish, Mrs. Bridgemore; she has proved the best feather in my wing. But, call her down; go, daughter, call her down.

Luc. I'll send her to you; nothing shall prevail with me to speak to her, or look upon the odious creature more. [*Exit.*

Mrs. B. What is it you are always hinting at about this girl? She's the best feather in your wing. Explain yourself. [you should never know it.

Bridge. I can't; you must excuse me; 'tis better

Mrs. B. Why, where's the fear? What can you have to dread from a destitute girl, without father, and without friend?

Bridge. But is she really without a father? Were I once well assured of that—But, hush! my daughter's here. Well, where's Miss Aubrey?

Re-enter LUCINDA, *followed by a Maid-servant.*

Luc. The bird is flown.

Bridge. Heyday! gone off?

Mrs. B. That's flat conviction.

Bridge. What have you there? A letter?

Luc. She found it on her table.

Bridge. Read it, Lucy. [touch her nasty scrawl.

Luc. I beg to be excused, sir; I don't choose to

Bridge. Well, then, let's see; I'll read it myself. (*Reads.*) "*Sir,—Since neither Lord Abberville's testimony, nor my most solemn protestations can prevail with you to believe me innocent, I prevent Miss Bridgemore's threatened dismission, by withdrawing myself for ever from your family: how the world will receive a destitute, defenceless orphan I am now to prove; I enter on my trial without any armour but my innocence; which, though insufficient to secure to me the continuance of your confidence, will, by the favour of Providence, serve, I hope, to support me under the loss of it.* AUGUSTA AUBREY." So, she's eloped!

Mrs. B. Ay, this is lucky; there's an end of her: this makes it her own act and deed: give me the letter. Go, you need not wait. (*To the Serv.*)

Serv. Madam!

Luc. Don't you hear? Leave the room.

Serv. Pray, don't be angry; I beg to speak a word

Luc. Go, go; another time; I'm busy. [to you.

Serv. I've done a wicked thing; and if I don't discharge my heart, 'twill break, it is so full.

Mrs. B. What have you done? Speak out.

Serv. Why, I have been the means of ruining an innocent person; for such Miss Aubrey is.

Bridge. How so? Go on.

Serv. 'Twas I that brought Lord Abberville last night into her chamber, unknown to her. I thought it was a little frolic to surprise her; but, when I heard her scream, I was alarmed, and ran and list- [ened at the door.

Serv. Why, then I heard her chide him, and desire him to begone; yes, and but just before you came up stairs, I heard the poor young lady reproach him bitterly for his baseness in making love to her, when he was engaged to you, madam: indeed, she is as innocent as the babe unborn. [about it.

Luc. Go your way for a simpleton, and say no more

Serv. To be sure I was a simpleton to do as I did; but I should never survive it, if any mischief was to follow. [*Exit.*

Bridge. What's to be done now?

Mrs. B. What's to be done? why let her take her course; guilty or not, what matters it, if every man who offers for your daughter, is to turn aside and follow her?

Luc. True; where's the woman who can pardon that? Indeed, had she been really criminal, I could have endured her better, for then I had one qualification, which she had wanted; now she piques me every way. *Enter a Servant.*

Serv. Lord Abberville, madam, desires to be admitted to say a word with you.

Luc. Who? Lord Abberville?

Mrs. B. Oh! by all means, admit him: now, Lucy, shew yourself a woman of spirit; receive him, meet his insulting visit with becoming contempt. Come, Mr. Bridgemore, let us leave them to themselves. [*Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. B.*

Luc. Ahem! now, pride, support me.

Enter LORD ABBERVILLE.

Lord A. Miss Bridgemore, your most obedient; I come, madam, on a penitential errand, to apologize to you and Miss Aubrey for the ridiculous situation in which I was surprised last night.

Luc. Cool, easy villain! (*Aside.*)

Lord A. I dare say you laughed most heartily after I was gone.

Luc. Most incomparable assurance! (*Aside.*)

Lord A. Well, I forgive you; 'twas ridiculous enough; a foolish frolic, but absolutely harmless, be assured. I am glad to find you no longer serious about it. But where's Miss Aubrey, pray?

Luc. You'll find her, probably, at your own door; she's gone from hence. [*Enter a Servant.*]

Serv. Mr. Tyrrel, madam. [jection?

Luc. Shew him in, pray. My lord, you've no ob-

Lord A. None in life. I know him intimately; but, if you please, I'll take my leave; you may have business. Curse on't! he is the lady's lover. (*Aside.*)

Luc. Nay, I insist upon your staying. Now, malice stand my friend! (*Aside.*) [*Enter* TYRREL.] Good morning to you, sir, you're welcome to town.

Tyr. I thank you. I am wrong, I believe; your

servant should not have shewn me in here: 'tis with Miss Aubrey I request to speak.

Luc. Lord Abberville, you can direct Mr. Tyrrel to Miss Aubrey; she has left this family, sir.

Tyr. Madam—my lord—I beg to know—I don't understand. [so malicious? (*Aside.*)

Lord A. Nor I, upon my soul. Was ever anything

Luc. My lord, why don't you speak? Mr. Tyrrel may have particular business with Miss Aubrey.

Lord A. Why do you refer to me? How should I know anything of Miss Aubrey.

Luc. Nay, I ask pardon: perhaps Mr. Tyrrel's was a mere visit of compliment.

Tyr. Excuse me, madam; I confess it was an errand of the most serious sort. [placed her.

Luc. Then it's cruel not to tell him where you've

Tyr. Placed her!

Lord A. Ay, placed her, indeed! For heaven's sake! what are you about?

Luc. Nay, I have done, my lord; but after last night's fatal discovery, I conceived you would no longer affect any privacy as to your situation with Miss Aubrey.

Tyr. What did you discover last night, madam? tell me; I have an interert in the question.

Luc. I'm sorry for it, for then you'll not be pleased to hear that she admits Lord Abberville, by night, into her bed-room, locks him up in it, and on detection, the next morning, openly avows her guilt, by eloping to her gallant. [is true—

Tyr. What do I hear? My lord, my lord, if this

Lord A. What then? What if it is? Must I account to you? Who makes you my inquisitor?

Tyr. Justice, humanity, and that control which virtue gives me over its opposers: if more you would, with anguish I confess, my heart, unhappily, was placed on her whom you've ruined: now you'll not dispute my right. [be found at home.

Lord A. This is no place to urge your right; I shall

Tyr. I'll wait upon you there. [*Exit.*

Lord A. Do so: your servant. Miss Bridgemore, I am infinitely your debtor for this agreeable visit; I leave you to the enjoyment of your many amiable virtues, and the pleasing contemplation of what may probably ensue from the interview you have provided for me with Mr. Tyrrel. [*Exit.*

Luc. Ha, ha, ha! I must be less or more than woman, if I did not relish this retaliation. [*Exit.*

ACT III.—SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter COLIN MACLEOD.

Colin. Ah! Colin, thou'rt a prodigal; a thriftless loon thou'st been, that could na' keep a little pelf to thysall, when thou hadst got it; now thou may'st gang in this poor geer to thy live's end, and worse, too, for aught I can tell; faith, mon, 'twas a smeart little bysack of money thou hadst scraped together, and the best part of it had na' been laft amongst thy kinsfolk, in the isles of Skey and Mull; muckle gude may it do the weams of them that ha' it! There was Jamie Mac Grejor, and Sawney Mac Nab, and the twa braw lads of Kinruddin, with old Charley Mac Dougall, my mother's first husband's second cousin: by my sol, I could na' see such near relations, and gentlemen of such auncient families, gang upon bare feet, while I rode a horseback: I had been na' true Scot, as I could na' ge'en a countryman a gude laft upon occasion.

Enter MISS AUBREY.

Miss A. That house is Mr. Mortimer's; and yet, I can't resolve to go to it: to appeal to Tyrrel is a dangerous step; it plunges him again in my unprosperous concerns, and puts his life, a second time, in danger; still, still I know not how to let him think me guilty: wretched, unfriended creature that I am, what shall I do? (*As she is going out, Colin advances.*) [what's your malady?

Colin. Haud a bit, lassie, you that are bewailing;

Miss A. Sir! Did you speak to me?

Colin. Troth, did I; I were loath to let affliction pass beside me, and not ask what it ailed.

Miss A. Do you know me, then?

Colin. What need have I to know you? An you can put me in the way to help you, isn't that enough?

Miss A. I thank you: if I have your pity, that is all my case admits of.

Colin. Wha' can tell that? I may be better than I seem: as sorry a figure as I cut, I have as gude blude in my veins, and as free of it, too, as any Briton in the lond; troth, an you be of my country, madam, you may have heard as much. [land.

Miss A. I do not question it; but I am not of Scot-

Colin. Well, well; an if you had, the de'il a bit the worse should I ha' liked you for it; but it was not your lot; we did na' make oursalls; Paradise itsal would na' hald all mankind, nor Scotland neither; and let me tell you, there's na' braver or more auncient people underneath heaven's canopy; no, nor a nation of the terrestrial globe, wha have more love and charity for one another.

Miss A. Well, sir, you seem to wish to do me service: I have a letter here; I cannot well deliver it myself; if you are of this neighbourhood, perhaps you know the house of Mr. Mortimer.

Colin. Hoot, hoot! I ken him well; I came fra' thence but now.

Miss A. Will you take charge of this, and give it as directed? the gentleman will be found at Mr. Mortimer's.

Colin. "To Francis Tyrrel, Esquire." Ah! an 'tis thereabouts you point, gadzooks! your labour's lost; you may ev'n wear the willow, as they say; for, by my troth, he'll play the loon wi' you.

Miss A. Is that his character?

Colin. No: but he canna' well be true to twa at the same time. [the lady's name?

Miss A. His heart's engaged, it seems: what is

Colin. Woe worth her name! I canna' recollect it now; an it had been a Scottish name, I should na' let it slip so; but I've no mighty memory for your English callings, they do na' dwell upon my tongue: out on't! 'tis with a grete fat lubber yonder in the city that she dwells; a fellow with a paunch below his gullet, like the poke of a pelican; and now I call to mind, 'tis Aubrey is her name; ay, ay, she's the happy woman.

Miss A. Is she the happy woman? Well, sir, if you'll deliver that letter into Mr. Tyrrel's hands—there is no treason in it against Miss Aubrey; she herself is privy to the contents.

Colin. You need na' doubt but I shall hond it to him; I were a sorry child an I could grudge you that: where shall I bring his answer?

Miss A. It requires none.

Colin. But an he craves to know your house, where mun I say you dwell?

Miss A. I have no house, no home, no father, friend, or refuge in this world; nor do I, at this moment, fainting as I am with affliction and fatigue, know where to find a hospitable door.

Colin. Come with me, then, and I will shew you one. Ah! woe is me, we ha' na' all cold hearts that occupy cold climates: I were a graceless loon, indeed, when Providence ha' done so much for me, an I could na' pay bock a little to a fellow-creature.

Miss A. Who you may be I know not; but that sentiment persuades me I may trust you: know, in this wretched person you behold her whom you think the envied, the beloved Miss Aubrey.

Colin. Miss Aubrey! You Miss Aubrey? His presence be about us! And has that grete fat fellow in the city turned his bock upon you? Out on him, ugly hound! his stomach be his grave! I could find in my heart to stick my dirk into his weam.

Miss A. Have patience: 'tis not he; Lord Abberville's the source of my misfortunes.

Colin. Ah, woe the while! the more's his shame.

Miss A. Do not mistake affliction for disgrace; I am innocent. [as much of him.

Colin. I see it in your face: would I could say

Miss A. You know him, then?

Colin. Ay, and his father afore him. Colin Mac-

Miss A. Colin Macleod! [lead's my name.

Colin. What do you start at? Troth, there's no shame upon't; 'tis nought a bit the worse for my wear; honesty was aw my patrimony; and, by my sol! I ha' na' spent it: I serve Lord Abberville, but not his vices.

Miss A. I readily believe you; and to convince you of it, put me, I beseech you, in some present shelter, till the labour of my hands can keep me; and hold me up, but for a breathing space, till I can rally my exhausted spirits, and learn to struggle with the world.

Colin. Ay, will I, by my sol! so heaven gives life; and woe betide the child that does you wrong! I be na' smuthly spoken, but you shall find me true. And, look, the first door that I cast my ey'n upon, I ken the name of Macintosh: troth, 'tis a gudely omen and prognostic; the Macintoshes and Macleods are aw of the same blude fra' long antiquity: had we searched aw the town, we could na' find a better. (*Knocks at the door.*) Odzooks! fear nothing, damsel, an she be a true Macintosh you need na' doubt a welcome. [*Enter* MRS. MACINTOSH.] Gude day to you, madam; is your name Macintosh?

Mrs. M. It is: what are your commands?

Colin. Nay, haud a bit, gude child, we command nought; but being, d'ye see? a Scottish kinsman of your's, Colin Macleod by name, I crave a lodgment in your house for this poor lassie. Gude troth, you need na' squant at her so closely; there's nought to be suspected; and though she may na' boast so long a pedigree as you and I do, yet, for an English family, she's of no despicable house; and as for reputation, gude faith, the lamb is not more innocent: respecting mine own sall, I will na' vaunt, but an you've any doubts, you need na' gang a mighty length to satisfy 'em: I'm no impostor.

Mrs. M. I see enough to satisfy me; she is a perfect beauty. Pray, young lady, walk in; pray, walk up stairs, you are heartily welcome: lack-a-day! you seem piteously fatigued.

Miss A. Indeed I want repose.

Colin. Rest you awhile; I'll deliver your letter, and call on you anon.

Miss A. I thank you. [*Exit into the house.*

Mrs. M. Heavens, what a lovely girl!

Colin. Haud you a bit, you've done this kindly, cousin Macintosh; but we're na' come a bagging, d'ye see? here, take this money in your hond, and let her want for nought.

Mrs. M. You may depend upon my care.

Colin. Ay, ay; I kenn'd you for a Macintosh at once; I am na' apt to be mistaken in any of your clan; and 'tis a comely presence that you have; troth, 'tis the case with aw of you; the Macintoshes are a very personable people. [*Exit.*

Mrs. M. Another of my Scottish cousins. Oh! this new name of mine is a most thriving invention; a rare device to hook in customers. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in Lord Abberville's house.*

Enter LORD ABBERVILLE, *followed by Servants.*

Lord A. You are a most unreasonable set of gentry, truly; I have but one Scotchman in my family, and you are every one of you, cook, valet, butler, up in arms to drive him out of it.

La Jeu. And with reason, my lord. Monsieur Colin is a grand financier; but he has a little of what we call la maladie du pays; it is not for the credit of my lord Anglois to be too œconomique.

Lord A. I think, La Jeunesse, I have been at some pains to put that out of dispute; but get you gone all together, and send the fellow to me; I begin to be as tired of him as you are. [*Exeunt Servants.*] His honesty is my reproach; these rascals flatter while they rob me: it angers me, that one who has no stake, no interest in my fortune, should husband it more frugally than I who am the owner and the sufferer: in short, he is the glass in which I see myself, and the reflection tortures me; my vices have deformed me; gaming has made a monster of me. [*Enter* COLIN MACLEOD.] Come hither, Colin; what is this I hear of you?

Colin. Saving your presence, I should guess a pratty many lies; 'twill mostly be the case when companions in office, give characters one of another.

Lord A. But what is he whom nobody speaks well of? You are given up on all hands.

Colin. And so must truth itsall, when the de'il turns historian.

Lord A. You've been applauded for your bluntness; 'tis no recommendation to me, Macleod; nor shall I part from all my family to accommodate your spleen; from the stable-boy to my own valet, there's not a domestic in this house gives you a good word.

Colin. Nor ever will, till I prefer their interest to your's; hungry curs will bark; but an your lordship would have us regale our friends below stairs, while you are feasting your's above, gadzooks! I have a pratty many countrymen in town, with better appetites than purses, who will applaud the regulation.

Lord A. 'Tis for such purses and such appetites you would be a fit provider; 'tis for the latitude of the Highlands, not for the meridian of London, your narrow scale of economy is laid down.

Colin. Economy is no disgrace; 'tis batter living on a little, than outliving a great deal.

Lord A. Well, sir, you may be honest, but you are troublesome; my family are, one and all, in arms against you; and you must know, Colin Macleod, I have great objection to a rebellion either in a family or state, whatever you and your countrymen may think of the matter.

Colin. My lord, my lord! whan you have shad the blude of the offenders, it is na' generous to revive the offence: as for mine awn particular, heaven be my judge, the realm of England does na' haud a heart more loyal than the one I strike my hond upon.

Enter DOCTOR DRUID.

Lord A. So, Doctor, what's the news with you? Well, Colin, let me hear no more of these complaints; don't be so considerate of me; and, harkye! if you was not quite so parsimonious to yourself, your appearance would be all the better.

Colin. I'd be better habited, but I canna' afford it.

Lord A. Afford it, sirrah! Don't I know you have money enough, if you had but spirit to make use of it?

Colin. True; but I fain would keep a little together, d'ye see? lest you should not. [*Exit.*

Dr. D. Plessing upon us, how the man prates and prattles! 'Twas but this morning he was differing and disputing, truly, about pedigrees and antiquities, though I can count forty and four generations from the grandmother of St. Winifred, as regularly as a monk can tell his beads.

Lord A. Leave your generations to the worms, Doctor, and tell me if you carried my message to Bridgemore. But why do I ask that? when I myself am come from putting the finishing hand to that treaty; and, really, if young women will keep companions who are handsomer than themselves, they mustn't wonder if their lovers go astray.

Dr. D. Ah! my Lord Apperville, my Lord Apperville, you've something there to answer for.

Lord A. Preach not, good sixty-five, thy cold continence to twenty-three; the stars are in my debt one lucky throw at least; let them bestow Miss Aubrey, and I'll cancel all that's past. (*A Servant delivers a letter.*) What have we here? From Tyrrel, I suppose. No, 'tis from a more peaceable quarter; my commodious Mrs. Macintosh. (*Reads.*) "*Chance has thrown in my way a girl that quite eclipses your Miss Somers: come to me without loss of time, lest the bird should be on the wing.*"—What shall I do? I have but little stomach to the business. Aubrey is my goddess, and 'tis downright heresy to follow any other. [*Enter a Servant.*]

Serv. My lord, a person without says he comes with a recommendation from Sir Harry Gamble.

Lord A. What sort of a person?

Serv. A little ugly fellow: I believe he's a Jew.

Lord A. That's right, I had forgot: my Jew is

fairly jaded; Sir Harry's, probably, is better trained; so let me see him. Who is in the ante-chamber?

Serv. There are several persons waiting to speak with your lordship; they have called a many times.

Lord A. Ay, ay; they come for money; he alone comes with it; therefore, conduct that little ugly fellow, as you call him, to my closet, and bid those other people call again. [*Exit Servant.*] Doctor, if any of my particulars are importunate to see me, don't let them interrupt me here; tell them I'm gone to Mrs. Macintosh's; they'll know the place, and my business in it. [*Exit.*

Dr. D. They may guess that without the gift of divination, truly: ah! this passion is the prejudice of education. He may thank France and Italy for this: I would have carried him through Ingria, Esthonia, and Livonia; through Moldavia, Bessarabia, Bulgaria, Thrace; from the Gulf of Finland to the Straits of the Dardanelles. 'Tis a chance if he had seen a human creature in the whole course of his travels. [*Enter* TYRREL.]

Tyr. Doctor, forgive me this intrusion: where is Lord Abberville? His servants deny him to me, and I've business with him of a pressing sort.

Dr. D. Business, indeed!

Tyr. Yes, business, sir: I beg you to inform me where to find him.

Dr. D. I take it, Mr. Tyrrel, you are one of his particulars; therefore, I tell you, he is gone to Mrs. Macintosh's; a commodious sort of a pody, who follows one trade in her shop, and another in her parlour. [business there.

Tyr. Yes, yes; I know her well, and know his

Dr. D. Pleasure is all his business: I take for granted, he finds some gratification in his visits there.

Tyr. Yes, the gratification of a devil; the pleasure of defacing beauty and despoiling innocence; of planting everlasting misery in the human heart for one licentious, transitory joy; 'tis there he holds his riots; thither he is gone to repeat his triumphs over my unhappy Aubrey, and confirm her in her shame. [ing passion now?

Dr. D. Ay, I suppose Miss Aubrey is the reign-

Tyr. Cursed be his passions, withered be his powers! Oh! sir, she was an angel once: such was the graceful modesty of her deportment, it seemed as if the chastity, which now so many of her sex throw from them, centered all with her.

Dr. D. I've told too much; this lad's as mad as he.—Well, Mr. Tyrrel, I can say but little in the case; women and politics I never deal in; in other words, I abhor cuckoldom, and have no passion for the pillory. [*Exit.*

Enter COLIN MACLEOD.

Colin. Gang your gait for an old smoke-dried piece of goat's-flesh. (*Shuts the door.*) Now we're alone, young gentleman, there's something for your private reading. (*Delivers a letter.*)

Tyr. What do I see? Miss Aubrey's hand! Distraction! how this racks my heart.

Colin. Ay, and mine, too.—Ecod, it gave it sic a pull, I canna for the sol of me, get it back into its place again: gude truth, you'll find it but a melancholy tale.

Tyr. (*Reads.*) "*I am the martyr of an accident, which never will find credit; under this stroke, I can't conceal a wish that Mr. Tyrrel would not give me up; but, as his single opposition to the world's reproach might be as dangerous to him, as it must be ineffectual to me, I earnestly advise him to forget the unfortunate*—AUGUSTA." What am I to conclude? The paper looks like innocence; the words as soft as modesty could utter.—The martyr of an accident! She calls it accident; why that's no crime. Alas! it might be accident which threw temptation in her way, but voluntary guilt which yielded to the tempter; of him she makes no mention. Pray, sir, inform me, have you seen this lady?

Colin. I have.

Tyr. Discoursed with her?

Colin. I have.

Tyr. In that discourse, do you recollect if she named Lord Abberville?

Colin. I recollect she said he was the source of her misfortunes. [yond doubt.

Tyr. Ay, did she say so much? That's guilty be-

Colin. You're right; it carries a d—d guilty look. I would na' take his fortune to father his faults.

Tyr. Why you then give him up. Oh! 'tis too palpable. But, pray, did she herself give you this letter for me?

Colin. With her own houdes; gude faith, the heart within you would ha' malted to have seen the manner of it.

Tyr. That aggravates my torture! Where was it you left her? In what wretched habitation?

Colin. Hoot! no disparagement upon her habitation? there's nought of wretchedness about it. Odzooks! she's with a lady of as gude a family—

Tyr. Well, well, the place.

Colin. Nay, 'tis hard by; a cousin's of mine own; a comely, courteous woman as you'd wish to commune with: one Mrs. Macintosh.

Tyr. 'Sdeath! that confirms it! There, sir, bring me no more letters: whether you're dupe or pander in this business, I desire never to be troubled more. [*Exit.*

Colin. Hoot! what the fiend posseses you? What time o'the moon is this? The lad's an errant Bedlamite. There's mischief in the wind; and this same laird of mine is at the bottom of it. Gadzooks! there goes Maister Mortimer; I'll tell him aw the case, and take his counsel on the whole. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Mrs. Macintosh's House.*

Enter MRS. MACINTOSH *and* TYRREL.

Mrs. M. Well, Mr. Tyrrel, if you must and will be heard, you must; but pray be short, my time is precious.

Tyr. So is my peace of mind: you've got a lady in your house has taken that from me I never shall recover. [in my house?

Mrs. M. What is't you mean? What lady have I

Tyr. Miss Aubrey. [heard the name.

Mrs. M. Miss Aubrey! You mistake; I never

Tyr. Come, you and I have long been friends; answer me truly, does Lord Abberville visit a lady

Mrs. M. Well, if he does, what then? [here?

Tyr. Why, then, that lady has undone me; she has broke my heart. [lord calls her Somers.

Mrs. M. Yes; but her name's not Aubrey; my

Tyr. Let my lord call her what he will, coin what new name he pleases, to elude my search, still I must see her.

Mrs. M. Why, you're mad, sure, to think of such a thing; I thought you knew me better: violate a trust! No, no, young man, that's not my principle; you see no lady here. I've not maintained an honourable character in the world till now, to make away with it at last. [our conference.

Tyr. If you suspect me, stay and be present at

Mrs. M. Yes; and so have my lord come in and catch us, and a tilting-bout ensue betwixt you; no, Mr. Tyrrel, mine's a sober, well-conducted family.—Hush! as I live, here comes my lord: dear Tyrrel, be advised, come along with me, and betake yourself out of his way.

Tyr. No; I'll not seek a quarrel with Lord Abberville, but I cannot fly from him: go, go, and leave us to each other. [*Exit Mrs. M.*

Enter LORD ABBERVILLE.

Lord A. Tyrrel! what brings you here? This is no place of meeting; if you've any explanation to require upon Miss Aubrey's account, come to my house; I answer nothing here.

Tyr. My lord, when I'm assured Miss Aubrey is in this house, and see you her visitor, I can interpret for myself.

Lord A. Miss Aubrey in this house! You rave.

Tyr. Come, 'tis in vain; your Scotchman told me so; your Mrs. Macintosh herself confessed it.

Lord A. Humph! after all, 'twould be a lucky hit, should this be true: it may be so. (*Aside.*)

Tyr. If you require more witnesses to what I say, here comes an indisputable one, Miss Aubrey herself. [*Enter* MISS AUBREY.]

Miss A. Oh! Mr. Tyrrel, this is generous, indeed. Lord Abberville here, too; 'tis what I dreaded. You have mischief in your minds; but, I beseech you, leave me to my misfortunes, nor cast away a thought upon a wretch like me.

Tyr. Give me your answer, first, to these demands. Have you been wronged? Have you an accusation to prefer against this lord? or do you acquit him, and submit with patience to your situation?

Miss A. I accuse no one; I submit with patience; I am content to be the only sufferer in this business, and earnestly entreat you to desist from any altercation with Lord Abberville on my account.

Tyr. I'm satisfied; and shall religiously obey you: Lord Abberville, I ask your pardon for this interruption; I never shall repeat it more.

Miss A. But are you going?

Tyr. For ever. Dangerous to behold you are; therefore, before my fond, my foolish heart relapses into love, I'll seize the resolution of the moment, and bid farewell to you for ever. [*Exit.*

Miss A. Astonishing!

Lord A. There, madam, you perceive the love, the honour of that gentleman.

Miss A. Could I have thought this of him? Now I'm truly wretched.

Lord A. No, madam, if my purse, my person, my assiduous ardent love can fill the vacancy his falsehood makes, you've had no loss: dry up your tears, you've yet a friend; smile only on my wishes.

Miss A. No, my lord, no; you've made me wretched, guilty you shall never make me.

Lord A. Inexorable girl, will nothing move? Then I've no longer any terms to keep: call to mind where you are; in a house where I am master; surrounded by creatures whom I command. Your champion gives you up; resistance is in vain; if you refuse my favours, madam, you shall feel my force.

Miss A. What is't you mean, my lord?—Stand off! *Enter* MORTIMER.

Mort. Ay, what is it you mean, my lord?

Lord A. Mortimer! 'Sdeath, what evil genius conducted you hither?

Mort. (*Goes to the door.*) Nay, good friend, come in.—[*Enter* COLIN MACLEOD..]—This honest man was my conductor: while you, Lord Abberville, in a distinguished rank, are openly assaulting innocence, he, in his humble post, is secretly supporting it. If you come under that description, madam, I am your defender; if not, I have no further business here.

Miss A. Why should I urge my innocence? I am unfortunate, I am poor; your nephew, sir, will tell you that is cause sufficient for abandoning me.

Lord A. This grows too serious; I scorn to steal that from you, half my fortune could not purchase. I believe you are as innocent as heaven first formed you; and to convince the world in what esteem I hold your virtues, here, before Mortimer, I offer you my hand, and lay my title, rank, and fortune at your feet.

Miss A. No; there may be a legal prostitute as well as a licentious one; had you a world to give, after your base experiment, you cannot offer anything that I shall take You may find others less exceptious; but in a noble family, though stripped of fortune, there will still be pride.

Lord A. I see my fate; I see a prepossession in your heart too strong for me to shake: I plainly perceive that Mr. Tyrrel can offend with more impunity than I can; however, Mortimer, you are a man of honour: I resign Miss Aubrey into your hands for the present, and shall expect you will avail yourself of no unfair advantages over me.—Macleod, I find Miss Aubrey is to thank you for this seasonable visit of Mr. Mortimer's. [*Exit.*

Mort. Madam, you are now my ward; Bridgemore must struggle hard to get you back again.

Miss A. Sir!—Mr. Mortimer! You'll pardon me, but must I think you serious? If what you now propose is meant in kindness to me, I must say the world has not done justice to your character: I have been taught to look upon you as no friend to our sex in particular.

Mort. Nor am I; your sex have broke treaty with us; passed the bounds betwixt us; forced into our very taverns; and from being once the glory of my country, are become its shame.

Miss A. But all have not done this.

Mort. Nor am I, then, at enmity with all: a virtuous individual is of no sex, no country.

Colin. No country? Hoot! A true North Britain will give up his virtue afore his country at any time.

Miss A. Yes, and I think it was a partiality to your country, rather than to virtue, which determined you to put me into this house.

Colin. De'il take me now, and all my kindred with me, if I knew aught about the house, more than the name of Macintosh upon the door.

Mort. Time will clear all things up: a general misconception is gone forth; my nephew, I perceive, has fallen under it. As for poor Colin, his design in bringing you hither was more than innocent; depend upon it, it was noble; I have heard his story, and, at my request, he brings me here: commit yourself, therefore, to my protection, and rely upon my justice.

Miss A. How shall I answer you? Your generosity overwhelms me.

Mort. I generous! No, I am a mere voluptuary; I study luxury by principle, and am as sensual on the side of virtue, as Abberville, or any other fashionable rake, on that of vice. Colin, you'll settle matters with your countrywoman, and come to us at my house. [*Exeunt.*

Colin. My countrywoman! The fiend a bit. I never will believe she has a drop of Scottish blude in aw her composition; as I shall answer, I never blushed before for any of the name; there must be something spurious in her genealogy: I'll have a little serious talk with her on that; I've got the pedigree of the Macintoshes at my fingers' ends; and if there's e'er a flaw in her descent 'twixt this and Noah, gadzooks, I'll wager a hundred pounds I prove her an impostor. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—*Fish-street-hill.*

Enter AUBREY.

Aub. If Bridgemore hasn't shifted his abode, that is the house; 'twas there that, eighteen years ago, I lost a wife, and left an infant daughter. All-disposing Providence, who hast ordained me to this hour, and through innumerable toils and dangers led me back to this affecting spot, can it be wondered at, if I approach it with an anxious, aching heart, uncertain as I am if I have still a child or not? What shall I do? If my Augusta's lost, 'twere better I should never enter those ill-omened doors; if she survives, how shall I disclose myself, and tell her she has a still a father? Oh! that unknown and unperceived, I could but catch a sight of her, gaze till I'd gratified my longing, and till this throbbing might abate. I'll watch the door till somebody comes out, that I may speak to. (*Steps aside.*)

Enter COLIN.

Colin. The murrain light upon this Fish-street-hill, wherever it may be: I would it had na' got its name for nought, that I might fairly smell it out, for I am clear bewaldered. Johnny Groat's house would as soon be found as this same Bradgemore's. One cries, turn o'this hond, one o'that; t'other stares and grins, forsooth, because I hanna' got the modern gabble on my tongue, but speak the language in its auncient purity. Hoot! this mon seems of a batter sort, and, peradventure, would concede an answer. Speed you, gentleman, I pray you, which way leads to Fish-street-hill?

Aub. This is Fish-street-hill.

Colin. Gadzooks! and that's the reason I could

find it na' where alse. Ken you one Bradgemore's, may I ask?

Aub. He had used to live in yonder house with the great gates; but it is many years since I have been in England.

Colin. I'faith, you need na' tell me that; I apprehend as much from your civility.

Aub. Give me leave, now, in my turn, to ask you a few questinns.

Colin. With aw my heart; you have gude right; you may interrogate me freely.

Aub. You are acquainted with this Bridgemore?

Colin. I am.

Aub. And with his family?

Colin. I am.

Aub. And what does it consist of?

Colin. Troth, of a spouse and daughter.

Aub. Are they all?

Colin. Ay, and enough in aw gude reason; the de'il, sir, in his vengeance need na' add a third.

Aub. But, to be serious; tell me, I beseech you, do you know of no one else in Mr. Bridge-

Colin. Of none. [more's family.

Aub. What do I hear? Pray recollect yourself; you don't seem to know this house; perhaps you are not well acquainted with his family?

Colin. Aw that he owns, I know; what base-begotten brats he may have sculking up and down in holes and corners, troth, I can't pretend to say.—These city cattle sometimes will break pasture.

Aub. You misconceive me, honest friend: has no young lady of the name of Aubrey come within your knowledge?

Colin. Ay, ay, poor lassie, she once lived with Bradgemore; the worse luck her's, but that is over; she has got her liberty; she's now released.

Aub. I understand you—she is dead.

Colin. Dead! Heaven forefend! An you would give me time, I would ha' told you she's released from yon fat fellow's tyranny; na' more: out on him, filthy porpoise! aw the bowels in his belly, though he has got gude store, dunna' contain one grain of pity: troth, with his gude will, she might ha' starved and perished in the streets.

Aub. What is't you tell me? In the same breath you bring my hopes to my life, and murder them again. Starved in the streets! I thought she had an affluent fortune.

Colin. In virtue, sir, nought else; and that will not pass current for a dinner. Zooks! and I mysall, by heaven's gude providence, had na' stapt in upon the very nick of time, my life upon't, she had been lost.

Aub. Come to my arms, then, whosoever thou art, and wonder not, for thou hast saved my daughter.

Colin. Daughter! Gadzooks! you make my heart jump to my laps for joy. Are you Miss Aubrey's

Aub. I am her father. [father?

Colin. An if I'd found mine awn, I could na' been more happy. Wall, wall, I hope you'll merit your gude fortune; by my sol, you've got an angel of a child. But where have you been buried aw the while? for we believed you dead.

Aub. You shall hear all my story, but this is no fit place to tell it in: satisfy me, first, if my poor child is safe.

Colin. Fear nought, she's safe with Maister Mortimer; I laft her but this moment.

Aub. Who is Mr. Mortimer?

Colin. Why, Maister Mortimer is one who does a thousand noble acts without the credit of one; his tongue wounds and his heart makes whole; he must be known and not described: an you will bait awhile, in yonder tavern, till I come from Bradgemore's, I'll accompany you to your daughter.

Aub. Agreed; I fear I've been mistaken in this Bridgemore: three years ago I consign'd to him a cargo of great value from Scauderoon; if he has robbed me—but till I've seen my daughter, I'll suspend my inquiry. Step with me into yonder tavern, there we'll concert the means of bringing Bridgemore to an interview at Mr. Mortimer's. Come, my good benefactor, how fortunate was this meeting. I long to know to whom I owe this happiness. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Bridgemore's Counting-house.*

Enter BRIDGEMORE *and* NAPTHALI.

Bridge. And so, friend Napthali, Lord Abberville has had another tumble.

Napth. A d—d one.

Bridge. I'm glad on't; this will wring his fine, high, pampered carcass to the quick.

Napth. I'fait, he flings and winces so, I tremble to come near; he looks as dark as India stock upon a settling day.

Bridge. Ay, ay; the dice are little weapons, but they make deep wounds: what between those that win, as that lend, he bleeds at both arms. These are the bonds.

Napth. Take 'em: this is a memorandum of the premium on five thousand, and this the private contract for extraordinary interest. (*Gives papers.*)

Bridge. Good, friend Napthali! The bonds give legal interest, and this doubles it. There, there, lie by and breed. But harkye! Hast brought the abstract of the sale of the Neptune's cargo?

Napth. Aubrey's consignment you mean.

Bridge. The same; but mum! That's between you and me: close, close, my little Napthali.

Napth. A broker and betray his principal! That's not my vay; there is no senses in that. Here I have make out your account; 'tis vary coot bargain I have make, considering diamond is a drug.

Bridge. Why this tells well; it mounts; the raw silk was old gold; the carpeting and cottons not amiss; and, whuh! the rhubarb— [coffee.

Napth. Ah! sir, but vat is that? Look at the

Bridge. Politics account for that; while newspapers bear price, coffee will hold its own. This rupture with the Russians was in our favour here.

Napth. Ay, ay, a charming stroke; war is a vary coot thing; and then the plague; a blessed circumstance, tank heaven; coot seven per cent.

Bridge. Let me see; altogether, 'tis a thumping sum: it netted forty thousand: where's the conscience, Napthali, that wouldn't strain a point for forty thousand pounds?

Napth. Oh! 'tis all fair in the vay of trade; you could not strike a jury out of Jonathan's that wouldn't acquit you. Well, Mr. Bridgemore, anything more in my vay? [Lloyd's?

Bridge. Nothing at present. Did you call at

Napth. Odso! well recollected! The Seahorse is arrived from Scanderoon, she that had such high insurances upon her.

Bridge. What d'ye hear? What passengers come in her? Is she at Stangate-creek?

Napth. No, in the pool; she brought clean bills of health from Leghorn.

Bridge. Go, go; you have given me an ague-fit; the name of Scanderoon sets all my teeth a chattering. [*Exit Napth.*] Well, would it had been possible to have kept my secret from that fellow.—The Seahorse come at last! Why, be it so. What ails me; what possesses me? If she brings news of Aubrey's death, I'm a whole man; ay, and a warm one, too. How now! who's there?

Enter COLIN MACLEOD.

Colin. Cawdie Macleod, a ragged Highlander, so please you; a wretched gaelly, under favour of your raverence, na' better.

Bridge. I recollect you now for one of my Lord Abberville's retinue. Well, you have some inquiries to make about Miss Aubrey.

Colin. Ecod, you are close upon the mark.

Bridge. I guessed as much; but she is gone from hence, and you may follow.

Colin. Out on thee, ragamuffin! an I were not bound to secrecy, I'd gee thee sic a pill should lead that weam of thine the de'il a dance. (*Aside.*)

Bridge. No, Master Colin; your Scotch policy will stand you in no stead this turn.

Colin. Then I'll forswear my country. Well, you wull na' have my message, then, I mun gang bock to Maister Mortimer, and tell the Turkish trader you'll na' see him. [of?

Bridge. Hold, hold! what trader do you speak

Colin. Of one that's com'd a passenger from Scanderoon, aboard the what d'ye call the vessel? the Seahorse, I take it.

Bridge. What, who? It is not Aubrey.

Colin. Gude faith, I would it were; the mon is dead. [Aubrey?

Bridge. Which man is dead; the passenger or

Colin. Hoot! can't you think 'tis Aubrey? By your leave, truth, awhile; you will na' take it much to heart, an I make use of falsehood to detect itsall. (*Aside.*)

Bridge. I'll go to Mr. Mortimer's; I'll go with all my heart. Give me your hand; I ask your pardon heartily, my honest friend.—And so he's dead, you say; you're sure he is dead. Pray, what distemper did he die of?

Colin. When a mon's in his grave, what matters what distemper laid him there.

Bridge. That's true, that's true enough. Pray you, sit down; I'll just run up and tell my wife and daughter. Zooks! suppose I brought them with me; will they meet a welcome, think you?

Colin. Ay, sic a one as you don't look for, take my word.

Bridge. I'm a new man; I walk upon the air. [*Exit.*

Colin. Ecod! the project takes; I drew for the cock bird, and have taken the whole covey.

Enter Napthali, *hastily.*

Napth. Ods my life, Mr. Bridgemore, I forgot —Who's there? that devil Scotchman.

Colin. Hold, hold! friend Napthali; you and I munna part; you must keep pace wi' me to Maister Mortimer's.

Napth. To Mr. Mortimer's? Impossible: why, I must be at Bank, sir, I must be at Jonathan's: I've forty bargains to settle. I shall have half the coffee-house on my back. Would you make me a lame duck?

Colin. Duck, or no duck, ecod! sir, you must travel. [*Drags him out.*

Enter Lucinda.

Luc. Heyday! I never saw the like before; I can't think what possesses my father; he's intoxicated; quite beside himself with this confirmation of Mr. Aubrey's death: for my part, I derive no particular gratification from it; so that Augusta had but one lover less, I care not if she had forty fathers living: Tyrrel's the man of her heart, and in truth, he is an object worthy any woman's preference; if I could draw him from her, 'twould be full retaliation for Lord Abberville.—I'll go to Mortimer's; 'tis an untoward visit; but I'll go there.

Re-enter Bridgemore.

Bridge. Come, bustle, daughter, bustle; get your cloak on, the coach will be here immediately: but where's my Scotchman? I forgot to ask the stranger's name. [*Exit, hastily.*

Enter Mrs. Bridgemore.

Mrs. B. Where have you hid yourself, my dear? Come, are you ready? Your father's frantic with impatience.

Luc. I follow you. Now, Aubrey, 'tis my turn. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*Mortimer's Library.*

Enter Mortimer *and* Tyrrel.

Mort. Never tell me; you've acted like a giddy, hot young man; put a few hearsay circumstances together, shook 'em in an empty noddle, and so produced a compound of nonsense and suspicion.

Tyr. I plainly see I've judged too hastily.

Mort. Judged! pooh! I would not give a rush for such a judge: a magpie in a cage, that chatters out whore to every woman that goes by, will be as often right as you, and judge as wisely: never talk to me of judging others, till you've condemned yourself.

Tyr. I do condemn myself; and if Miss Aubrey does not sign my pardon, I am disposed, not only to condemn, but execute.

Mort. Away, then, and throw yourself upon the mercy of the court; it is the fate of bunglers to be asking pardon. [*Exit Tyrrel.*

Enter Colin Macleod.

Colin. Bless you, gude Maister Mortimer, I hanna' slept in your commission: yon fat fellow upon Fish-street-hill is on his march, with bag and baggage. [with him?

Mort. What mean you? Does he bring his wife

Colin. Troth, does he, and his daughter, too; the plot is thickening, you mun know, apace, and yon same buzzard canna' spy it out.

Mort. What plot is thickening?

Colin. Zooks! mon, you shall behold as pretty a discovery, come the time, as ever your eyes looked upon; but aw things in their course; I mun gang home the whilst, but I'll be quickly bock again, d'ye see?

Mort. Do so, my friend; and, harkye! tell your lord I beg half an hour's conversation with him, when and where he pleases.

Colin. I shall do that; but you mun know, while I was on my way, I crossed upon a gentleman of no vulgar presence; and, considering he has sojourned for a pretty many years with none but such as we denominate barbarians, as courteous in his manners as your heart could wish.

Mort. That accounts for it. Well, what of him?

Colin. With your leave, Maister Mortimer, he'll tell you his own errand: troth, he wull'd me introduce him to you: he's without.

Mort. Admit him.

Colin. Gude faith, he has done that for himsall; he's not habituated to our ceremonies. Maister Mortimer, I pray heaven take you to its holy keeping till I see you again. [*Exit.*

Enter Aubrey.

Aub. Sir, your most humble servant. Can you forgive the intrusion of a stranger?

Mort. A stranger, sir, is welcome: I cannot always say as much to an acquaintance.

Aub. I plainly see your experience of mankind by the value you put upon them.

Mort. True, sir; I've visited the world from arctic to ecliptic, as a surgeon does an hospital, and find all men sick of some distemper: the impertinent part of mankind are so busy, the busy so impertinent, and both so incurably addicted to lying, cheating, and betraying, that their case is desperate: no corrosive can eat deep enough to bottom the corruption.

Aub. Well, sir, with such good store of mental provision about you, you may stand out a siege against society; your books are companions you never can never be tired of.

Mort. Why, truly, their company is more tolerable than that of their authors would be; I can bear them on my shelves, though I should be sorry to see the impertinent puppies who wrote them: however, sir, I can quarrel with my books, too, when they offend my virtue or my reason. But I'm taking up your time; the honest Scotchman, who announced you, told me you had something of importance to communicate to me.

Aub. I have: I'm told I am your debtor, and I came with a design to pay you down such thanks as your benevolence well merits; but I perceive already you are one whom great professions would annoy, whose principle is virtue, and whose retribution arises from within.

Mort. Pray, sir, no more of this; if you have anything to request, propose it: I'd rather much be told what I may do for you, than reminded of what I may have done.

Aub. I readily believe you; and, according to your humour, will address you: I own you may confer a benefit upon me; 'tis in your power, Mr. Mortimer, to make me happiest of all mankind.

Mort. Give me your hand; why now you speak good sense; I like this well: let us do good, sir, and not talk about it; shew but how I may give happiness to you, with innocence to myself, and I shall be the person under obligation.

Aub. This, then, it is; you have a young person under your protection, a lady of the name of Au-

Mort. I have. [brey—

Aub. Resign her to my care.

Mort. Sir! [can support her.

Aub. Put her into my hands: I am rich, sir; I

Mort. You're insolent, or grossly ignorant, to think I would betray a trust, a sacred trust: she is a ward of virtue; 'tis from want, 'tis from oppression, I protect Miss Aubrey—who are you, that think to make a traitor of me?

Aub. Your zeal does honour to you; yet if you persist in it, and spite of my protest hold out, your constancy will be no virtue; it must take another name. [tery, and tell me why.

Mort. What other name? Throw off your mys-

Aub. Because—

Mort. Ay, let us hear your cause.

Aub. Because I am her father.

Mort. Do I live?

Aub. Yes, in my heart, while I have life or memory; that dear injured girl, whom you so honourably protect, is my daughter. The overflowings of a father's heart bless and reward you! You whom I know not, and that poor Highlander, out of his small pittance, have, under Providence, preserved my child; whilst Bridgemore, whom I raised from penury, and trusted with the earnings of my travel, has abandoned and defrauded her.

Mort. Oh! mother nature, thou'lt compel me to forswear thee.

Aub. Ah! sir, you feel the villany of man in every vein; I am more practised, and behold it only with a sigh: Colin and I have laid a little plot to draw this Bridgemore hither; he believes me dead, and thinks he is to meet a person at your house, who can relate particulars of my death; in which case, it is clear, he means to sink a capital consignment I sent him about three years since, and turn my daughter on the world.

Mort. Well, let him come; next to the satisfaction I receive in the prosperity of an honest man, I am best pleased with the confusion of a rascal.

Enter TYRREL, *hastily.*

Tyr. Dear uncle, on my knees—What am I doing?

Mort. You thought I were alone.

Tyr. I did.

Mort. And what had you to tell me in such haste?

Tyr. I had a petition to prefer, on which my happiness in life depends.

Aub. I beg I may retire: I interrupt you.

Mort. By no means: I desire you will not stir; let him make his request; if it is not fit for you to hear, it is not fit for me to grant. Speak out: nay, never hesitate.

Tyr. What can I ask of you but to confirm my hopes, and make Miss Aubrey mine?

Mort. Was ever the like heard? Pray whence do you derive pretensions to Miss Aubrey? Tell me in the presence of this gentleman.

Tyr. Not from my own deservings, I confess; yet, if an ardent, firm, disinterested passion, sanctified by her consent, can recommend me, I am not without some title.

Mort. Look you there now: this fellow, you shall know, sir, is my nephew; my sister's son; a child of fortune. Harkye! with what face do you talk of love, who are not worth a groat?

Tyr. You have allowed me, sir, to talk of love; openly, beneath your eye, I have solicited Miss Aubrey's consent, and gained it; as for my poverty, in that I glory, for therein I resemble her whom I adore; and I should hope, though fortune has not favoured us, we have not lost our title to the rights of nature.

Mort. Pooh! the rights of nature! While you enjoy its rights, how will you both provide against its wants?

Tyr. Your bounty hitherto has let me feel no wants; and should it be your pleasure to withdraw it, thanks to Providence, the world is not so scantily provided but it can give to honest industry a daily dinner.

Mort. Fine words! but I'll appeal to this good good gentleman; let him decide betwixt us.

Aub. In truth, young gentleman, your uncle has good reason on his side; and were I he, I never would consent to your alliance with Miss Aubrey, till she brought fortune enough to keep you both.

Tyr. These are your maxims, I've no doubt; they only prove to me that you love money more than beauty, generosity, or honour.

Aub. But is your lady in possession of all these? Let me be made acquainted with her, and perhaps I may come over to your sentiments.

Mort. Ay, Frank, go fetch your girl, and let my friend here see her; I'm in earnest. Upon my honour, nephew, till you've gained this gentleman's consent, you never can have mine; so go your ways, and let us see if you have interest enough to bring her hither.

Tyr. Oh! if my fate depends upon her looks, they must be iron hearts that can withstand them. [*Exit.*

Aub. The manly and disinterested passion of this youth, while it possesses me strongly in his favour, gives an assurance of a virtuous conduct in my child: indeed, sir, I am greatly taken with your nephew.

Mort. Thank heaven, the boy, as yet, has never made me blush; and, if he holds his course, he may take one half of my fortune now, and t'other at my death.—But see, sir, here your daughter comes.

Re-enter TYRREL, *introducing* MISS AUBREY.

Tyr. You are obeyed; you see the lady, and you've nothing now to wonder at, but my presumption.

Aub. To wonder at! I do behold a wonder! 'Tis her mother's image! Gracious Providence, this is too much! (*Aside to Mort.*) [visible.

Mort. You will alarm her; your disorder is too

Aub. I cannot speak to her; I pray you let me hear her voice. [How have I offended?

Miss A. Why am I sent for? Is your uncle angry?

Aub. Hush, hush! she speaks; 'tis she herself, it is my long-lost wife restored and raised again.

Mort. Pooh! what had I to do to meddle with these matters?

Miss A. Why does that gentleman regard me so attentively? His eyes oppress me; ask him if he knows me?

Tyr. Sir, if you know the lady, if you've any tidings to communicate that touch her happiness, oh! that I could inspire you with my feelings.

Aub. I knew your father, and am a witness to the hard necessity which tore him from an infant child, and held him eighteen tedious years in exile from his native land.

Miss A. What do I hear? You was my father's friend? The prayer and intercession of an orphan draw heaven's righteous benediction down upon you! [to tell you of your father.

Aub. Prepare yourself, be constant. I have news

Mort. I can't stand this: I wish I were anywhere else. (*Aside.*)

Tyr. Courage, my dear Augusta; my life upon it, there is happiness in store for thee.

Miss A. Go on, go on!

Aub. You are in an error; you are not an orphan; you have a father, whom, through toil and peril, through sickness and through sorrow, heaven has graciously preserved, and blest at length his unremitting labours with abundance.

Tyr. Did I not tell you this? Bear up.

Aub. Yes, virtuous Augusta, all your sufferings terminate this moment; you may now give way to love and happiness; you have a father living who approves your passion, who will crown it with a liberal fortune, who now looks upon you, speaks to you, embraces you. (*Embraces her.*)

Mort. There, there! I'm glad 'tis over. Joy befall you both.

Tyr. See how her colour flies: she'll faint.

Aub. What have I done? Dear innocent, look up.

Miss A. Oh! yes, to heaven with gratitude for these divine vouchsafements. I have a father, then, at last. Pardon my tears; I'm little used to happiness, and have not learned to bear it.

Tyr. May all your days to come be nothing else. But look, she changes again; help me to lead her into the air. [*Tyrrel and Aubrey lead her out.*

Mort. I believe a little air will not be much amiss for any of us. Look at that girl; 'tis thus mortality encounters happiness; 'tis thus the inhabitant of earth meets that of heaven, with tears, with faintings, with surprise: let others call this the weakness of our nature; to me it proves the unworthiness; for had we merits to entitle us to happiness, the means would not be wanting to enjoy it. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Hall in Lord Abberville's house.* *Enter* LORD ABBERVILLE *and* COLIN MACLEOD.

Lord A. 'Sdeath! sir, am I or you the master of this house? who made you judge what company is fit for me to keep? The gentlemen you excluded came by special invitation and appointment.

Colin. Gentlemen!

Lord A. Ay, gentlemen. Were they not such?

Colin. Under favour, I took 'em to be sharpers; I know your lordship always loses, and I've noticed that they always win.

Lord A. Impertinence! I had debts of honour to adjust with every one of them.

Colin. Hang 'em, base vermin! pay your poor tradesmen; those are debts of honour. (*Aside.*)

Lord A. What is't you mutter? It was you, too, I suppose, that drove away my Jew, that came with money to discharge those debts.

Colin. That's true enow, gude faith; I promised him a beating, and I kept my word.

Lord A. Rascal, thou'rt born to be my plague.

Colin. Rascal! your father never used that word.

Lord A. On your life, name not him: my heart is torn with vultures, and you feed them: shall I keep a servant in my house to drive away my guests to curb my pleasures, my pursuits, and be a spy upon my very thoughts; to set that cynic Mortimer upon me, and expose me in the moments of my weakness to that snarling humorist? I want no monitors to reproach me, my own thoughts can do that. [*Exit.*

Colin. Well, well! 'tis vary well! A rascal! Let it pass. Zooks! I'm the first Macleod that ever heard that word and kept my dirk within my girdle. Let it pass. I've seen the world, served a spendthrift, heard myself called rascal, and I'll now jog back again across the Tweed, and lay my bones amongst my kindred in the isle of Skey; they're all that will be left of me, by then I reach the place. *Enter* LA JEUNESSE.

La Jeu. Ah! dere he stand, le pauvre Colin in disgrace! Ha, ha, ha! quelle spectacle! Ma foi, I must have one little word wid him at parting.—Monsieur le Financier, courage; I am inform my lord have sign your lettre de cachet: vat of dat? the air of Scotland will be for your healt; England is not a country for les beaux esprits; de pure air of de Highlands will give you de grande appetit for de bonny clabber.

Colin. Take your jest, master Frenchman, at my countrymen, an welcome; the de'il a jest they made of you last war. [*Exit.*

La Jeu. Yes; you are all adroit enough at war, but none of you know how to be at peace. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Mortimer's house.* MORTIMER, AUBREY, *and* NAPTHALI, *discovered.*

Mort. And these are all the money dealings you have had with Lord Abberville?

Napth. That is the amount of his debt; the bonds and contracts are in Bridgemore's hands.

Mort. You see your money has not slept in Bridgemore's keeping; your consignment, Mr. Aubrey, is put to pretty good interest. (*Mortimer looks over his papers.*)

Napth. Aubrey! Is your name Aubrey, may I ask?

Aub. It is.

Napth. Have you had any dealings with Mr. Bridgemore?

Aub. To my cost. [Scanderoon?

Napth. Did you consign him merchandize from

Aub. I am the person who was guilty of that folly. [dead.

Napth. Bridgemore, I believe, thought you were

Aub. I take it for granted he would gladly have me so. But do you know anything of that consignment?

Napth. Eh! Do I know of it? I had better make a friend of him; 'tis up with Bridgemore, fait; there is no senses in serving him any longer. (*Aside.*) Why, you shall know, sir, I was Bridgemore's broker for your merchandize: here is the abstract of the net proceeds. (*Gives a paper to Aub.*)

Mort. That's lucky, as I live; I see an honest man can never want weapons to defeat a knave. And pray, sir, what might be your profit on this sale; double commission for a breach of trust; that is the rule of the trade, I think.

Napth. I work as others; I do nothing below market price.

Mort. You're right, sir; 'twould be starving many an honest family, if you made roguery too cheap; but get you gone together to my library; I observe a person coming who will interrupt you. Harkye! Mr. Aubrey, have an eye to our Jew.

Aub. Trust him to me; I'm pretty well accustomed to their dealings. [*Exit with Napth.*

Enter DOCTOR DRUID.

Dr. D. Save you, sir, save you; is it true, I pray you, that a learned gentleman, a traveller, but just arrived, is now with you?

Mort. There is a person under that description in my house.

Dr. D. May he be seen, good now? May he be talked with? What has he brought home? Is he well stored with oriental curiosities?

Mort. Faith, sir, indifferently well; he has brought a considerable parcel of sun-dried bricks from the ruins of ancient Babylon; a heavy collection of ores from the mines of Siberia, and a pretty large cargo of common salt from the banks of the Caspian.

Dr. D. Inestimable!

Mort. Oh! sir, mere ballast.

Dr. D. Ballast, indeed; and what discoveries does he draw from all these?

Mort. Why, he has discovered that the bricks are not fit for building, the mines not worth the working, and the salt not good for preserving: in short, Doctor, he has no taste for these trifles; he has made the human heart his study; he loves his own species, and does not care if the whole race of butterflies were extinct.

Dr. D. Yes, putterflies! 'Tis in my mind, d'ye see? what you have said about my putterflies: 'tis upon my memory; but no matter, your studies, Mr. Mortimer, and mine, are wide asunder. But go on, reform the world, you'll find it a tough task; I am content to take it as I find it.

Mort. While the sun shines, you'll carry a candle; how will that light them who travel in the night? Away with such philosophers, here comes an honest man, and that's a character worth ten on't.—[*Enter* COLIN MACLEOD.]—So, Colin, what's the news with you? If I'm to augur from your countenance, something goes wrong at your house.

Colin. Troth, sir, no mighty matter; only Laird Abberville has turned away a troublesome fellow, who bore your honour grete gude will.

Mort. What is't you tell me? Is my lord determined upon ruin, that he puts away the only honest man belonging to him?

Dr. D. By this coot light, and that is well re-

membered; lookye, I've got your wages: come, hold out your hand.

Colin. Excuse me, I'll ha' none on't.

Dr. D. No wages? Why, 'tis all coot money; 'tis in full. What, man, think better on't: you'll want it when you get to Scotland, ten to one else.

Colin. Like enow; but by my sol, I'll touch na' siller: he has geen a title to me, which I hanna' merited, heaven knows, nor ever shall.

Mort. What title has he given you?

Colin. Saving your presence, it ha' pleased my laird to say, I am a rascal; but I'll na' wear a rascal's wages in a Scottish pouch: de'il o'my soul, I'd sooner eat my stroud for famine.

Mort. I think thou wouldst; but wait awhile with patience; this rash young man's affairs press to a crisis; I have yet one effort more to make, which, if it fails, I shall take leave of him as well as you. *Enter* JARVIS.

Jar. Lord Abberville desires to speak with you.

Mort. That's well. Colin, go you with honest Jarvis. Doctor, for once let us unite our studies in this cause; come you with me; if my advice can rescue your unhappy pupil from a course of guilty occupations, your philosophy may furnish harmless ones to fill their place: make haste, make haste! here come the Bridgemores. [*Exeunt.*

Enter a Servant, introducing BRIDGEMORE, *his Wife, and Daughter.*

Serv. Please to walk in here; my master will wait upon you immediately.

Bridge. Nobody here! Harkye, friend, I expected to meet a stranger; a gentleman just landed from Scanderoun. Know you of such an one?

Serv. He is now in the house.

Luc. And Mr. Tyrrel, sir, is he at home?

Serv. He is; they both will wait upon you presently. [*Exit.*

Bridge. That's well, that's well; as for old surly-boots, we could well spare his company; 'tis a strange dogged fellow, and execrated by all mankind.

Mrs. B. Thank heaven, he is a man one seldom meets; I little thought of ever setting foot in this house: I hope the savage won't grow ceremonious, and return the visit.

Luc. Unless he brings his nephew in his hand.

Enter MORTIMER.

Mort. Ladies, you do me honour. Mr. Bridgemore, you come here upon a melancholy errand.

Bridge. True, sir; but death, you know, is common to all men: I looked to meet a gentleman here; this is all lost time.

Mort. True; therefore, before he comes, let us fill it up with something more material: I have a business to propose to you, which I consider as my own. You must know, sir, I've a nephew—

Bridge. Mr. Tyrrel, I suppose?

Mort. The same. [mission.

Mrs. B. Mind that, Lucy, he is opening his com-

Luc. La! ma'am, you put me into such a flutter.

Mort. There is a certain lady, Mr. Bridgemore, whom, on this occasion, you must father.

Bridge. How tedious he is. Couldn't he as well have named my daughter? (*Aside.*) Well, sir, what are your expectations from that lady?

Mort. Nay, nothing but what you can readily supply: I know no good thing she stands in want of, but a fortune.

Bridge. Well, and who doubts but, on a proper occasion, I shall give her one? ay, and a tolerable fortune, too, Mr. Mortimer, as times go.

Mort. The fortune you were to have given my ward, Lord Abberville, will just suffice: I think the sum were forty thousand pounds.

Bridge Why you speak out at once.

Mort. That's ever been my custom; I abominate long, sleepy processes; life don't allow of them.

Bridge. But I hear nothing on your part; Mr. Tyrrel, as I take it, is wholly dependant on your bounty; besides, affairs, as I conceive, are yet scarcely ripe.

Luc. Indeed, papa, you're very much mistaken.

Mrs. B. Why, really, Mr. Mortimer, the parties should, at least, be suffered to consult each other's inclinations.

Mort. By all means; let them speak for themselves; 'tis their own cause, and they will plead it best. Harkye, come in: sir, these are the parties.

Enter TYRREL *and* MISS AUBREY.

Luc. Ah! [thorn?

Mort. What ails you? have you trod upon a

Mrs. B. Astonishing assurance! Augusta here?

Mort. Yes; Francis Tyrrel and Augusta Aubrey. Do the names offend you? Look at the parties; are they not well matched? Examine them, they'll tell you they're agreed. Who shall forbid their union?

Luc. Who cares about it? If Mr. Tyrrel and the lady are agreed, that's enough: I suppose it is not necessary for us to be present at the ceremony.

Bridge. Ay, sir, I pray you, where's the occasion for us to be called in, because your nephew chooses to take up with an unworthy girl, that I once harboured upon charity?

Tyr. Hold your audacious tongue: let conscience keep you silent.

Miss A. Hush, hush! you frighten me: pray be composed; and let me own that no injustice, no severity, can wholly cancel what I owe to Mr. Bridgemore for his past protection, and that share of education he allowed me; but when he puts it to the account of charity, he takes a virtue foreign to his heart, and only aggravates the shame that's falling on him. [you answer?

Mrs. B. Is the man thunderstruck; why don't

Mort. Charity keeps him silent.

Luc. Come, let's begone; her words have daggers in them, and her looks have poison.

Miss A. Before you go, Miss Bridgemore, suffer me to ask, when you related Lord Abberville's adventure to Mr. Tyrrel, why you suppressed the evidence of your own maid, who conducted him into my chamber?

Luc. Miss Aubrey, if it ever is your fate to have a rival, you will find an answer to that question.

[*Exit, with Mrs. B.*

Mort. Hold! you and I, sir, must not part. (*To Bridgemore, as he is going.*)

Bridge. Well, sir, your pleasure?

Miss A. I suffer for him; this is a scene I wish not to be present at. [*Exit.*

Tyr. Well, Mr. Bridgemore, you that harboured my Augusta upon charity, I shall leave my uncle to discharge my obligations to you on that score, together with his own. [*Exit.*

Mort. Well, sir, we're now alone; and if it needs must be that one of us shall come to shame, 'tis well we are so. It is thought I am a hard unfeeling man; let it be so; you shall have justice notwithstanding: innocence requires no more. You are accused; defend yourself.

Bridge. Accused of what? and who is my accuser?

Mort. A man; and you shall face him like a man. Who waits?—[*Enter Servant.*]—Desire the stranger to come hither. [*Exit Servant.*] Fear nothing; we're enough to try this question; where the human heart is present, and the appeal is made to heaven, no jury need be summoned. Here is a stranger has the confidence to say, that your pretensions to charity are false; nay, he arraigns your honesty; a charge injurious to any man, but mortal to a trader, and levelled at the vital root of his profession.

Bridge. Ay, 'tis the Turkey merchant, I suppose; let him come in; I know upon what ground I stand, and am afaid of no man living.

Mort. We shall try that. (*Aside.*) Do you know this gentleman?

Enter AUBREY.

Bridge. Aubrey!

Aub. Thou wretch.

Bridge. He lives!

Aub. To thy confusion.—Raised by the bounty

of my family, is this your gratitude? When in the bitterness of my distress I put an infant daughter in your hands, the last weak scion of a noble stock, was it to rob me you received her? to plunder and defraud an helpless orphan, as you thought her, and rise upon the ruins of your benefactor's fortune?

Bridge. Oh! I am trepanned. How shall I look my wife and daughter in the face. (*Aside.*)

Aub. Where have you lodged the money I deposited with you at parting? I find my daughter destitute: what have you done with the remittances I sent from time to time? But, above all, where is the produce of the Neptune's cargo? Villain, look here, I have the proofs; this is the abstract of the sale; if you dispute it, I am here provided with a witness, your Jew broker, ready at hand, to attest it to your face.

Bridge. Expose me not; I will refund to the last farthing: I dispute nothing; call him not in.

Mort. There's no occasion for witnesses when a man pleads guilty.

Enter Miss Aubrey.

Miss A. Dear sir, upon my knees, I do beseech you mitigate your severity; it is my first petition; he's detected; let his conscience add the rest.

Aub. Rise, my beloved child, it shall be so. There, sir, your pardon be your punishment; it was my money only you attempted, my choicest treasure you have left untouched: now, go and profit by this meeting: I will not expose you: learn of your fraternity a more honourable practice; and let integrity for ever remain the inseparable characteristic of an English merchant.

Mort. Stay; I've another point to settle with you; you're a creditor of Lord Abberville's: I find you've put Miss Aubrey's money to extraordinary interest: Jarvis, shew this gentleman into my library, you'll find a lawyer there will settle your accounts.

Bridge. I think you've pretty well done that already. A fine visit, truly, I have made on't; and a fine reception I shall meet at home. [*Exit.*

Aub. So, this uneasy business past, let us now turn to happiness: where is your nephew?

Mort. Conferring with Lord Abberville.

Miss A. Lord Abberville! You frighten me.

Mort. Fear nothing; you will find him a new man; a deep incision has let out the disorder; and I hope a healthy regimen, in time, will heal the wound; in short, I can't be idle; and now Frank is off my hands, I've once more undertaken to set this rickety babe of quality upon his legs. Oh! here he comes; why, this is as it should be; now you look like friends.

Enter Lord Abberville *and* Tyrrel.

Lord A. May we ever be so! Oh! Mortimer, I blush to look upon that lady: your reproofs I bore with some composure; but methinks were she to chide me, I should sink with shame.

Miss A. You've nothing, my Lord Abberville, to apprehend from me: I should be loath to give an interruption to your happiness in the height of my own.

Aub. Give me thy hand, Augusta.—In the hope that I was labouring for thy sake, and in thy person that I should restore the prostrate fortunes of an ancient house, I have toiled on through eighteen years of wearisome adventure: crowned with success, I now at length return, and find my daughter all my fondest hope could represent. But past experience makes me provident: I would secure my treasure; I would bestow it now in faithful hands. What say you, sir, will you accept the charge? (*To Tyrrel.*)

Tyr. Yes, and will bear it ever in my sight; watch over it with unremitting love, and guard it with my life.

Aub. What says my child, my dear Augusta? But I read her looks.—Blest be you both!

Mort. Amen, say I. Live an example to the age; and when I read the list of marriages, as I do that of burials, with a sigh, let me have this to say, that there was one example of felicity.

Lord A. Oh! Frank, 'tis hard to speak the word, but you deserve her; your's is the road to happiness: I have been lost in error, but I shall trace your steps, and press to overtake you.

Mort. Why, that's well said; there spoke your father from within you: now begone; fly to the altars of your country lares; visit that nurse of contemplation, solitude; and while you range your groves, that shook at every rattle of the dice, ask of your reason, why you was a gamester.

Lord A. I've been a madman; I have lost an humble faithful friend, whose services would be invaluable.

Mort. Why ay, your Highlander, your poor Macleod! our plan must stop without his help; I'm but a projector, he must execute; but there, likewise, I can serve you. [taken thee!

Lord A. Oh! Mortimer, how much have I mis-

Mort. Come, come, I have my faults; I'm an untoward fellow, and stand as much in need of a reform as any of you all.

Enter Doctor Druid, *followed by* Colin.

Dr. D. Tutor me, truly! talk to me! Pray, gentlemen, bear witness: is Master Colins here, a proper teacher of the dialects, d'ye see? and pronunciations of the English tongue?

Colin. Why not? Is there not Duncan Ross of Aberdeen that lactures twice a week on oratory, at the Seven Dials? And does not Sawney Ferguson, a cousin of mine awn, administer the English language in its utmost elegance at Amsterdam? [ness.

Dr. D. Bear witness; that is all I say, bear wit-

Mort. We do: there is not one amongst us, Doctor, but can bear witness to some noble act of Colin's; and we would not wound his harmless vanity for any bribe that you can offer.

Lord A. Colin, I've done you wrong; but I was not myself; be you no worse a servant than you have been, and you shall find henceforward I will be a better master.

Colin. I'm satisfied; an you'll neglect yoursall na' more than I shall do, things will gang well enow.

Tyr. I must apologize to Colin, too; like my Lord Abberville, I was not myself when I rebuffed you on the business of Miss Aubrey's letter.

Colin. Say no more, Maister Tyrrel; 'tis not for a man to resent the pertness of a child, or the petulance of a lover.

Miss A. But what shall I say to him? Where shall I find words to thank him as I ought?

Aub. I father all your obligations; 'twas not you but me his bounty saved.

Lord A. Hold! sir, in point of obligation, I stand first. By how much there is more disgrace in doing than in suffering a violence, by so much I am more his debtor than you all.

Colin. Ecod, and that is true enow; heaven sends misfortune, but the de'il sends mischief.

Dr. D. Well, Master Colins, all is past and over; you have got your place again, and all is well. Coot now, let me admonish you for the future to be quiet and hear reason; moderate your choler, and your passions, and your partialities: it is not for a clown like you to prattle and dispute with me; in fait, you should know better.

Mort. Come, come, 'tis you that should know better; in this poor Highlander, the force of prejudice has some plea, because he is a clown; but you, a citizen that should be of the world, whose heart, philosophy, and travel, might have opened, should know better than to join the cry with those whose charity, like the limitation of a brief, stops short at Berwick, and never circulates beyond the Tweed: by heaven, I'd rather weed out one such unmanly prejudice from the hearts of my countrymen, than add another Indies to their empire.

[*Exeunt.*

FIRST LOVE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

LORD SENSITIVE	MR. WRANGLE	LADY RUBY
SIR MILES MOWBRAY	BILLY BUSTLER	MRS. WRANGLE
FREDERICK MOWBRAY	ROBIN	MRS. KATE
DAVID MOWBRAY	SERVANTS	SABINA ROSNY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter FREDERICK MOWBRAY, *followed by* DAVID MOWBRAY.

David. Well, I could almost swear—yet I won't be sure. I wish he would look back once again. Yes it is, by St. George! it is my dear brother Frederick. Ah! my sweet fellow, welcome to England. Don't you remember little David?

Fred. David! may I believe my eyes? 'Tis he, sure enough. Come to my arms, my brave lad! Why, you are altered out of knowledge! and in the navy uniform! that's right, my boy, there you're in your proper line.

David. Ay, ay, sir! But we'll talk of that by-and-by. How are you, in the first place? How fares it with you, my hearty? where are you come from? what sort of a cruize have you had in t'other country? have you fallen in with father?

Fred. No; nor do I wish him to know of my arrival as yet.

David. Be it so, be it so! Mum's the word for that. Are you come home full or empty? Egad! you'll find father cling plaguily by the claws; d—d close in the lockers: if you are bare of the ready, I've plenty.

Fred. Thank you, David, thank you heartily; but I can shift. Keep your money, my good lad.

David. Not that, with your leave; I know a little better than so, we may hope. But what brings you home o' the sudden?

Fred. My father's peremptory commands.

David. Enough said; then 'tis on account of sister's wedding.

Fred. I believe not: but I did not know till this moment she was married. Tell me the particulars, for 'tis interesting intelligence.

David. Why, she's married, that's all I can tell you: she has got a mate of father's own choosing; so he thinks he has done a mighty feat, and rigged her out for a fair-weather voyage; but, between you and me, I suspect there's foul wind in feather-bed bay, and a kind of cat-and-dog harmony on board between 'em; that's my notion.

Fred. I can well believe it; she has not the best temper in the world. What is the gentleman's name and condition?

David. Wrangle is his name, and wrangling I suspect to be his condition; but I heartily dislike the man, and therefore I would not have you take his character from me: see him, and judge for yourself.

Fred. There is one marriage in our family, then, to begin with; and now I must tell you, David, in confidence, that I do not believe it was on account of this wedding my father called me home in such haste, but with a view to another.

David. Like enough, like enough! that's your look-out, thank heaven! and not mine.

Fred. Bad luck for me, David, if it is as I fear; but you know Sir Paul Ruby is now dead, and my first love is a widow, young, blooming, and mistress of a mine of wealth: you can remember Clara Middleton, how devotedly I was attached to her, and how cruelly my father tore me from her?

David. Do I remember it? yes, to be sure, and in my mind never forgave old Crusty for his hard-heartedness to this hour; but if that be his sport, let him come on. By the Lord Harry! Fred.

you'll be a gay fellow if you can bring that prize into harbour.

Fred. Hush, hush! that can never be.

David. Why, you are in the right not to be too sore, for all the world is after her; but if she has a hankering for you still, you know—

Fred. Heaven forbid!

David. Well, well, I won't flatter you, brother; you are a little gone off to be sure, rather the worse for wear, a small matter out of trim; but we can soon put that to rights, if your timbers are but staunch.

Fred. It is not there I should fail, let us hope; but if death were the alternative, I could not give my hand to Lady Ruby.

David. I take you now; you'll be no man's second. I see how it is with you, first oar or none at all. Lord love you, what a whim is that! 'Tis no denial to a good ship because another man has commanded her.

Fred. You are wide of the mark, friend David; it is not that I object to Lady Ruby as a widow, for I dare say she is still beautiful as an angel.

David. That's more than I know, for I never saw one; but I'm sure she is as fresh and as fine as a daisy.

Fred. Why, that is as lowly a similitude as you can well find for her; but with all her charms, and all her riches, and all the love she could bestow upon me, were it warm and flattering as in our fondest moments, the barrier between us would be insuperable: fate has disunited us for ever.

David. Then fate has played you a very foul trick, let me tell you; for, search the world through, you will nowhere find her fellow.

Fred. If I dare trust you with a secret, I would put that to the trial; and yet I think you are too good a fellow to tell tales.

David. Give me none to tell, and that's a sure way to prevent it; but I think you might venture to trust me, too.

Fred. This it is, and I'll make a short story of it.

David. Do so.

Fred. I have brought a virtuous and lovely girl with me into England—

David. Indeed!

Fred. Who has been the preserver of my life, the companion of my journey from Padua to this place, and whom I have pledged myself to make the partner of my fortune.

David. Your wife?

Fred. My wife: the word is past, and I must keep it.

David. To be sure you must: but I'm sorry for it: there's no more to be said. Death and fury! what a torrent will you have about your ears! why, father will come down upon you like a water-spout.

Fred. I am now seeking out some place where she can be lodged and boarded with people of reputation, till I can arrange my affairs; but I have been so long out of England, that I am almost as much a stranger in London as herself. Perhaps, David, you can help me out.

David. Why, that's what I'm thinking of: I have a friend, a right one, as staunch an old cock as ever crowed,—my navy agent, Billy Bustler by name. I'm to dine with him to-day; and he has a sister Kate by the same token; a good soul!—But if your miss isn't of the right sort, look you—

Fred. Oh! fie, fie! Can you suppose any otherwise?

David. Well, well! but a word in time, you know—for Kate's a pure maiden, you must think, with a good deal of the buckram about her. Lord! how I do set her up sometimes. So, if you've stowed away all your courtship, d'ye see? and got your marriage tack fairly a-board, why, upon these terms, I think I have interest enough with Kate to coax her into compliance. Now, what say you?

Fred. Let us about it directly; for my lovely charge is expecting me, and time is precious.

David. Say no more, my bright fellow! As for Billy, he's a sure card. Give me your arm, and we'll be down upon him in a whiff. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Chamber in Mr. Wrangle's house.*

Enter Mr. *and* Mrs. Wrangle.

Mrs. W. Ah! my dear, dear Mr. Wrangle, I have been sighing for a sight of you this many a long hour: where in this world have you hidden yourself from the eyes of your fond doting wife? Come, come, my love, look kindly upon me: we, that are so happy in each other, should always meet with rapture.

Mr. W. Well, my dear Lyddy, and who is so rapturous as I? where is the husband that so dotes upon his wife?

Mrs. W. Don't say so, don't say so! Can you lay your hand upon your heart, and say you love me to the full as well as ever you did?

Mr. W. Better, better!

Mrs. W. No, you don't.

Mr. W. Yes, I do.

Mrs. W. I'll swear you don't; I know to a certainty your affection abates, whereas mine increases every hour; nay, it is so excessive, that I am almost afraid it grows troublesome to you.

Mr. W. Don't fear it; from my soul I believe our fondness for each other is equal and alike: the uninterrupted harmony of our nuptial state, and the fidelity I have ever manifested—

Mrs. W. Well, and what has my fidelity been, I would ask? Notorious, unique, the talk of all the town. I am really so pointed at in all companies as a mere domestic creature, that I am almost ashamed to shew my face in any fashionable circle.

Mr. W. Never mind their sneering; your own conscience can acquit you of deserving it. If I were you, Mrs. Wrangle, I would sometimes pass an evening at home, if it were only to shew them you despise their spleen.

Mrs. W. Sometimes, Mr. Wrangle! sometimes pass an evening at home! Where is the woman of fashion passes so many eveniogs at home as I do?

Mr. W. The present won't be one of the number, if I may judge from your dress.

Mrs. W. The present, indeed! How can you expect it? Isn't it operanight? Would you wish to deprive me of my only pleasure? Is there anything in life I love so well as an opera?

Mr. W. Oh! yes; your husband.

Mrs. W. Well, my husband, to be sure! my husband is before every pleasure, so you need not take me up so quickly; for you know, my dear, you are all in all to me.

Mr. W. With the opera to help out.

Mrs. W. The opera, indeed! You should be ashamed to mention the opera, where, I think, considering all things, I might expect to be indulged with a box to myself, instead of scrubbing into the pit, as I do at present; which, give me leave to say, few women of my pretensions would put up with.

Mr. W. Keep your temper, Mrs. Wrangle!

Mrs. W. And don't I keep my temper, Mr. Wrangle? Isn't it the part of a friend to let you know the whole town cries out upon you? that you're the public talk? Your character suffers by it. People know what a fortune I brought you; and you know in your heart, my dear, that if you had a little more of the gentleman in your spirit—

Mr. W. 'Sblood! madam, if I had a great deal less, you are enough to call it up.

Mrs. W. There, there! now you are going to be in one of your tantarums.

Mr. W. Then why do you provoke me to it?

Mrs. W. I provoke you! I only tell you of your faults, and you have not temper to hear of them.

Mr. W. You are very sharp-sighted in spying out my faults, methinks; and, at the same time, either shut your eyes upon your own, or find them too incurable to meddle with.

Mrs. W. I plead to no fault but the fault of keeping terms with you; and that I'm resolved to correct out of hand: I'll put up with your ill-humours no longer; my father, my family, the whole town shall know your treatment of me. I could bear my lot well enough if the world did but know I were not that happy wife they suppose me to be.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Lady Ruby. [*Exit.*

Mr. W. Best impart your sorrows to her, then; she, you know, is your bosom friend.

Enter LADY RUBY.

Mrs. W. My dear Lady Ruby!

Lady R. My dear Mrs. Wrangle!

Mr. W. Here's a tender greeting. An honest man would suppose these women had a regard for each other; nothing less at heart with either. (*Aside.*)

Lady R. Oh! you incorrigible creature! *tête-à-tête* with your own wife.

Mr. W. I have the grace, at least, of taking a hint, when the friends of my wife would dispense with my company, [*Aside, and exit.*

Lady R. Did you ever see the like? Upon my life, Lydia, you have spoilt that good man of your's, and made him as freakish as a humoured child: there is not one in a thousand of that silly sex can bear being petted. [intolerable.

Mrs. W. Never think about him; he grows quite

Lady R. Bless me! I could not have believed it.

Mrs. W. No; because you will believe me what I am not, never have been, nor ever shall be—happy with that man. My temper is quick, his sullen; my nature is open and sincere, his dark and jealous.

Lady R. He jealous? Mr. Wrangle jealous?

Mrs. W. Oh! extremely so.

Lady R. I could not have believed it.

Mrs. W. Now cannot I, for the life of me, comprehend why you could not have believed it! because, though I am sufficiently guarded in my conduct, especially before him, yet I should hope I am not too vain, when I suppose some few attractions, some small pretensions, may still be said to belong to me; though comparatively nothing with what your ladyship possesses.

Lady R. Certainly, my dear madam, you have charms in full measure; and if you rather choose to be complimented upon them than your discretion, your husband shall be credited by me for all the jealousy you think fit to ascribe to him, with as much or as little cause for it as you may be disposed to allow of.

Mrs. W. I believe there is no woman but would be mortified if her husband was to say to her, "It is not in your power to make me jealous."

Lady R. I grant you the power is desirable, the exercise of it an experiment of some danger: 'tis like a dormant title, one would not give it up, though it may not suit us to assume it.

Mrs. W. Apropos to a title—now your year of widowhood is up, have you asked a certain question of that little heart of your's, and has the sly thing ever been brought to confession about this same Lord Sensitive, who follows you up and down like your shadow?

Lady R. Oh! yes; I've talked with the sly thing, as you call it, by the hour about him, and a very edifying conversation it was, I assure you.

Mrs. W. Ay, indeed! as how?

Lady R. Why, I took it roundly to task; for I began to perceive it had got some foolish flutterings, which you good wives know nothing of; now this I did not like, for, being as you see, a free woman, I resolve to profit by past sorrows, and not enslave myself any more.

Mrs. W. Humph! that's a widow's resolution, made without meaning, and broken without remorse; but, for my part, as I don't believe you are at all in love with him, I must wonder what amusement you can find in tormenting him.

Lady R. La! child, the man torments himself; he takes all the trouble off my hands, and makes me a by-stander in my own quarrels: he sees things that never had existence, hears things that were never said, and seems to have a phantom ever at his beck; like a conjurer's familiar, that whispers in his ear, and drives him upon extravagancies that exceed all credibility.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Lord Sensitive begs permission to pay his respects to you.

Lady R. Look you there, now; phantom again! Better send him away; for if he gets a haunt of your house, he'll be under your couch, behind your bed-curtains; not a corner, closet, nor cupboard will be free from him.

Mrs. W. Now I won't send him away, for I perceive she's jealous. Provoking creature! how vexatiously well dressed she is! (*Aside.*) Shew my Lord Sensitive up. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter LORD SENSITIVE.

Lord S. I have presumed upon the privilege of an old acquaintance—

Mrs. W. To come in search of a new one. I am much beholden to Lady Ruby for the honour of this visit.

Lord S. Now that is quite cruel, Mrs. Wrangle; it really gives me pain; but it is my misfortune to have every attention of mine misunderstood.

Mrs. W. Would your lordship be understood, then, to have no attention for any lady in this room besides myself?

Lord S. I would be thought not to want more temptations than one for visiting Mrs. Wrangle; but whatever interpretation you may please to put upon my attentions, I must think myself highly honoured when they are regarded as an object, either by yourself or Lady Ruby.

Lady R. My lord!—meaning me?

Lord S. Madam! [was all.

Lady R. I thought I heard my own name, that

Lord S. And do I offend by pronouncing it? if so, I fear I am guilty even in my sleep, nay, in my prayers; for I am apt to name you then.

Mrs. W. Now that's too much, by all that's tender! Heavens! what a Philander. Such milk and sugar speeches make me sick. (*Aside.*)

Lord S. I am very unlucky, ladies, and, perhaps, unseasonably intrude upon some more interesting business; Lady Ruby's thoughts, at least, seem to be otherwise engaged than upon the present subject.

Lady R. You are not quite out of your guess; they were just then upon a ramble. I think, my lord, you was last summer in Italy. [Italy.

Lord S. In Italy! Yes, yes, madam, I was in

Lady R. Did you visit Padua?

Lord S. Padua! No—What do I say? Yes, I have been at Padua.

Lady R. Did you make any long stay there?

Lord S. Really I—I have almost forgot how long I staid. But pray, madam, why do you wish to know? Have you any particular motive for inquiring how long I staid at Padua, or what passed whilst I was there?

Lady R. None, none at all; not the least curiosity, be assured.

Mrs. W. Don't believe her, my lord; she has a motive for everything, and never speaks without forethought.

Lady R. How can you say so? Oh! you spiteful thing, what a persecution have you drawn upon me!

Lord S. Indeed, and indeed, Lady Ruby, you have alarmed me: I feel everything that falls from you, and am tremblingly alive to the slightest whisper that may wound my reputation where I am most interested to guard it. I entreat, if you have heard anything against me, that you will suffer me to defend myself.

Mrs. W. No time like the present; therefore, I'll charitably leave you together; which is a good-natured way of making you perfectly disagreeable to each other. [*Aside, and exit.*

Lord S. It is now in your power, Lady Ruby, to make this abrupt departure of Mrs. Wrangle's the kindest action of her life, and the happiest moment of mine— [you.

Lady R. My lord, I don't perfectly understand

Lord S. By permitting me to justify my character to your entire satisfaction. I will suppose, madam, you have heard that I had an idle attachment at Padua.

Lady R. I did not hear it was idle.

Lord S. Admit it was a serious one, then, for argument's sake; such fooleries, I should hope, do not stick fast to a man's character, especially after the object is shaken off and forgotten.

Lady R. Perhaps that may be the worst part of the story, if the lady was not unworthy; but I am no inquisitor.

Lord S. I'll not impeach the lady's reputation, neither will I allow it to be said I have dealt dishonourably with her in any shape: if any gentleman dares to fix that aspersion upon me, I am ready with my answer.

Lady R. I don't doubt it; there's a certain argument that answers everything.

Lord S. I guess from whom your information is derived: Mr. Frederick Mowbray has been at Padua; is there still, perhaps—

Lady R. Hold, hold! I must set you right in one particular; and I insist on your believing me, when I declare to you, upon my honour, that Frederick Mowbray is not my informer, neither does my information come by any other channel from him.

Lord S. May I ask the lady's name you suppose me to have been attached to?

Lady R. Sabina Rosny; of noble parents, who had perished under the axe in France; an orphan, fugitive, young, beautiful, and friendless.

Lord S. I befriended her, I protected her! If our best deeds are to be perverted by detraction, and then urged against us as crimes, who is safe?

Lady R. Innocence.

Lord S. Well, madam, I hope that is my case.

Lady R. I hope it is; and if it is, you'll treat such stories with contempt.

Lord S. And so I do; but I am penetrated, cut to the heart, confounded with—with contrition—no, not that—but with shame and vexation, that such stories should be entertained by you in any serious light.

Lady R. Your agitation makes them serious.

Lord S. My agitation is proportioned to the—to the agony it gives me to say that I regard myself as dismissed, discarded, banished from your sight for ever. [*Exit.*

Lady R. Guilty, upon my honour!

Re-enter Mrs. Wrangle.

Mrs. W. Well, my dear lady, you have quarrelled, as I supposed, and parted with high words; and now, if his lordship should fall to his prayers, I should doubt if it will be a blessing he'll bestow upon you.

Re-enter Lord Sensitive.

Lord S. I step back once more, and for the last time—Confusion! Mrs. Wrangle here! [*Exit.*

Mrs. W. Shall I stop him?

Lady R. No; I beseech you let him go.

Mrs. W. He is terribly agitated.

Lady R. Not a whit more than will do him good; let us hope his fermentation will refine him.

Mrs. W. Ah! my dear lady, I see plainly how it will be; you will marry that man; positively you will marry him.

Lady R. If you are positively right and infallible in your predictions, it must be so; if I have anything to say to it, I shall beg leave to doubt; but time flies fast in your society, and I have been making you a most unconscionable visit. May I request your servant to order up my coach?

Mrs. W. Must I part from you? Who waits? [*Enter a Servant.*] Order Lady Ruby's servants.

Lady R. Well, good b'ye to you! We shall meet at the opera.

Mrs. W. My dear, dear friend, all happiness attend you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*A Room in Billy Bustler's house.*

Enter Billy Bustler *and* Mrs. Kate.

Billy B. Well, Kate! well, girl! now let us hear how it goes in the kitchen quarter; it comes a little *mal-à-propos* to be sure, for I'm plaguy busy; but I know you like to set out a dinner, so give us your bill o'fare. [day.

Kate. Why, you know, Billy, this is Michaelmas-

Billy B. Yes, yes, I know that fast enough. I hope you have a goose.

Kate. La! brother, how you snap one up; to be sure there is a goose.

Billy B. At first course, I hope—bottom dish.

Kate. No, the goose is at top. [bottom.

Billy B. I tell you no, my goose shall be at

Kate. Why, then, you must have two gooses, for no one shall cut it up but myself. There's a boiled leg of corned pork for your carving: I hope you call that a bottom dish, with a pease-pudding on one side, and a bowl of apple-sauce on the other.

Billy B. I tell you what, Kate, I can't give up the goose; I love to have him under my own nose, smoking with sage and onions. Oh! he's a savoury fellow! Can't give him up, Kate; can't, upon my soul.

Kate. Then you must give up me; for I won't sit at table on any other terms. You, indeed, to dispute with me about tops and bottoms! with me, who could have set out seven and eleven before you was man enough to tuck a napkin under your chin. Do, pr'ythee, keep to your own receipt-book, and leave me to mine; I know it all, from a lark to a loin of beef, and in the economy of the table, wou'dn't hold a candle to Hannah Glasse herself, if she was living, and here at present.

Enter David Mowbray.

David. Heyday! how came this to pass? Here's a breeze, indeed; here's a ripple! Kitty, my charmer, who has vexed you?

Kate. Why, Billy has vexed me; he will chatter about things he knows nothing of.

Billy B. I've done, I've done; serve up the goose in your own way.

David. Out upon him, for a lubber! he has been running foul of the kitchen haulyards, after his old fashion.

Billy B. No, no; it's all over; there's an end; I knock under: your presence, Pickle, always makes peace.

David. Why, how long have you lived by the sea, friend Bustler, not to find out that it's sure to make rough water where two tides meet? Kitty's temper is as smooth as a mill-pond, if you won't put in your oar. Come, come, let us be all in good humour with each other, for I've a favour to ask of you.

Kate. What is that, lapwing?

David. Oh! quite a small matter; I know you'll grant it at the first word. [hear it.

Kate. It shall go hard but I'll try for it. Let us

David. Why, 'tis only to accommodate a friend of mine with a night or two's lodging in your spare [cabin.

Kate. Is that all?

David. Yes; that's all.

Billy B. Any friend of your's, my dear boy, shall be welcome to my house, bed and board, for as long as he likes. Why didn't you bring the gentleman with you?

David. Gentleman! No, no; the gentleman in this case happens to be a lady.

Kate. Ah! gemini! you little wicked devil, would you foist your naughty hussies into my house?

David. Who says she's a naughty hussy? She's as spotless a virgin as yourself, only she is not so obstinately bent to continue one; for she's about to be married out of hand.

Kate. Get you gone, get you gone! I'll have nothing to do with her.

Billy B. Hold, hold! let us understand this a little better. What is the lady's name? who is she going to marry? and how are you interested about her? I don't think David Mowbray would bring a bad woman into my family.

David. Why, who can suppose I would? But with respect to entering into her history with you, I can't do it; for 'tis brother Frederick's affair, and he'll satisfy you in all points. It is not I that am going to marry her, but he: all I know is, that she is a person of rank, and an emigrant. Take notice, I have never seen her, and moreover, it is a close secret from father.

Kate. Billy, Billy, if it is a secret affair, don't meddle or make with it: as sure as can be, you'll get into hot water with Sir Miles Mowbray.

Billy B. Hot water, indeed! let him take care, then, he don't scald his own fingers. I shall act the straight part by my friend David; if he deceives me, that is his fault; if I deceive him, I am a flincher, and no true Englishman: so, I say the lady shall be welcome: I say it, and who shall gainsay it?

David. Come, sweet Kate, it only wants your concurrence; take a little pity into your heart for a poor orphan stranger, driven out of her own country by the murderers of her parents, and give her a small sample of your hospitality, for the honour of old England.

Kate. Nay, if she is an orphan and a stranger, and a fugitive from that cruel country, who but a monster would refuse to take her in? I'll not be outdone in charity by anybody. Let her come when she will, I'll do everything in my power for her.

Billy B. Well said, Kate! thou art a kind soul, though a dear lover of a little contradiction.

David. When there's a good heart at bottom, what matters it how you get to it? But I'm going to my brother; and when I bring him in my hand, I shall bring one, for whose honour I will vouch with my life. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Mr. Wrangle's House.*

Enter MR. *and* MRS. WRANGLE.

Mr. W. So, child, how comes it to pass you are not at the opera to-night?

Mrs. W. The fates decreed it otherwise.

Mr. W. Nonsense! the fates, indeed! You have other reasons than they can give you.

Mrs. W. Well, if you are not contented with the fates, you must make inquiry amongst the casualties. Your coach broke down with me at the opera door.

Mr. W. My coach! my new coach?

Mrs. W. The very same; and for an accident, methinks, you have come off reasonably well. If my limbs had been broken at the same time, you would have had double repairs on your hands.

Mr. W. Humph! are my horses safe?

Mrs. W. They are jobs, you know; you need have no feeling for them.

Mr. W. How did you come home? [me.

Mrs. W. Took the first carriage that was offered

Mr. W. And whose was that?

Mrs. W. Colonel, Colonel—I can't think of the man's name.

Mr. W. Come, come, I know your man. I'll bet ten to one 'twas Colonel Doricourt's.

Mrs. W. That's high odds, but you'd win the wager. [court?

Mr. W. You came home with Colonel Dori-

Mrs. W. Exactly so.

Mr. W. D———n! then there are more repairs on my hands than a broken carriage; there is a ruined reputation.

Mrs. W. Carry in your damages; the gentleman will satisfy you.

Mr. W. And do you think I'll be satisfied with this cool contempt, this insolent indifference to my just remonstrances? No, madam; your new method of insensibility won't serve: I'll make you feel before we part.

Mrs. W. Keep your temper, Mr. Wrangle.

Mr. W. I'll not keep my temper.

Mrs. W. Throw it aside, then, and get a better; for it is thoroughly worn out, and no longer fit for any gentleman's wear.

Enter SIR MILES MOWBRAY.

Sir M. So, so, so! very good, very good! Here you both are, close as ever: here I left you, and here I find you, still the same, ever fond and loving, ever happy in each other.

Mr. W. Oh! supremely happy.

Mrs. W. Both superlatively blest.

Sir M. Yes, yes, I know it well. And why are you so superlatively blest, but because you had the grace to discover that I could choose better for you than you could for yourself? Why is a father called the head of his family, but as it is his business to think for all those whose heads can't think for themselves? The human heart, children, has been my peculiar study; and as I have kept myself exempt from all those passions that disturb it, I may say, without vanity, I am master of the subject.

Mr. W. And pray, sir, may I ask how you became thus learned in the passions, having never experienced the effects of them?

Sir M. As a physician finds out a disease without feeling it; by natural intuition and deep reflection.

Mrs. W. And by which of these do you discover to a certainty that I am as happy as I pretend to be?

Sir M. Can I fail to discover it is day when the sun shines? If there were any hypocrisy in your heart, can you suppose it would escape me? When your brother Frederick was in love, did not I find it out? Yet I never was the dupe of that nonsensical passion myself.

Mrs. W. So I should think, sir, when you undertook to reason him out of it.

Sir M. Ay, madam, and now you shall see I'll reason him into it.

Mr. W. That I should guess will be no hard task, if Lady Ruby is the object. Mr. Mowbray will be a happy man if he obtains her.

Mrs. W. He'll be a rich one, at least: why you should so decidedly say he will be a happy one, I am at a loss to guess, because I know the lady is no favourite of your's.

Mr. W. I can have no favourites, whilst one reigns mistress of my heart, compared with whom all other objects are as nothing.

Sir M. Do you hear that, Lyddy? By my soul, Wrangle, though I say it to my daughter's face (and she's a good girl, I confess) thou art enough to spoil any wife in England.

Mrs. W. Not with kindness, I should think.

Mr. W. Can I possibly be too kind to such a wife?

Sir M. No; but you may talk too much about

it; you may turn her head with too many fine speeches.

Mrs. W. I wish you had heard what fine speeches he made to me just now.

Sir M. I don't doubt it.

Mrs. W. I had the misfortune to have my coach broken down at the opera. I have seen husbands that will fret and fume at such an accident, and scold the poor wife without mercy.

Sir M. Ay, those are peevish paltry fellows, truly!

Mrs. W. Are they not? Yet even these, who are such tyrants out of sight, shall be sycophants to your face, and pass themselves upon the world for the best of husbands, by the mean resource of flattery and fine speeches.

Sir M. Very true; they are the most loathsome characters in nature.

Mrs. W. I think so from my soul; and all the while the poor wife, though, in fact, the most miserable of beings, shall be falsely supposed the happiest of women. [of all.

Sir M. That is the most provoking circumstance

Mrs. W. Insupportably so, in my opinion. Then the odious creature is so jealous upon every trifling occasion, and so petulant withal, that one knows not which he is most to be despised for, his captiousness or his cruelty.

Sir M. Ah! child, child! had you been refractory and self-willed, all these miseries might have fallen upon you; whereas, by following my judgment in the great concern of life, you have all the blessings of wedlock, and escape its sorrows. So, farewell! I leave you happy; I have made you happy: and if I have the same success with Lady Ruby, to whom I am now going, we shall all be happy. [*Exit.*

Mr. W. My dearest life, permit me to attend upon you; honour me so far as to give me your hand.

Mrs. W. Oh! that I could recall the day when I did give you my hand! neither force, nor flattery, nor all the fortune upon earth, should prevail with me to consent to it. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*A Chamber in Lady Ruby's house.*

Enter Lady Ruby *and a Waiting Woman.*

Lady R. When Lord Sensitive's confidential servant informed you of his attachment for Sabina Rosny, did he speak of her as a woman of character?

W. Woman. Oh! yes, my lady; he gave the young gentlewoman a very high character.

Lady R. For her discretion, I ask you?

W. Woman. For her good qualities, my lady, her accomplishments, and above all, for her beauty.

Lady R. Pooh! her beauty is out of the question; I am simply talking of her character, of her conduct.

W. Woman. Pardon me, madam, I did not think it handsome to be over-curious about conduct; for I concluded Mr. Carrington too much a man of honour to betray his master's secrets.

Lady R. So it should seem, indeed, by his taking you into counsel for the keeping them. You may leave me. [*Exit W. Woman.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Lord Sensitive delivered this himself; and bids me say he attends to know your ladyship's pleasure. (*Delivers a note.*)

Lady R. Very well. (*Reads it.*) My compliments to his lordship, and if he wishes to walk up, I am at home. [*Exit Servant.*] So! here's another explanation to undergo. Ah! man, man! positively thou art the most irrational, nonsensical animal in the creation.

Enter Lord Sensitive.

Lord S. Am I permitted, once more, to approach you?

Lady R. You have the same permission, my lord, that you always had.

Lord S. I am sensible my visits can no longer be acceptable to you: where suspicion has taken hold, kindness cannot keep its place; I had, therefore, determined never to intrude again; but a natural wish to attempt my justification, and, more than all, a natural weakness, which my heart cannot instantly shake off, induce me once more, and for the last time, to solicit an admission.

Lady R. I am happy to see your lordship upon any terms; and I hope you will repeat your visits for the last time so often, that our acquaintance will improve by it.

Lord S. Ah! madam, madam, whilst you can sport with my feelings in this manner, your levity convinces me how indifferent I am to you: nay, I believe from my soul, I am become your aversion; and I am astonished, when your ladyship so well knows the real motives of my visits here, you have not ordered your doors to be shut against so unwelcome an intruder.

Lady R. Pray, my lord, what is our quarrel just now? and why should my doors, that are apt to be open to all persons of honour, and my friends in general, be shut against you in particular?

Lord S. Because I understand some tattling busy-body has impressed you with unfavourable notions of my conduct, in an affair, which delicacy forbids me to explain.

Lady R. Then let delicacy prevail with you to forbear the subject. We may be good friends without searching into the secrets of each other's heart.

Lord S. Right, madam! 'tis a compromise that saves us both from an unpleasant task: my heart is not pure enough for your inspection; your's, were I to search it, would disclose all the tender feelings, all the fond unabated affections, that are there glowing and alive for a certain person, who sways it still, though absent and neglectful. 'Sdeath! madam, it is a discovery that would drive me into madness; nor will I stoop to friendship where I have once aspired to love.

Lady R. That is sincere, at least: you think my nature steady to a first attachment; credit yourself for the same principle, and we have each of us our separate pursuits; they clash no longer.

Lord S. May I, then, be permitted to ask you one plain question?

Lady R. With all my heart; propose it.

Lord S. Are you not, at this moment, still so wedded to a first attachment, as to be no longer susceptible of any other?

Lady R. That is a question, let me observe to you, that none but the most intimate friend could expect an answer to; how, then, can your lordship look for it, when you will not submit to be regarded in that character?

Lord S. But if a lover presumed to put such a question, would you wave it in his case?

Lady R. If he were a man I disliked, I might, perhaps, avail myself of so fair an opportunity for getting rid of him; if he were one I esteemed, I should be sorry to find he had so self-tormenting a curiosity belonging to him.

Lord S. Oh! loveliest of women! ever charming, ever irresistible! pardon my too-anxious sensibility, and pity one who lives but in your sight. I find it is impossible to escape: scorn me, trifle with me, torture me as you will, still I must adore you.

Lady R. Must you be always in extremes? Now you are more intolerable than ever. Let go my hand, I desire of you.

Lord S. Grudge me not this short respite from my anguish; for pity's sake, do not leave me.

Lady R. Positively I must. Ah! you have crushed my hand; release it, I beseech you.

Lord S. Spare me these few moments; I am not so presumptuous as to flatter myself they can last.

Lady R. I hardly think they should; I don't be-

lieve any human hand could bear to be so squeezed much longer.

Lord S. Thus let me atone the injury I have done it. (*Kisses her hand.*)

Lady R. I perceive, my lord, our interviews should last no longer than whilst we keep up the spirit of controversy; as soon as ever we begin to be of the same mind, it is time we should part.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir Miles Mowbray begs the honour of a few minutes' conversation with your ladyship.

Lord S. There, there, there! all my apprehensions are verified.

Lady R. Hush, hush! Wait without a few moments. (*Servant retires.*) I confess I'm puzzled to account for this visit.

Lord S. So am not I; his motives are too clear: your fortune is the loadstone; he comes to make proposals for his son.

Lady R. Ridiculous! Go, go! you shall not stay a minute longer; I must admit him. Who waits? (*Servant advances.*) Tell Sir Miles Mowbray I am at his service.

Lord S. Well, madam, if it must be so, and if Sir Miles's business is so very interesting—

Lady R. Don't be so tiresome.

Lord S. I will obey; and yet—Oh! Lady Ruby, think of me! [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Miles Mowbray.

Sir M. I am your ladyship's very humble servant. Greatly obliged to you for this indulgence, very greatly obliged to you, indeed. I am a suitor to your ladyship, under favour, for a few moments of your patience, if my request be not unseasonable.

Lady R. I am entirely at your command, Sir Miles. Be pleased to take a chair.

Sir M. Not so, my lady; let me entreat you to be seated first.

Lady R. Pray use no ceremony. With your leave I will sit by you.

Sir M. I humbly thank you. In truth, my lady, I do greatly covet to be near you, near in every sense. Believe me, I should greet the moment as the happiest of my life, that connected me and mine in the closest and nearest alliance with your ladyship.

Lady R. Has that always been your wish?

Sir M. Madam!—My lady!—Ahem! I am not sure I rightly comprehend your ladyship's question.

Lady R. If I remind you of your past opinion, Sir Miles, it is because I would not have you be deceived as to your present one: I do not think that within the period since you and I have ceased to be acquainted, I have any such acquirements to boast of as should induce you to think better of me now that I am a widow, than you did before I was a wife.

Sir M. 'Tis a proof of your modesty, that you are pleased to say so; and what is so engaging? 'tis a token of your candour and sincerity; (amiable qualities!) and I always did you the justice to say that you possessed them in a very eminent degree.

Lady R. Indeed! did you say that?

Sir M. I did; I did, upon my soul; I said it, and I thought it.

Lady R. Then I suspect you do not think better of a woman for being only modest, candid, and sincere.

Sir M. Pardon me, madam! Can I give a stronger proof how highly I esteem those virtues, than by tendering you my son, my eldest son, Frederick?

Lady R. Bless me! would you recommend so bad a bargain to your son?

Sir M. How so, my lady? how so? Why do you say so bad a bargain?

Lady R. Because you have only reckoned up a ragged troop of virtues, which you once turned from your doors, when they were in better plight than at present, without naming money, which, I believe, in your opinion, is a virtue worth them all.

Sir M. I know the value of money, madam, though I won't call it a virtue; and I own to you that Sir Paul Ruby's property, so worthily bequeathed to your ladyship, consolidated with what Frederick, as my heir, may expect, are circumstances not to be overlooked in the calculations of a prudent father.

Lady R. Well, Sir Miles, I am still so much your son's friend as to rejoice at having discovered, that when interest prompts you to seek out an alliance for him, the good qualities of the lady you contract with will be no bar to your bargain.

Sir M. Very much on the contrary, very much, indeed; and, therefore, let me hope, my good lady, when my son, whom I look for hourly, shall arrive, you will graciously permit me to lay him at your feet: in this hope I humbly take my leave—

Lady R. Your patience for a moment: whatever hopes you are pleased to found upon this conversation, I must candidly tell you they are not at all to be depended upon; and recollect, Sir Miles, that if my affection for your son is now extinguished, it was your own authority that put an end to it; let me add, that if I am not greatly flattered by the honour of this visit, it is because I clearly comprehend the motives of it.

Sir M. My lady, I—I—I am your very humble servant.

Lady R. Your most obedient, Sir Miles Mowbray. Who waits? [*Exit Sir M.*] Oh! Frederick, Frederick! false, forgetful man! did you but feel those wishes, which your interested father expresses, how little would you need an advocate! how easily would my resentment be appeased! [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Billy Bustler's House.*

Frederick Mowbray *and* Sabina Rosny *discovered.*

Fred. Friend of my life! my benevolent preserver! I have now happily acccomplished one effort of my gratitude, by escorting you to an asylum, where persecution cannot reach you.

Sabina. Generous Mowbray! I do wish to tell you, in the language you have taught me, how my poor heart is penetrated with your goodness to me: but I am not eloquent; I can only say I do thank you for your care of me, and for bringing me to your charitable country, which I do honour from my soul; indeed I do honour it; but, alas! it is not for me ever to be happy in it.

Fred. Why do you say that? I am incapable of deceiving you: this instant I am going to my father; and, be assured, it shall not be many days before the dubious situation you are in shall be honourably done away, and all my promises fulfilled.

Sabina. No, no, no; my good friend, I shall not call upon you from those promises: we are now in England, and those promises are nothing; they are void.

Fred. What can you mean, Sabina? Do you suspect my integrity?

Sabina. I do not suspect you at all: but you was sick, take notice, very sick, and deranged in your senses, when, because I did do my possible, in pity and compassion to assist you in your malady, you was pleased to make those promises you speak, and I did let them pass for the time, saying nothing to the contrary of them, because they were very good and commodious for me, as a single woman, travelling alone with you, under protection of your honour; but now that you are at home again, and, thanks to heaven! in good health, I shall not be so base to let you ruin yourself by marrying poor me, only because you pledged your word when you did hardly know what that word meant.

Fred. Nobly conceived! But I am not that wretch to sacrifice my honour to a mean mercenary evasion: though my heart has been wounded, as you know, it has not been debased; and I am determined to go this instant to my father, and announce the resolution I have taken.

Sabina. Stop, I conjure you, stop! I have something on my mind to tell you. Ah! *miséricorde*, what is a-coming now?

Enter Lady Ruby.

Lady R. Bless me! I did not know this room was occupied: I beg a thousand pardons, Mr. Mowbray!

Fred. Lady Ruby! this is, indeed, a surprise.

Lady R. I desire I may not break in upon your conference, sir. My business with the master of this house may be transacted in his office.

Fred. Our conference, madam, is at an end; I was on the point of my departure.

Lady R. By no means let me hasten it: I should be sorry to deprive the lady of one moment of your company.

Fred. It has been my good fortune to be the lady's companion for some time, and we are just arrived in England. Mademoiselle Rosny is an emigrant of noble birth, as much to be admired for her virtues, as she is to be pitied for her misfortunes.

Lady R. Rosny! is that the lady's name?

Sabina. Yes, madam, that is my name: alas! I am the last that bear it: those that did honour to it once, are now no more: I am a miserable, solitary relict.

Lady R. So young an orphan! How my heart bleeds for you!

Sabina. How good, to feel for the distressed and stranger! Ah! had you known my parents! they perished at Marseilles; I fled to Padua, but sorrow overtook me: I had great sufferings there.

Lady R. I can well believe it. Lord Sensitive has that to answer for. (*Aside.*)

Fred. Sabina, you shall spare yourself the painful recital: Lady Ruby, if I rightly know her, is not curious to inquire into the private histories of the unfortunate.

Lady R. In point of idle curiosity, I hope you do me no more than justice; but to know misfortunes for the purpose of relieving them, permit me to say that I am curious. If Mademoiselle Rosny should prefer the protection of one of her own sex to her present situation, my heart and house are open to receive her.

Sabina. Oh! that is great consideration for me, truly.

Lady R. What say you, amiable Sabina? I am, like you, a solitary woman: will you consent to be my companion and friend?

Sabina. I have all possible *empressement* for your goodness, and certainly so charming a lady cannot fail to have a tender heart for the unhappy; but I am without a friend in England, except this worthy gentleman, and I do think he will advise me for the best. It seems to me that you are not quite estranged to one another: Mr. Mowbray is very honourable and good to poor me; I pray you, let me hear what he will say.

Lady R. Speak, Frederick.

Fred. I scarce know how to answer.

Lady R. If you believe me worthy of the trust, and sincere in wishing for it—

Fred. How can I doubt of either? But my connexion with this lady is a delicate one.

Lady R. I must suppose it is an honourable one.

Fred. In the strictest sense. Gratitude, not less than, under Providence, for my life, binds me to Sabina Rosny. Through the sad period of an excruciating illness, her soothing pity was my only support: snatched by her care from death, or a condition worse than death, could I do less than dedicate what's left of life and senses to the generous preserver of them? I am now going to my father; I need not say how much my fate depends upon that interview.

Sabina. No, no, no! I do once more pray and implore of you, Mr. Frederick, not to speak of me to your father: I have reasons for that, which it would be great pain and difficulty for me to explicate to you; but since my lady is so good to permit me to come to her, I do pray you let me avail myself of her kind favour; and, then, when I will make my confession to her, you shall find yourself very happy that you have not spoken to your father.

Fred. Go, then, and may you find your happiness where mine was lost! Oh! Lady Ruby, pardon a distracted mind—

Sabina. Be tranquil, my good friend; you shall have no cause to complain of me; and I am persuaded this lady, who has the beauty of an angel, has also the benevolence of one.

Enter Mrs. Kate *and* Billy Bustler, *hastily.*

Kate. My lady, I am your ladyship's most obedient humble servant! Pray, my lady, excuse this seeming want of manners; if we had had any item of your ladyship's doing us this great honour, things should have been in another sort of fashion, to have welcomed such a visitor.

Billy B. Sister and I had but just stepped out.

Kate. Yes, my lady, brother Billy and I had but just stepped out to provide something dainty for our charming guest—and a lovely young lady she is, though I say it to her face, as any in the kingdom, your ladyship always excepted.

Lady R. No apology to me, my good Mrs. Catherine; your brother knows that my business relates only to some small accounts of Sir Paul Ruby's, and those can be adjusted at any other time as well as the present.

Billy B. They are all ready, my lady; examined, vouched, and balanced; with your leave, I will bring up the abstract, and pay in the amount.

Lady R. Another time, if you please: till, then, I will trouble you to be my banker; everybody knows your punctuality, my good friend.

Billy B. Pretty correct, pretty correct, I flatter myself, fair lady: haven't lost my credit yet—hope I never shall.

Lady R. There is a loss, however, you must be prepared for; I am going to rob you of your amiable guest: you must pardon me, if I take Mademoiselle Rosny with me.

Billy B. Everything this house contains is so entirely at your ladyship's command, that if you were to take away not only my amiable guest, but sister Kate into the bargain, I must submit and obey.

Kate. La! brother, how you talk! as if such a person as me could be company for her ladyship. But Miss Rosny deserves better entertainment than we can give her; and, to be sure, if your ladyship so wishes, much as we shall feel the loss of her sweet society, yet, with Mr. Frederick's consent, we shall resign her.

Sabina. I am very thankful, indeed I am, good madam and good sir, for your politeness; and I am persuaded that the more I had known you, the more and more I should have loved you; but adieu for the present! I will pay you my devoirs as soon as it is in my power.

Kate. The blessing of blessings light upon you, sweet innocent! they must be monsters who could harm you.

Lady R. Come, my dear, are you ready?

Sabina. One word with you, Mr. Frederick. Ah! my good friend, give me your hand: I shall see you soon, and you shall know all my sad history; then you will pity and excuse me: meanwhile, I do pray, if you regard my happiness or your own,

say not one word to your father on the subject we were speaking of.

Fred. So far I promise you, till the mystery is cleared up. Lady Ruby, I commit to your protection a tender pledge, which, if I had not kept sacred whilst under guardianship of my honour, I were a wretch too hideous for society. What she has to reveal to you, I know not: if misfortunes, you will pity them; if mistakes, you will pardon them: wronged she may be, guilty she cannot be.

Lady R. Oh! Frederick, Frederick! I have much to say to you; many things to explain, and something to impart that will surprise you. Be cautious in your language to your father. After you have conferred, let me see you.

Fred. Is it possible you can wish it? Is there an object so unwelcome, so proscribed as I am?

Lady R. If your heart suggests that question, why do you trust me with a charge so dear to you? and, if you were unwelcome, why did I solicit the trust? Ah! where is your wonted intuition?

Fred. I can make no reply; I'll strive to fortify my heart, and wait upon you. Shall I attend upon you to your coach?

Lady R. By no means; stay where you are. Here is my beau.

[*Exit, attended by Bustler, and followed by Sabina and Mrs. Kate.*

Fred. Where am I? What is this obscurity, that gathers like a cloud ready to burst upon me? Sabina meditates to set me free—but why? I cannot penetrate her motives: I have no trace of what I may have divulged in the wanderings of my reason. Perhaps she has discovered my first love in the person of this lady, and means to make a generous sacrifice of her right in me. I'll not permit it: no! though my heart should burst with the recoil of that unconquerable affection, which the sight of my enchantress has revived, I never will submit to be a villain, and abandon my preserver. David!

Enter DAVID MOWBRAY.

David. Ay, sure enough I am he. Where's mademoiselle?

Fred. Gone with Lady Ruby.

David. Is she so? then I caught a glimpse of her for the first time. Well, I say nothing, every man to his own fancy; but, for my part, brother Frederick, if little England couldn't furnish me with a mate to my liking, I would be content to go single for the rest of my days. [now.

Fred. David, we won't talk upon that subject just

David. Very well; then you must keep clear of father, for he will talk of nothing else; yet I think you should speak him quickly, for it's out of chance for you to lie hid in this tattling town much longer.

Fred. I waited only till Sabina was disposed of, and am going to him directly. Will you accompany me?

David. To be sure I will, if you wish it. But, harkye! Frederick, I hope you don't take in ill part what I said to you, only because I thought it a pity an honest Englishman should go out of his own country for a wife; whereas, do you see, if your heart is pledged, why there's an end of the matter.

Fred. There let the matter end, then.

David. Enough said, leave it there; only if father comes down upon you with a spanking breeze, I would not have him take you at a nonplus.

Fred. A man who knows his duty cannot be surprised: I am his son in all lawful service; but where my honour is engaged, friend David, I think you will agree with me that an honest heart ought not to be shaken either by menaces or soothings; so let us boldly set forward, face our fortune, and defy its malice.

David. Come on, my brave fellow! to the last breath of my life I will stand by you; and if father cuts you off with a shilling, and leaves me his estate, the shilling shall be mine, and the estate shall be your's. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Sir Miles's house.*

Enter ROBIN, *who is crossing the stage;* MR. WRANGLE *following.*

Mr. W. (*Calling.*) Robin, Robin! A word in your ear. [did not see you.

Rob. I humbly beg your pardon, Mr. Wrangle, I

Mr. W. No offence, my good friend, no offence. How are you, honest Robin! [I pray?

Rob. Thank you, sir. What are your commands,

Mr. W. Where's your master? where's Sir Miles? I want a word or two with him in private.

Rob. I'll tell him as much. [*Exit.*

Mr. W. Do so, do so! I am determined it shall come out: she threatens to complain of me to her father; and as she always takes care to have the last word, it is but fair that I should have the first.

Re-enter ROBIN.

Rob. I crave your pardon, sir, but I hope you have no bad news about my young mistress?

Mr. W. Why should you suppose it, Robin?

Rob. Because I hear she had an accident at the opera-door; no bad consequences from the fright, I hope. Oh! here my master comes. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR MILES MOWBRAY.

Sir M. So, Wrangle, what's the best news with you?

Mr. W. I cannot say, Sir Miles, that I have any particular good news to impart to you; and yet, with your leave, I would fain solicit your attention for a few minutes.

Sir M. What's the matter now? Why do you round me with a circumbendibus in this manner, when I so often desire you to speak plainly, and to the point at once?

Mr. W. Well, sir, then to the point at once.

Sir M. To be sure; that's the way to be understood, son Wrangle; whereas to be verbose and circumstantial, is to be tedious; and when a man is tedious, you know, 'tis ten to one if his hearers are not tired with his preamble, before he lets them into the body of his bill.

Mr. W. At the present moment, I conceive, that fault does not lie with me.

Sir M. I don't say it does, I don't say it does; yet, a fault it is, lie where it will; and every man has his faults, which it is the part of a friend to tell him of; it is the part of a father: you yourself are not without faults, son Wrangle.

Mr. W. I own it, sir; I do not affect to disguise them; but the faults I would recommend to your cognizance are secret faults, which you do not see, and which I cannot remedy without your help.

Sir M. Come, come, sir, my insight may go deeper than you are aware of; I have spied out some little lurking peccadilloes in a certain person, which I shall not descant upon in your hearing.

Mr. W. Peccadilloes, do you call them? they merit a much harder name, believe me.

Sir M. Well, well, well! if, for obvious reasons, I don't give them hard names, let that be no proof with you I mean to overlook them.

Mr. W. I hope you will not.

Sir M. Be sure of that, son Wrangle; you will hardly doubt but I have my daughter's interest very thoroughly at heart, and having been the author of your union, feel myself responsible for the happiness or unhappiness that may result from it.

Mr. W. Sir Miles, I honour you for the candour of that very liberal confession. Ours was not a match of passion; prudence concerted our alliance, and on your wisdom I reposed my hopes; but, indeed and indeed, I am not what I seem; I am not that happy man you supposed me to be.

Sir M. Why, I'm sorry for it; but don't despair; confiding your situation to me, you take a prudent

step, and you shall find me, my dear Wrangle, a zealous friend to serve you. Tempers may be corrected; there shall be no want of admonition on my part, in your behalf; in the meantime, let it be a secret between you and me; don't tell your wife a word of what has passed: I shall take the affair into my own hands.

Mr. W. Well, sir, on that condition I will not let her know I have appealed to you.

Sir M. Every husband ought to keep up his consequence and authority; whereas, this would only tend to lower you in her respect, as if you had not power of yourself to regulate your own concerns, without calling me in to assist you.

Mr. W. 'Tis very true; I see your motives, and am beholden to you for them. Under your fatherly correction, worthy sir, I may now flatter myself we shall go on better than ever.

Sir M. I hope you will: and now you see the good effects of plain speaking; let me advise you never to be circumlocutory any more.

Enter ROBIN, *hastily.*

Rob. Oh! sir, sir, sir! rare news! Master Frederick is arrived well and hearty, heaven be praised for all things! Humbly beg pardon for my boldness, but I couldn't contain myself for joy. [*Exit.*

Enter FREDERICK *and* DAVID MOWBRAY.

Sir M. How, how, how is all this? Ay, there he is, sure enough; my own dear boy come home again. Welcome, Freddy, welcome again and again! And how are you, my brave fellow? glad to see old England once more?

Fred. I am happy to see you, sir, in such health and spirits.

Sir M. Why, for health, thank heaven! I am pretty well; for spirits, look you, I am all the better for the sight of you. But hold, hold! here's a new relation of your's, Caleb Wrangle, Esquire, husband to our Lyddy, and such a husband! Bear up, Wrangle; I'm no blab. (*Aside to Mr. W.*) Ay, that's right, that's right! take him by the hand; give him joy! though I say it to his face, I don't know such another. Davy knows what a fond couple they are; don't you, Davy?

David. Not I, father; that's only known to themselves.

Sir M. Out upon thee, surlyboots! wilt never be civilized? Wrangle, I am staunch; I'll stand by you. (*Aside to Mr. W.*)

Mr. W. We are so rarely favoured with our brother David's company, that he cannot witness what he does not see: I flatter myself Mr. Frederick will be more neighbourly; but I'll not intrude upon moments so precious. I'll run home to my beloved, and gladden her fond heart with the joyful tidings. [*Exit.*

Sir M. There he goes, the paragon of husbands, bating a few infirmities of temper, which I shall soon correct.

David. I'll lend you a hand heartily at that job, father, if you want a mate.

Sir M. Hold your tongue, sirrah! if you were as free to find out your own failings, and as candid to confess them, as he is, you would be fitter for society than you are. I hope, son Frederick, you, at least, like your new brother-in-law.

Fred. I hope my sister does, sir; that is most to the purpose. All I can say of him is, that he seems a very civil, smooth-spoken gentleman.

Sir M. You are right; a little too oily-tongued; that is a fault, to be sure, but I shall correct that: I own I like a man that speaks his mind boldly.

David. Not when it does not fall in with your own, father.

Sir M. Peace, puppy! I'm now coming to the point with you, Frederick. I have sent for you home upon an affair of the last consequence to your happiness and my own: your first love, Lady Ruby, is now a free woman, and one of the greatest fortunes in the kingdom.

Fred. Her fortune is no lure to me. [boldly.

David. You like a man that speaks his mind

Sir M. Get out of my sight! Her fortune no lure! You was in love with her, then, for her poverty, was you not? You liked her best when you had a fair chance of starving with her?

Fred. Not so, sir; but as you considered her good qualities but as dust in the scale till money was thrown into it, I consider money but as dust to dust.

Sir M. Your humble servant, sir! You may march back to your old quarters; your head is turned; you have filled it with foreign vapour and outlandish rhodomontade.

Fred. I hope I did not go out of my own country to be taught the duties of a man of honour.

Sir M. I wish you would learn the duties of a son, and not insult my ears with that puppily word honour. I can remark you have always the honour to think differently from me; if it was not for that same honour of running counter to my wishes, you would run into this lady's arms; your honour was eager enough for it when I stood your friend and opposed it.

David. Ay, father, you spoke your mind boldly, then, and now its Frederick's turn to speak his.

Sir M. Saucebox! jackanapes! impudent varlet! If you don't instantly vanish, by the horns of Jupiter Ammon, I swear, I will extinguish you.

David. Say no more, father, I'm off. Good morning to you. Marry, I'd rather mess with you a week than a fortnight. By the horns of Jupiter Ammon! That's a good one, by the Lord Harry! [*Exit.*

Fred. With your permission, sir, I will take my leave for the present.

Sir M. Sir, you may take it for everlasting: I care not what becomes of a reprobate son. [*Exit Frederick.*] Ah! poor Wrangle! he has a thousand faults; but what then? he has the grace to own them. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Lady Ruby's house.*

LADY RUBY *and* SABINA *discovered.*

Lady R. I pry not into your secrets, amiable Sabina: tell me nothing that will give you pain to reveal; but treat me as a friend, who needs no spur to serve you, nor any other testimonies of your innocence than you carry in your countenance.

Sabina. Ah! my dear, good lady! you are very considerate of me, and have great pity for unhappy Sabina; but it is my duty to explain to you my follies as well as my misfortunes: you are too good in crediting me for my innocence; but I will not be a deceiver, though I have myself been sacrificed by deceit.

Lady R. What do I hear? Has Frederick—

Sabina. Oh! no, no, no! He is perfection of a man, and if he did know my wrongs, I do believe he would expose his life for my redress; therefore, I will not let the name of my betrayer pass my lips, for fear that it should reach his ears.

Lady R. How's this, Sabina? Have you been wronged, betrayed, and yet did you consent to Frederick's proposal?

Sabina. Not for the universe would I consent; for I do know his heart too well, and my own conscience still better. Ah! my dear lady, if you can pity me, a stranger, for my sufferings, what must you feel for his, when you shall know yourself to have been the cause of them?

Lady R. I! I the cause of them?

Sabina. Ah! yes, indeed; it was your marriage broke his heart, his brain; he was a dying, a distracted man.

Lady R. How could my marriage so affect him?

Had he not forsaken me, had he not renounced me, I would have suffered death ere I would have joined my hand to any other man's.

Sabina. I know not how that was; I only know how he did rave when his poor mind was gone, and his life almost at the last moment: I'm sure, if ever woman was adored by man, you are by Mr. Frederick; for myself, then, if I were free, (which I am not,) judge if I could, in honour, marry him.

Lady R. Did he not freely offer it? Does he not still most strongly press it?

Sabina. He presses it in honour, not in heart; and when he offered it he was beside himself with rage and disappointment for the loss of you: in fine, my lady, I do wish I had a friend just now, who would say to Mr. Frederick, that Sabina Rosny cannot, if she would, accept his hand; and further, if she could, for his sake she would not.

Lady R. And who so fit to say that, as Sabina Rosny herself?

Sabina. Alas, alas! how difficult for me, how dangerous for him! If I should say how I was treated by a certain person of this country, (I did believe all Englishmen were honest,) would he not force me to confess the whole? And then, oh, terrible! is it not better I should bury my sad story in my heart, and suffer in secret?

Lady R. A villain should be dragged to light, and punished by the world's contempt.

Sabina. Let his own conscience be his punishment! Though he has ruined me, basely betrayed me by a pretended marriage, and then cruelly abandoned me, what can I say or do? Shall a poor alien like me contend with power like his? Your laws will not redress me; my religion is not his religion: I know not who is that Italian monk that married us; I know not where to find him; or, if I could, what then? my lord would little care for that.

Lady R. My lord shall care; doubt not but there are means to make him care and feel, and tremble for his character, which public fame shall blast through all the world, unless he does you right.

Sabina. But you don't know him: I did say too much when I said, unawares, "my lord," but yet I have not named him.

Lady R. I know his name; his nature, too, I know, and how susceptible he is of the world's fame, how quick of feeling. Am I not right, Sabina? is he not very, very—*Sensitive?*

Sabina. Ah! (*Shrieks.*) You are magicienne.

Lady R. Come, come; you see you might as well have trusted me at once; I've fathomed your deep secret. Be now convinced, Sabina, a man cannot do wrong in this country, and escape discovery; in the next place, assure yourself Lord Sensitive is not that man who can offend without atoning for it: honour belongs to him still, though he can shift it off awhile, but nakedness will soon shame him into wearing it again. Hark! we have a visitor; perhaps you'll wish to ponder on these things in private.

Sabina. I pray you, let me retire; my heart is very full. [*Exit.*

Enter Lord Sensitive.

Lord S. If I am too bold in approaching you without special permission, your servants are in the fault, who said they had orders to admit me without reserve.

Lady R. They told you truth; you may remember I said my doors were open to all persons of honour; and who fulfils that character more completely than Lord Sensitive?

Lord S. But might I not have interrupted a conversation more agreeable than Lord Sensitive's? Frederick Mowbray is come home.

Lady R. Well, if he is?

Lord S. Then there is one more votary (and no mean one, I confess,) to offer incense at the shrine of that divinity whom all men worship, and all women envy.

Lady R. I could give you a reason, my lord, which, I am sure, you would admit to be conclusive, against Mr. Mowbray's addressing me.

Lord S. May I ask what should prevent him from paying his addresses to your ladyship?

Lady R. Simply this; because he has pledged them elsewhere, and is too much a man of honour to violate his engagements.

Lord S. Oh! if he is engaged elsewhere—that is—if—he is absolutely bound, that alters the case.

Lady R. To be sure it does: I knew you would allow the reason to be good; I knew you would feel the force of it.

Lord S. I do, indeed; I feel the force of it very thoroughly.

Lady R. I'm satisfied you do, and I hope you will credit me when I declare to you, upon the word of truth, that if Frederick Mowbray was the one man whom I preferred before all men living, and I knew him guilty of having pledged his faith to another woman, whom he afterwards abandoned, I would as soon join hands with infamy, and be the outcast of society, as with such a traitor.

Lord S. That, that is very strong, Lady Ruby, and bespeaks your utter abhorrence of double-dealing; but you will permit me to observe, that much would depend upon who, and what the woman was.

Lady R. I would not hear of such a plea, and you, my lord, would be the last man living to allow of it; it would be a mere evasion, not a mitigation of his guilt. Every mean wretch can blast the reputation of the fond, believing victim, whom his unmanly cunning has seduced, and his unprincipled inconstancy deserted.

Lord S. That is quite unanswerable, Lady Ruby; that brings it home to a man's conscience, I confess: I have nothing to offer in defence of such a proceeding.

Lady R. No, no; there is no sophistry can palliate seduction. What, then, would you say, if, in aggravation of his wickedness, he had abused her credulity by a pretended marriage?

Lord S. Madam—madam! who told you this?

Lady R. Who told me? What is it you mean? I am supposing a case, and did you understand I was stating a fact? I hope there is no one (of my acquaintance, at least,) whose conscience can plead guilty to a charge like this; if there is, I am sure Frederick Mowbray is not the man. So now your lordship sees I have set you perfectly at your ease about him.

Lord S. I cannot say, madam, I am just now perfectly at my ease.

Lady R. Why, how now, my good lord? I think I have been tolerably explicit.

Lord S. Yes, yes; I don't complain of that; I perfectly understand you.

Lady R. Well, then, what ails you?

Lord S. Oh! I have many ails.

Lady R. What other phantom have you conjured up? Come, come; you are very dull company; I shall not let you in another time, if you are such a melancholy gentleman.

Lord S. I will ask to be admitted to you but once more, before I take my leave for ever. I most heartily beg your pardon for all the foolish things I have said or done since I had the honour of knowing you: I was betrayed into involuntary admiration; it is not easy to reflect within the sphere of your attraction, but I have regained my senses, and shall be out of England before three days are at an end.

Lady R. Ay, so you say; but this is one of your freaks: however, I conjure you let me see you before you go. Promise me this—

Lord S. I promise.

Lady R. Upon your honour?

Lord S. Solemnly I promise. Then you shall know me better. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*The Street.*

Enter David Mowbray *and* Billy Bustler.

David. Ah! Billy, my fine fellow, how fares it with you?

Billy B. I don't know whether I shall speak to you; I am not sure I shall acknowledge you.

David. Heyday! what is in the wind now, my heart of oak? What have I done to offend you?

Billy B. What have you done? inquire of sister Kate; she will let you know what you have done, and set her claws into your face at the same time for your doings. You have brought a naughty woman into our house.

David. 'Tis false!

Billy B. Don't say so. I have proof positive. She a virtuous suffering innocent! She to be married to your brother Mowbray! No such thing, friend David; she is married already, and your honourable brother has made free to steal a march with another man's wife.

David. I'll tell you what, Billy, in one word, either prove what you say, prove it upon the spot, or fall to your prayers and take leave of life, for d——e if you don't tread upon your grave.

Billy B. Read, then, and be convinced. Here is a trinket sister Kate found in her drawer after she had left us: 'tis the portrait of some gentleman; his name is not to it, but see what is inscribed at the back.

David. Give it me, give it me: I should know this face. Aha! my lord have I discovered you? Now for the writing at the back: "*The husband of the forsaken Sabina!*" D——n! Does the world contain such villany? I'll make him swallow it, ay, and digest it, ere I suffer my poor brother to be so abused.

Billy B. Why, you astonish me; I never could have thought—

David. Mark me! don't think at all, for this business belongs to me; your only part is to be inviolably secret, hushed as death, till I have sifted it to the minutest grain: that done, I will report to you the particulars; and then, as I am sure my brother's honour will come out clear as the light, you must revoke every syllable you have uttered injurious to his reputation.

Billy B. Ay, ay; revoke! one of us must revoke; for I'll swear there is a foul trick somewhere. So, your humble servant. [*Exit.*

David. Now which tack shall I be upon? Whether to begin first with madame or monsieur, (for I am positive this leering traitor is Lord Sensitive,) or, first and foremost, to make sure of my poor Frederick, and snatch him from the snare, is a question that—I need not debate upon, for here he comes. How now, Fred.! whither bound?

Enter Frederick Mowbray.

Fred. In your phrase I answer, on a dangerous coast; I believe I am rash enough to be going to Lady Ruby.

David. I believe not.

Fred. Why do you say that?

David. Because I think your rashness will not attempt to make its passage through my body, and there is no other road.

Fred. I comprehend you, and I take your motive in good part: you see my weakness, you perceive I am relapsing into my former passion for Lady Ruby, and you tremble for the honour I have pledged to Sabina Rosny.

David. You are right; I tremble for your honour; I plant myself between you and ruin; and I conjure you, nay, I compel you to turn back with me from that house, which will else be the tomb of your happiness, your fortune, and your fame.

Fred. Explain yourself.

David. I cannot now; I will hereafter. Answer me this, are you married to the Frenchwoman?

Fred. I am not.

David. Thank heaven!

Fred. Speak of her, however, more respectfully, if you mean we should be friends.

David. Friends, friends! Who dares to call my friendship into question, when I have pledged it to a brother? I am no trifler, Frederick.

Fred. I will not treat you as such, but follow you as my guardian genius, sent to snatch me from disgrace; for, alas! I must confess to you I am lost if I behold that siren, who first took possession of my soul. Come, let us fly! Whither shall we go? Carry me to my sister. [her yet?

David. To your sister, then! Haven't you seen

Fred. Not I; Lady Ruby, Lady Ruby is the loadstone that draws away every particle of steel that should fortify my heart, and leaves it weaker than a woman's tear.

David. What's all that, brother? A kind of gabble I don't deal in, nor aim to understand: let actions speak for me. Come along. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*The House of Mr. Wrangle.*

Enter Mr. Wrangle, *speaking to a Servant.*

Mr. W. Tell your mistress I would speak with her before she goes out. Hold! I see she is coming. Leave me. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter Mrs. Wrangle.

So, madam, you are on the wing, I perceive: have you any very pressing engagements on your hands?

Mrs. W. Half a hundred.

Mr. W. And suppose I had a wish to engross a few minutes of your conversation, how many of these very pressing engagements would you dispense with at my request?

Mrs. W. Ridiculous! What conversation can you want with me?

Mr. W. A very serious one, be assured; therefore, with your leave, I will dismiss your equipage; and, in place of half a hundred frivolous visits, recommend you a more profitable method of disposing of your time with me. (*Going.*)

Mrs. W. Hold! sir, are you mad?

Mr. W. No, madam, I am not mad; nor will I suffer you to act as if you were.

Mrs. W. Do you mean to make your house my prison? Shall I not be allowed to visit my own father?

Mr. W. By all means, your father. I'll go with you to Sir Miles myself.

Mrs. W. You are a bold man, Mr. Wrangle, if you will venture to face that accusation which I shall prefer against you: I should doubt if your hypocrisy will bear you out with my too credulous father any longer.

Mr. W. Try it, Mrs. Wrangle; I shall resort to no hypocrisy; truth will serve my purpose.

Mrs. W. Are you sure of that? Sha'n't you feel a little awkward in attempting so very new an experiment? I rather think your interest lies in a quarter opposite to truth.

Mr. W. I believe, madam, you will find it pretty strong in a quarter you don't suspect: if you are wise, you will be silent; Sir Miles Mowbray knows you.

Mrs. W. From your report, I defy him, or any person else, to know me; for your malice is too gross to escape detection, and your wit too dull to make even scandal entertaining.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Frederick and Mr. David Mowbray. [*Exit.*

Enter Frederick *and* David Mowbray.

Mrs. W. There, there! My protectors are at hand.

Welcome, my dear Frederick! welcome to England! Welcome to the rescue of your poor imprisoned sister, whose heart panted to be with you, but whose tyrant husband, lost to all human feelings, would not suffer her to depart from his doors.

Fred. What is all this? Can you explain it, sir?

David. Oh! yes, he can explain anything.

Fred. How greatly I am shocked I need not say! I came to give you both a joyful greeting; I am saluted by one party with a flaming accusation, by the other with a sullen reserve. What am I to say?

Mr. W. The less the better between man and wife. I hope, gentlemen, you do not combine to over-awe me in my own house.

David. Step out of it, then, with me: the open air is common property, and we will talk together man to man.

Mr. W. I shall do no such thing: it is enough for me that I am married to your sister; I am not bound to risk my life against her brothers.

Fred. It will not be required of you, Mr. Wrangle. My brother David is too quick; and, I am sure, when I tell him it is my particular request, he will have the kindness to withdraw.

David. With all my heart, for I never wish to be under the same roof with the man I despise.

Fred. Hush, hush! Impetuous boy!

David. Harkye! Frederick, a word in your ear: don't quarrel with him; he's below your anger. I am going to Lady Ruby; come to me there; I have thought better of it since I prevented you a while ago, and have a secret to communicate worth a king's ransom. Don't fail me. And, look! by Saint George and the dragon! here comes my father, a joyful witness to the happiness of a match of his own making. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Miles Mowbray.

Sir M. What does the puppy prattle about?

Mrs. W. Oh! sir, sir, don't reprove him for his generous indignation against a cruel husband, who oppresses and insults your poor suffering daughter, till, no longer able to endure her sorrows and his tyranny, she is compelled to cast herself at your feet, and implore your pity and protection.

Sir M. I'm thunderstruck! I'm petrified! This is one fault more, Wrangle, than I thought you had.

Fred. Rise, sister, rise! You are too vehement in your remonstrance: I must believe it is not in this gentleman's nature to oppress or insult an unoffending wife, which I hope you are; and I am heartily sorry you make our father a party in your little domestic squabbles, which might easily be adjusted without his privity.

Sir M. Give me your hand, Frederick, you speak like an angel. I am friends with you from this moment for ever.

Mr. W. Through the favour of Mr. Mowbray's temperate interposition, for which I am greatly beholden to him, I flatter myself I may now have leave to speak.

Sir M. By all means, Mr. Wrangle, by all means; no man speaks better, when his own faults are the topic, and I do not forget the promise I have made you.

Mr. W. To that promise I now appeal. The cause of Mrs. Wrangle's complaint is simply this: she had ordered her coach to make half a hundred idle visits, and I, in the expectation of her brother's coming, would fain have prevailed with her to stay at home and receive him.

Mrs. W. Monstrous prevarication!

Sir M. Hush, child, hush! A small stretch upon the truth would have been a softer phrase.

Mr. W. Now, Sir Miles, if you recollect what I hinted to you about your daughter's temper—

Sir M. About my daughter's temper? What is it you mean? I heard a pretty many broad hints of your own temper, but not one of my daughter's.

Mr. W. Of my temper, sir? No: whatever faults there may be in my temper, I owe no account of them to you; because, if you had taken the smallest pains to know me before I married Miss Mowbray, you must have seen and confessed I was the last person living to make her happy, or be happy with her.

Sir M. I wish you had imparted that to me in good time. Your intelligence, Mr. Wrangle, is rather of the latest.

Mrs. W. It is very true, sir; and had you given me leave to choose a husband for myself, Mr. Wrangle, be assured, is just the very last man in existence, on whom I should have fixed my choice.

Sir M. Heyday! why, then, did you both agree in persuading me you were the happiest, fondest couple in all England?

Mrs. W. You persuaded yourself: we were miserable enough, methinks, not to be mistaken.

Mr. W. 'Tis very true: Mrs. Wrangle herself will do me the justice to say I never pretended to be happy with her.

Mrs. W. No, no; we both had a very sovereign dislike for each other: 'tis the only point we ever agreed in.

Sir M. Your most obedient humble servant! I am very much obliged to you both; and, as you so lovingly agree in laying all your faults upon me, I leave you in a perfect state of harmony with each other; and I pray heaven you may live long to enjoy it! [*Exit.*

Fred. Sister, sister, make it up, I conjure you; where there is blame on both sides, you should exchange forgiveness. [*Exit.*

Mr. W. (*After a pause.*) Mrs. Wrangle! Love!

Mrs. W. Mr. Wrangle! My dear!

Mr. W. I begin to think—

Mrs. W. What do you begin to think?

Mr. W. That we have exposed ourselves very sufficiently.

Mrs. W. Quite enough in all conscience. Why would you complain to my father?

Mr. W. Why would you complain to your brother?

Mrs. W. We were both to blame: complaints are very foolish.

Mr. W. Then away with them at once, say I.

Mrs. W. For ever! Let us forbear to gratify our friends, by never publishing our disagreements.

Mr. W. And cure the world of its contempt, by never calling upon it for its pity.

Mrs. W. Agreed! here's my hand upon it.

Mr. W. And here's my heart; to which I press you with the warm affection of a husband, that will never cool.

Mrs. W. And I return it with the love and duty of a wife, who will never create a murmur, nor utter one again. [crisy.

Mr. W. Why, this is happiness without hypo-

Mrs. W. Perfect felicity unfeigned.

Mr. W. Oh! joyous husband!

Mrs. W. Oh! transported wife!

[*Exeunt, hand in hand.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*An Apartment in Lady Ruby's house.*

Enter Lady Ruby, *meeting* David Mowbray.

Lady R. Out upon you, false loon! What can you say for yourself, for not having been near me these three long days?

David. Lord love you, my dear lady, I have been brushing up and down this great town about my ship affairs, here and there, and everywhere; and now, you know, brother Frederick is come home.

Lady R. Oh! you sea-creature! were you half as much of a lover as you are of a hero, you would understand that no excuse will serve for neglecting a fond woman.

David. Always a dab for poor David; but when I am at sea again, and sailing in the Venus, I shall never cast a look upon the figure at the head without thinking of your ladyship.

Lady R. That's very fine, David; but, come, be sincere, isn't that the *bon-mot* of the ship? Can you lay your hand on your heart and declare you never said that to anybody before?

David. Never, never; though I don't deny but others have, for I heard Joe Jackson, our gunner, say it to his wife as she went over the side at parting. And now to my business: I have a small matter of property belonging to Mademoiselle Rosny, which I would fain deliver into her own hands.

Lady R. From your brother, we'll suppose.

David. I rather suppose not. Here it is; not very like Frederick, is it, madam?

Lady R. Lord Sensitive to the very life! Where did you pick up this?

David. Billy Bustler delivered it to me, open as you see; they found it in her toilette, after she had left the house.

Lady R. Have you shewn it to your brother?

David. I hardly thought that necessary, as the inscription on the back shews the lady to be already provided with a husband.

Lady R. Yes, yes; I see it. Alas! poor Sabina! this confirms her own sad story, and his lordship's guilt.

David. Does it not do something more than that, if the lady has been carrying on designs upon my brother?

Lady R. There you do her wrong. Who waits? [*Enter a Servant.*] Tell Mademoiselle Rosny I desire to speak with her. [*Exit Servant.*] She has no designs upon your brother; but, in the most decided manner, has declined his honourable offers. If she has withheld the secret from him hitherto, it is simply because she would not involve him with Lord Sensitive. Oh! here she comes!

Enter Sabina Rosny.

My dear, this young officer is your friend Mr. Mowbray's brother. I don't know if you have met before. [nour.

Sabina. I do not remember to have had that ho-

Lady R. He has something in charge to return to you from the good people in whose house he procured you a reception. Do you recollect having left any small article of your property behind you?

Sabina. A picture: I have been searching for it everywhere.

David. I am happy to restore it to you, and wish I could, at the same time, restore the original to a sense of his honour, for I feel it as a disgrace to myself to own him for my countryman.

Sabina. It is so your brother would have said, if he had seen it; which I hope he has not.

David. No, no, madam; man to man is a fair match; there is no need of two masters to teach one worthless individual his duty. My sword is at your service.

Sabina. Heaven forbid I should employ your sword, when your country has such need of it! In defending that, you defend me, and thousands like me, who refuge in its generous protection.

Enter a Servant, and whispers David Mowbray.

David. Very well. I'll come to him.

Lady R. What does he tell you?

David. My brother is below.

Lady R. My dear Sabina, do your spirits serve you for an interview with Mr. Mowbray?

Sabina. Aid me, my good lady, and I will do my possible.

Lady R. Say to Mr. Mowbray, we request the favour of his company. [*Exit Servant.*] Now, my brave lad, recollect we are not to aggravate your brother's mind against Lord Sensitive, for whom I take upon myself to answer; and you, Sabina, whose gentle bosom has long laboured with a painful secret, be assured one short and final effort will conclude your sufferings, and restore you to your peace.

Enter Frederick Mowbray.

Mr. Mowbray, we rejoice to see you.

Fred. I have obeyed your ladyship's commands.

Lady R. You would greatly have disappointed our wishes, if you had not. You see I have your amiable fellow-traveller in safe keeping; how I have fulfilled my trust, and whether I deserve a further continuation of it, you have a right to know, and she will take occasion of informing you.

Fred. I cannot doubt your kindness, nor her proper sense of it.

David. Lord! brother, how you stand! Oh! that I might but speak! (*Aside.*)

Fred. Sabina, I am prepared to expect some discovery from you, that I am interested to be informed of: I rely upon your candour for the fullest satisfaction; but if you would consult my feelings, you will ask permission of Lady Ruby that we may retire.

Sabina. As it shall be your will, so am I. But if my lady, who knows my sad history, and how I am embarras to relate it, would have pity for my confusion—

Fred. Oh! Sabina, Sabina! you know not what you ask, nor see the ruin you invite upon yourself and me. If you would wish to preserve my senses, patiently to hear and honourably to decide, take me from hence without a moment's loss.

Sabina. Come, then, with me; your happiness, my best of friends, is as my own.

Lady R. Stop, if you please; this room is your's. David and I have something to discuss elsewhere.

David. I wish you'd let me say it here. A little plain sailing would bring us all to the point.

Fred. Are you offended with me, loveliest of women?

Lady R. Not much; not quite past reconciliation: a little, it may be, a very little angry; but if you are disposed to make peace, here is my hand.

Fred. Oh, heavens! my soul sinks in it. Where, where are you, Sabina?

[*Exeunt Lady Ruby and David.*

Sabina. You are alarmed for me, my dear, dear friend, without a cause. It is my wish, my prayer, my supplication to heaven for you, that you may be blest and happy all your long life with that charming lady.

Fred. Sabina, what have you a mind to make of me? a villain, a betrayer of my word and faith? or a distracted husband without heart or head?

Sabina. Husband! that cannot be. I tell you now, in verity, as I did tell you before, you cannot be my husband, because—because—ah, me! ah, me! How shall I speak it? I am much ashamed—

Fred. Speak, I beseech you!

Sabina. Because—I am already married.

Fred. Married! it cannot be! Married! Beware, Sabina; solemnly I adjure you to reflect that my unalterable purpose cannot be dispensed with. If, because you see me combatting a passion that was once my master, you suppose me conquered, you mistake: my faith, my honour, my confirmed experience of your virtues, never can be shaken, be the trial ever so severe.

Sabina. I pray you, pardon my poor mode of speaking, but I do feel your goodness at my heart, indeed, indeed I do; and be not angry with me, my good friend, for that I did not tell you this before, but it is true no less—I am a wife—I will not say a happy one, for it was not for me to find a heart like your's; but I will hope the best, for I have not merited to be forsaken. [you?

Fred. Is there a monster living would forsake

Sabina. Oh! yes; for I am poor. My family, my fortune perished: yet I should not expect a noble

Englishman would make my poverty my crime, when there was nothing else that he could urge against me.

Fred. Sabina, I must now believe that you are serious; my part, therefore, must change with your condition: but though some obligations are dissolved, others are left in force, which honour cannot acquit me of: therefore, before I ask the name of your betrayer, be he who he may, I solemnly devote myself to your redress.

Sabina. Ah! that is why I tremble to disclose his name. Oh! my dear friend, I pray you to excuse me this one day. My Lady Ruby flatters me with hopes all shall be well.

Fred. I must insist upon his name.

Sabina. No, no; you will not make me more unhappy than I am: you will not, surely, refuse my intercession, if I do pray you on my knees.

Fred. Hold, hold, sweet supplicant! be not so humble. I will not wound your tender sensibility for all the earth. Compose yourself.

Sabina. Oh! when you are so good to me, how can I stop my tears?

Fred. What can I say? what shall I do to comfort you?

Sabina. I wish, I wish my lady were but here.

Fred. Behold, she comes upon your wish.

Enter LADY RUBY.

Lady R. My dear, what ails you?

Sabina. Oh! he is so generous and so kind to poor Sabina, that my heart is fit to break: I do think he is the best man living, and I do know he loves you, my sweet lady—heaven! how he does love you! Will you, then, be very angry with me, if I shall be so bold to say, you are the only lady upon earth that does deserve him.

Lady R. Oh! you seducing creature! that is not his opinion; for there is only this distinction between your fate and mine, that Frederick ran from me before marriage, Lord Sensitive from you after it.

Fred. Lord Sensitive! I'm thunderstruck!

Sabina. Ah! what have you said?

Lady R. Was it a secret?

Fred. So help me heaven! I cannot name the man whose honour I would so implicitly have vouched for as Lord Sensitive.

Lady R. And he'll redeem his honour, be assured.

Fred. Yes, or his life must answer it. I know him well; brave, generous, quick to feel and to resent each breath that glances at his fame. Either there is some error in his brain, or else some villanous traducer has imposed on his credulity. I'll probe him to the heart—

Lady R. Ah! Frederick, there are certain cases of the heart, which women are supposed to treat better than men. Leave this to me; if he does not receive his cure from under my hands, I'll then consent to turn him over as a desperate case to you. (*Loud knocking.*) That must be Lord Sensitive's.

Sabina. Ah, *miséricorde!* what will now come of me?

Lady R. Away, away! take your fair *protegée* off the field, and leave it clear for me. On your allegiance, Frederick, stir not from your post till I relieve you. [*Exeunt Frederick and Sabina.*] Now, conscience take our part! 'tis your own cause; support it.

Enter LORD SENSITIVE.

Lord S. Lady Ruby, I have remembered my promise; and as I know your late impressive words were pointed at my heart, I beg leave to assure you they have reached it. When I say I am your convert, need I add that I am prepared to make atonement to Sabina Rosny?

Lady R. I congratulate your lordship on that resolution, and am persuaded you can only find your happiness where you have left your honour.

Lord S. I'll not attempt to varnish my misdeeds. I acknowledge that Sabina Rosny has every requisite of merit, birth, and beauty, to engage and fix my heart. When I left her on a sudden call to England, I was not guilty of a purpose to desert her; my promise of a speedy return was sincerely given: but in the interim—what shall I say? Your candour must supply the rest.

Lady E. We'll talk not of the past: Sabina's candour, and your lordship's better thoughts, as soon as you shall meet, will bury all offences in oblivion.

Lord S. You predict flatteringly, but I have many anxious hours to pass before that meeting.

Lady R. 'Tis a long distance between this and Padua; but if your resolution is made up—

Lord S. Unalterably! I shall set out within this hour.

Lady R. Wait a few moments, then; and though I cannot promise you a wind, as witches did of old, I'll do my best to give you a quick passage. Sit down: your sylph shall be at your elbow before you can well draw a sigh. [*Exit.*

Lord S. What can she mean? what project has her active fancy sprung to back this bold profession? Hark! I hear her. Well, fair sylph, I keep my post, and wait your promised favour. Ah! what now? Sabina! Heaven uphold me! from what cloud have you dropped down on earth?

Enter SABINA ROSNY.

Sabina. My lord! my husband!

Lord S. Come to my arms! Oh! unexpected joy! Now we will part no more.

Sabina. Indeed! will you not forsake your poor Sabina any more? Ah! what sad moments I have passed, counting the hours for your return, day after day, but all in vain. No lord, no letter, no hope left at last, no country to receive me, no parents, brothers, friends, to fly to: miserable me! I did believe I was renounced of Providence, and destined to despair.

Lord S. Oh! my much-injured, my acknowledged wife!

Sabina. That has sweet sound with it: my heart is comforted.

Lord S. My life shall be devoted to atonement. Trust me, my sweet Sabina, 'tis not my nature to be base or cruel: once restored to your forgiveness, (and, methinks, your eyes promise me that,) I will offend no more.

Sabina. I know not how to call it an offence, for what am I? My fortune nothing, my nobility a shadow; a heart to honour you is all that I can boast. How, then, can I be angry, if, when returned to your own happy country, where so many fairer ladies court your attention, you forgot poor, humble, lost Sabina? But of this no more: I have a friend, an honourable, noble friend, to whom I owe this happy meeting; I must take you to him. Give me your hand.

Lord S. My heart and hand. Thus, led by virtue, and restored to reason, I am a man again.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Sir Miles Mowbray's house.*

SIR MILES MOWBRAY *and* MR. WRANGLE *discovered.*

Sir M. Well, sir, 'tis your own concern; if you are contented with each other, it's a proof you are soon pleased. Quarrel when you like, and make it up how you can, you have my free leave. I find, by late experience, that the man who thinks for more heads than he carries on his own shoulders, lays out care for himself, and reaps no thanks for his kindness.

Mr. W. Believe me, my good Sir Miles—

Sir M. Pardon me, my good Sir Caleb! that is a weakness I am cured of. I was the dupe of credulity when I believed you would make my daughter happy, and when I took your word for your being so: I was the veriest dolt in creation, when I thought I could either qualify your failings, or compose your squabbles. I pray you, sir, be husband and wife in your own way, and never let me be middle-man between you, henceforth and for ever.

Enter Mrs. Wrangle.

Mrs. W. Oh! my dear, dear father! this is, at length, a joyful meeting.

Sir M. I am glad to hear it. What am I to be joyful for?

Mrs. W. For the total and complete extinction of all possible dissensions between my beloved and myself.

Sir M. If he is your beloved, keep that a secret to yourself; at least, don't insist upon my believing it.

Mrs. W. Nay, surely, you'll believe me, and rejoice, when I tell you, that my ever-dear Mr. Wrangle—

Sir M. Child, child! your fondlings make me sick, and your fends make me sad; therefore, let me have no more of either, I beseech you.

Enter Frederick *and* David Mowbray.

Welcome, welcome, Frederick; give me your hand: I have to ask your pardon for my folly, in supposing I had a right over your affections; first, by diverting them from the woman of your heart, and secondly, by directing them towards her; and all my wonder is, you had the patience to listen to my nonsensical authority, in either instance. I have, also an apology to make to that amiable lady for a most impertinent visit.

Fred. That amiable lady thinks the apology rather due for her reception of you, than for your visit to her; and before many minutes are gone by, I expect she will be here to tell you so.

Sir M. I can't believe it, Freddy; I won't believe it; 'tis a happiness above my hopes. How now, Robin, how now?

Enter Robin, *hastily.*

Rob. Sir! your honour! She's a-coming, she's a-coming up the stairs—

Sir M. Who's a-coming?

Rob. Sir, the lady—the lady—I shall forget my own name—my young master knows who I mean.

[*Exit. Fred. goes out to receive Lady R.*

Enter Lady Ruby, Lord Sensitive, *and* Sabina Rosny.

Sir M. My Lady Ruby, this is, indeed, an honour and happiness—and a—My lord, I am your most obedient; may I request to be made known to this fair stranger?

Lord S. This fair stranger, Sir Miles, whom I have the honour to call wife, is ambitious to pay her compliments to the father of her best friend, and my greatest benefactor.

Sabina. Yes, truly, sir, I am very happy to make my humble obeisance to you, for the sake of your honourable son, my very good friend, Mr. Frederick Mowbray; for whose favours I have not the words to speak my gratitude, though I have a heart that will never cease to feel them.

Lord S. If such be your gratitude, lovely Sabina, what should mine be to those friends of honour who have restored you to my heart, and blessed me with a prospect of that state of happiness, which I truly hope the married part of this company will continue to enjoy, and the unmarried make haste to obtain.

David. Brother Wrangle, there's one wish for you and my sister; part it between you. And, brother Frederick, were I as you, I would drop down on both knees to my sweet Lady Ruby, and beg to go halves in the other wish with her.

Sabina. And if my prayers could profit for his sake, I would kneel and pray till some kind saint, that favours virtuous love, should hear me.

Fred. (*Kneeling.*) Oh! more than ever dear, long-lost, lamented, and despaired of, even to distraction; has your once tender heart, weaned by time, or alienated by suspicion, forgot its former feelings?

Lady R. Rise, Frederick! explanations of this nature should be private: yet I will freely own, in presence of this company, 'twas the abrupt and secret manner of your leaving me, which I could not reconcile to that generous sensibility I gave you credit for. Did you write me one letter from abroad?

Fred. Several—many. Did you answer one?

Lady R. As truth shall judge me, not a line of your's ever reached my hands.

David. I wish to my soul they had passed through mine; I would have staked my life for the delivery of them. Father, I should like to know if anybody here present could give an account of those same unlucky letters.

Sir M. Say no more, say no more. My conscience flies in my face; but a man can do no more than own it.

Fred. I have done: this only let me assert, in vindication of the truth, that I ceased not from the tenderest expostulations on your silence; imploring you to keep me in your thoughts, and promising eternal constancy on my part, till I heard you was married: then, I confess, I was not hypocrite enough to send you my congratulation; my exhausted spirits sunk under the shock of that intelligence.

Lady R. Here let us pause. You have a zealous advocate, from whom I have heard the rest. I have now only to apologize to Sir Miles Mowbray for my reception of his visit, which if he is not discouraged to repeat, I can only assure him that the same proposal will not be treated with the same indifference.

Sir M. I am infinitely happy to hear you say so; but, really, madam, I am so confounded and ashamed of my past mistakes in cases of the heart, that I dare not venture upon more than putting up a prayer in secret for your happiness and my son's. Hitherto I have been an officious, and, I fear, an unfortunate father.

Mrs. W. Suffer me for a moment to interrupt your self-reproaches, so far, at least, as they apply to me. I now declare from my soul, that if a second choice were in my power, I would voluntarily fix it where you first directed.

Mr. W. And I protest, with equal and unfeigned sincerity, that, brought to recollection by this scene, and resolute to emulate the examples I behold, my life shall be devoted to the blessing you bestowed upon me.

Sir M. Excellently resolved on both sides! I only hope you will not want me to put you in mind of it.

David. We all join in that hope. Peace at home, for your sakes, ye happy husbands! war abroad for mine and yours, my gallant comrades!

Sir M. Corrected by experience, I will now venture to pronounce, that First Love is a faithful guide; and the parent who attempts to turn that stream from its course, makes himself responsible for all the miseries and miscarriages that may result from his diversion of it. [*Exeunt.*

THE FOUNDLING;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY EDWARD MOORE.



Act III.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

SIR ROBERT BELMONT	YOUNG BELMONT	ROSETTA
SIR CHARLES RAYMOND	VILLIARD	FIDELIA
COLONEL RAYMOND	FADDLE	SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Sir Robert Belmont's house.*

Enter YOUNG BELMONT *and* COLONEL RAYMOND.

Young B. My dear Colonel, you are as unlettered in love as I am in war. What! a woman, a fine woman, a coquette, and my sister,—and to be won by whining! Mercy on us! that a well-built fellow, with common sense, should take pains to unman himself, to tempt a warm girl of two-and-twenty to come to bed to him! I say, again and again, Colonel, my sister's a woman.

Col. R. And the very individual woman that I want, Charles.

Young B. And, of all women in the world, the least fit for thee. An April day is less changeable than her humour. She laughs behind her fan at what she should not understand; calls humility meanness, and blushing, the want of education. In all affairs with a man, she goes by contraries; if you tell her a merry story, she sighs; if a serious one, she laughs; for yes, she says no, and for no, yes; and is mistress of such obedient features, that her looks are always ready to confirm what her tongue utters.

Col. R. Fine painting, upon my word, and no flattery!

Young B. This is the lady. Now for the lover. A fellow made up of credulity and suspicion; believing where he should doubt, and doubting where he should believe; jealous without cause, and satisfied without proof. A great boy, that has lost his way, and blubbering through every road, but the right, to find his home again. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. R. Mighty florid, indeed, sir!

Young B. Come, come, Colonel; love, that can exalt the brute to a man, has set you upon all-fours. Women are, indeed, delicious creatures; but not what you think them. The first wish of every mother's daughter is power; the second, mischief: the way to her heart is by indifference, or abuse; for whoever owns her beauty, will feel her tyranny: but if he call her ugly, or a fool, she'll set her cap at him, and take pains for his good opinion.

Col. R. And so, submission and flattery are out of your system?

Young B. For submission and flattery I substitute impudence and contradiction; these two, well managed, will do more with beauty in an hour, than fine speeches in a year. Your fine woman expects adoration, and receives it as common incense, which every fool offers; while the rude fellow, who tells her truth, claims all attention. Difficulty endears conquest. To him only she appears what she should be to all; and, while she labours with her natural charms to secure him, she's lost herself.

Col. R. Why, faith! Charles, there may be some music in these wild notes; but I am so far gone in the old ballad, that I can sing no other words to any tune.

Young B. Ha, ha! Thou poor mournful nightingale in a cage, sing on, then; and I'll whistle an upper part with thee, to give a little life to the measure.

Col. R. That will be kind; for, heaven knows, I

have need of assistance. Pr'ythee, tell me, dost think Rosetta wants understanding?

Young B. No, faith! I think not.

Col. R. Good humour?

Young B. Hum! She's generally pleased.

Col. R. What, then, can reconcile her behaviour to me, and her fondness for such a reptile as Faddle? A fellow made up of knavery and noise, with scandal for wit, and impudence for raillery; and so needy, that the very devil might buy him for a single guinea. I say, Charles, what can tempt her even to an acquaintance with this fellow?

Young B. Why, the very understanding and good humour you speak of. A woman's understanding is design, and her good humour mischief. Her advances to one fool are made only to tease another.

Col. R. Sir, your most humble servant.

Young B. And her good humour is kept alive by the success of her plots.

Col. R. But why so constant to her fool?

Young B. Because her fool's the fittest to her purpose. He has more tricks than her monkey, more prate than her parrot, more servility than her lap-dog, more lies than her woman, and more wit than her—Colonel. And, 'faith! all these things considered, I can't blame my sister for her constancy.

Col. R. Thou art a wild fellow, and in earnest about nothing but thy own pleasures; and so, we'll change the subject. What says Fidelia?

Young B. Why, there, now! That a man can't instruct another, but he must be told, by way of thanks, how much he stands in need of assistance himself.

Col. R. Any new difficulties?

Young B. Mountains, Colonel, a few mountains in my way. But, if I want faith to remove them, I hope I shall have strength to climb them, and that will do my business.

Col. R. She's a woman, Charles.

Young B. By her outside, one would guess so; but look a little farther, and, except the stubbornness of her temper, she has nothing feminine about her. She has wit without pertness, beauty without consciousness, pride without insolence, and desire without wantonness. In short, she has everything—

Col. R. That you would wish to ruin in her. Why, what a devil are you, Charles, to speak so feelingly of virtues, which you only admire to destroy!

Young B. A very pretty comforter, truly!

Col. R, Come, come, Charles; if she is as well born as you pretend, what hinders you from cherishing these qualities in a wife, which you would ruin in a mistress? Marry her, marry her.

Young B. And hang myself in her garters the next morning, to give her virtues the reward of widowhood. Faith! I must read Pamela twice over first. But suppose her not born as I pretend, but the outcast of a beggar, and obliged to chance for a little education?

Col. R. Why, then, her mind is dignified by her obscurity; and you will have the merit of raising her to a rank which she was meant to adorn. And where's the mighty matter in all this? You want no addition to your fortune, and have only to sacrifice a little unnecessary pride to necessary happiness.

Young B. Very heroical, upon my word! And so, my dear Colonel, one way or other, I must be married, it seems.

Col. R. If Fidelia can be honest, my life on't, you are of my mind within this fortnight. But, pr'ythee, since I am not to believe your former account of her, who is this delicious girl, that must and will get the better of your pride?

Young B. A sister of the graces, without mortal father or mother; she dropped from the clouds in her cradle, was lulled by the winds, christened by the rains, fostered by a hag, sold for a whore, sentenced to a rape, and rescued by a rogue—to be ravished by her own consent. There's mystery and hieroglyphic for you! and every syllable a truth, beyond apocrypha.

Col. R. And what am I to understand by all this?

Young B. 'Faith! just as much as your understanding can carry. A man in love is not to be trusted with a secret.

Col. R. And, pray, most discreet sir, is Rosetta acquainted with her real history?

Young B. Not a circumstance. She has been amused like you, and still believes her to be the sister of a dead friend of mine, at college, bequeathed to my guardianship. But the devil, I find, owes me a grudge for former virtues; for this sister of mine, who dotes upon Fidelia, and believes everything I have told her of her family and fortune, has very fairly turned the tables upon me. She talks of equality of birth, forsooth; of virtue, prudence, and good sense; and bids me bless my stars, for throwing in my way the only woman in the world that has good qualities enough to redeem my bad ones, and make me, what she says every man ought to be—a good husband.

Col. R. Was ever poor innocent fellow in such distress! But what says the old gentleman, your father?

Young B. Why, 'faith! the certainty of a little money would set him at work the same way. But I'll have one trial of skill with them yet. As I brought her in by one lie, I'll take her out by another. I'll swear she's a whore, that I may get an opportunity to make her one.

Col. R. Most religiously resolved, upon my word!

Young B. Between you and me, Colonel, has not your old gentleman, Sir Charles, a liquorish look-out for Fidelia himself?

Col. R. No, upon my honour. I believe his assiduities there, are more to prevent the designs of another, than to forward any of his own.

Young B. As who should say, because I have no teeth for a crust, I'll muzzle the young dog that has. A plague of everything that's old, but a woman! for 'tis but varying her vocation a little, and you may make her as useful at fifty-five as fifteen. But what say you to a little chat with the girls this morning? I believe we shall find them in the next room.

Col. R. Not immediately: I have an appointment at White's.

Young B. For half-an-hour I am your man there, too. D'ye return so soon?

Col. R. Sooner, if you will.

Young B. With all my heart. *Allons!* [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter Rosetta *and* Fidelia, *meeting.*

Ros. Oh! my dear, I was just coming to see if you were dressed. You look as if you had pleasant dreams last night.

Fid. Whatever my dreams were, they can't disturb the morning's happiness, of meeting my dear Rosetta so gay and charming.

Ros. My sweet creature! But what were your dreams?

Fid. Oh! nothing. A confusion of gay castles, built by hope, and thrown down by disappointment.

Ros. Oh, barbarous! Well, for my part, I never built a castle in my sleep, that would not last till doomsday. Give me a dream, and I am mistress of the creation. I can do what I will with every

man in it; and power, power, my dear, sleeping or waking, is a charming thing.

Fid. Now, in my opinion, a woman has no business with power. Power admits no equal, and dismisses friendship for flattery. Besides, it keeps the men at a distance, and that is not always what we wish.

Ros. But then, my dear, they'll come when we call them, and do what we bid them, and go when we send them. There's something pretty in that, sure. And for flattery, take my word for't, 'tis the highest proof of a man's esteem. 'Tis only allowing what one has not, because the fellow admires what one has. And she that can keep that, need not be afraid of believing she has more.

Fid. Ay, if she can keep that. But the danger is, in giving up the substance for the shadow. Come, come, my dear, we are weak by nature; and 'tis but knowing that we are so, to be always upon our guard. Fear may make a woman strong, but confidence undoes her.

Ros. Ha, ha! How different circumstances direct different opinions! You are in love with a rake of a fellow, who makes you afraid of yourself; and I hold in chains a mighty Colonel, who's afraid of me. And so, my dear, we both go upon right principles. Your weakness keeps you upon your guard, and my power leaves me without danger.

Fid. And yet, you must forgive me, if I tell you, that you love this Colonel.

Ros. Who told you so, my dear creature?

Fid. I know it by the pains you take to vex him. Besides, I've seen you look as if you did.

Ros. Look, child! Why, don't I look like other people?

Fid. Ay, like other people in love. Oh! my dear, I have seen just such looks in the glass, when my heart has heat at my very lips.

Ros. Thou art the most provoking creature—

Fid. You must pardon me, Rosetta; I have a heart but little inclined to gaiety; and am rather wondering, that when happiness is in a woman's power, she should neglect it for trifles; or how it should ever enter her thoughts, that the rigour of a mistress can endear the submission of a wife.

Ros. As certain, my dear, as the repentance of a sinner outweighs in opinion the life of a saint. But, to come to serious confession, I have, besides a woman's inclination to mischief, another reason for keeping off a little: I am afraid of being thought mercenary.

Fid. Heyday! Why, are you not his equal every way?

Ros. That's not it. I have told you, that before his father's return from exile—you know his unhappy attachments to a successless party—this Colonel (brought up in our family, and favoured by Sir Robert and my brother,) laid violent siege to me for a whole year. Now, though I own I never disliked him, in all that time, either through pride, folly, or a little mischief, I never gave him the least hint, by which he could guess at my inclinations.

Fid. Right woman, upon my word!

Ros. 'Tis now about three months since the king, in his goodness, recalled Sir Charles; and, by restoring the estate, made the Colonel heir to a fortune more than equal to my expectations. And now, to confess all, the airs that folly gave me before, reason bids me continue; for to surrender my heart at once to this new-made commander, would look as if the poor Colonel had wanted a bribe for the governor. Besides, he has affronted my pride, in daring to imagine I could descend so low as to be fond of that creature Faddle; a fellow, formed only to make one laugh; a cordial for the spleen, to be bought by everybody; and just as necessary in a family as a monkey. For which insolence, I must and will be revenged.

Fid. Well, I confess, this looks a little like reason. But, are you sure, all this while, the Colonel, in despair, won't raise the siege, and draw off his forces to another place?

Ros. Psha! I have a better opinion of the men, child. Do but ply them with ill-usage, and they are the gentlest creatures in the world. Like other beasts of prey, you must tame them by hunger, but if once you feed them high, they are apt to run wild, and forget their keepers.

Fid. And are all men so, Rosetta?

Ros. By the gravity of that question, I'll be whipped now if you don't expect me to say something civil of my brother. Take care of him, Fidelia, for hunger can't tame him, nor fulness make him wilder. To leave you to his guardianship was setting the fox to keep the chicken.

Fid. Wild as he is, my heart can never beat to another. And then, I have obligations that would amaze you.

Ros. Obligations! Let me die, if I would not marry my Colonel's papa, and put it out of his power to oblige or disoblige me.

Fid. Still you banter me with Sir Charles. Upon my life, he has no more designs upon me than you have. I know no reason for his friendship but his general humanity, or, perhaps, the singularity of my circumstances.

Ros. Why, as you say, youth and beauty are particular circumstances to move humanity. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! my dear, time's a great tell-tale, and will discover all. What a sweet mamma shall I have, when I marry the Colonel!

Enter YOUNG BELMONT *and* COLONEL RAYMOND.

Young B. When you marry the Colonel, sister! A match, a match, child! Here he is, just in the nick; and, 'faith! as men go, very excellent stuff for a husband.

Col. R. Those were lucky words, madam.

Ros. Perhaps not so lucky, if you knew all, sir. Now, or never, for a little lying, Fidelia, if you love me. (*Apart to Fidelia.*)

Fid. I'll warrant you, my dear. You must know, sir, (*to Young Belmont*) that your sister has taken it into her head that the Colonel's father is my lover.

Ros. What is she going to say now? (*Aside.*)

Fid. And as she looks upon herself to be as good as married to the Colonel—

Ros. Who, I? I—

Fid. She has been settling some family affairs with her new mamma here; and, upon my word, she's a sweet contriver.

Ros. And you think I won't be even with you for this, Fidelia?

Young B. Sister!

Col. R. And was it so, madam? And may I hope?

Ros. Was it so, madam! And may I hope! (*Mocking him.*) No, sir, it was not so, and you may not hope. Do you call this wit, Fidelia?

Fid. My dear creature, you must allow me to laugh a little. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. 'Tis mighty well, madam! Oh! for a little devil at my elbow now, to help out invention! (*Aside.*)

Young B. Ha, ha, ha! Won't it come, sister?

Ros. As soon as your manners, brother. You and your grave friend there have been genteelly employed, indeed, in listening at the door of a lady's chamber; and then, because you heard nothing for your purpose, to turn my own words to a meaning, I should hate myself for dreaming of.

Young B. Why, indeed, child, we might have

perplexed you a little, if Fidelia had not so artfully brought you off.

Ros. Greatly obliged to her, really. (*Walking in disorder.*)

Col. R. I never knew till now, Rosetta, that I could find a pleasure in your uneasiness.

Ros. And you think, sir, that I shall easily forgive this insolence? But you may be mistaken, sir.

Young B. Poor thing, how it pants! Come, it shall have a husband. We must about it immediately, Colonel, for she's all over in a flame.

Ros. You grow impertinent, brother. Is there no relief? (*Aside.*)

Young B. Shall I lift up the sash for a little air, child?

Enter Servant.

Ros. So! John, have you delivered the card I gave you?

Serv. Yes, madam; and Mr. Faddle desires his compliments to your ladyship, and Madam Fidelia.

Ros. Mr. Faddle, John? Where did you see him?

Serv. He met me in the street, madam, and made me step into a coffee-house with him, till he wrote this, madam. [*Delivers a letter, and exit.*

Ros. Oh! the kind creature! Here's a letter from Mr. Faddle, Fidelia! Fortune, I thank thee for this little respite! (*Aside, and reading the letter.*)

Col. R. Does she suffer the fool to write to her, too?

Fid. What, pining, Colonel, in the midst of victory?

Col. R. To receive his letters, madam! I shall run mad.

Young B. So! away prop, and down scaffold! All's over, I see.

Ros. Oh! Fidelia, you shall hear it. You shall all hear it. And there's something in't about the Colonel, too.

Col. R. About me, madam? (*Peevishly.*)

Ros. Nay, Colonel, I am not at all angry now. Methinks, this letter has made me quite another creature. To be sure, Mr. Faddle has the most gallant way of writing! But his own words will speak best for him. (*Reads.*) "*Dear creature,—Since I saw you yesterday time has hung upon me like a winter in the country; and unless you appear at rehearsal of the new opera this morning, my sun will be in total eclipse for two hours. Lady Fanny made us laugh last night, at What's my Thought like, by comparing your Colonel to a great box o' the ear; because it was very rude, she said, and what nobody cared for. I have a thousand things to say, but the clamour of a coffee-house is an interruption to the sentiments of love and veneration with which I am,—Madam, most unspeakably your's,* William Faddle." Is it not very polite, Colonel?

Col. R. Extremely, madam. Only a little out as to the box o' the ear; for you shall see him take it, madam, as carelessly as a pinch of snuff.

Ros. Fie! Colonel, you would not quarrel before a lady, I hope. Fidelia, you must oblige me with your company to the rehearsal. I'll go put on my capuchin, and step into the coach, this moment.

Fid. I am no friend to public places; but I'll attend you, madam.

Ros. You'll come, Colonel?

Col. R. To be sure, madam.

Young B. Sister! Oh! you're a good creature! [*Exit Rosetta, laughing affectedly.*

Fid. Shall we have your company, sir? (*To Young B.*)

Young B. We could find a way to employ time better, child; but I am your shadow, and must move with you everywhere. [*Exit Fidelia.*] Ha, ha, ha! How like a beaten general dost thou look now! while the enemy is upon the march, to proclaim Te Deum for a complete victory.

Col. R. I am but a man, Charles, and find myself no match for the devil and a woman.

Young B. Courage, boy! and the flesh and the devil may be subdued. Ha, ha, ha! Such a Colonel! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*Sir Robert Belmont's house.*

Enter Sir Robert Belmont *and* Sir Charles Raymond.

Sir R. A voracious young dog! Must I feed ortolans to pamper his gluttony?

Sir C. Be under no apprehension, Sir Robert: Mr. Belmont's excesses are mitigated by the levity of youth, and a too early indulgence. In his moments of thinking, I know him generous and noble. And for Fidelia, I think I can be answerable for her conduct, both in regard to what she owes herself and you.

Sir R. Why, look you, Sir Charles, the girl's a sweet girl, and a good girl, and beauty's a fine thing, and virtue's a fine thing; but, as for marriage, why, a man may buy fine things too dear. A little money, Sir Charles, would set off her beauty, and find her virtue employment. But the young rogue does not say a word of that of late.

Sir C. Nor of marriage, I am sure. His love of liberty will prevent your fears one way, and, I hope, Fidelia's honour, another.

Sir R. Must not have her ruined though.

Sir C. Fear it not, Sir Robert. And when next you see your son, be a little particular in your enquiries about her family and circumstances. If she is what her behaviour bespeaks her, and he pretends, a lady of birth and fortune, why, secrets are unnecessary: if he declines an explanation, look upon the whole as a contrivance to cover purposes which we must guard against.

Sir R. What, you don't think the rogue has had her, eh, Sir Charles?

Sir C. No, upon my honour! I hold her innocence to be without stain. But, to deal freely with my friend, I look upon her story as strange and improbable. An orphan of beauty, family, and fortune, committed by a dying brother, to the sole care of a licentious young fellow! You must pardon me, Sir Robert.

Sir R. Pray, go on, sir.

Sir C. Brought in at midnight, too! And then, a young creature so educated, and so irresistibly amiable, to be, in all appearance, without alliance, friend, or acquaintance, in the wide world! a link, torn off from the general chain! I say, Sir Robert, this is strange.

Sir R. By my troth, and so it is!

Sir C. I know not why I am so interested in this lady's concerns; but, yesterday, I indulged my curiosity with her, perhaps, beyond the bounds of good-manners: I gave a loose to my suspicion, and added oaths of secrecy to my enquiries. But her answers only served to multiply my doubts; and, still as I persisted, I saw her cheeks covered with blushes, and her eyes swimming in tears. But, my life upon it, they were the blushes and the tears of innocence.

Sir R. We must and will be satisfied, Sir Charles.

Sir C. For who knows, while we are delaying, but some unhappy mother, perhaps, of rank, too, may be wringing her hands, in bitterness of misery, for this lost daughter. Girls who have kept their virtue, Sir Robert, have done mad things for a man they love.

Sir R. And so, indeed, they have. I remember,

when I was a young fellow myself—but is not that my Charles coming through the hall yonder?

Sir C. Ay, Sir Robert. Attack him now: but let your inquiries have more the shew of accidental chat, than design; for too much earnestness may beget suspicion. And so, sir, I leave you to your discretion. [*Exit.*

Sir R. You shall see me again before dinner. A plague of these young, rakehelly rogues! a girl's worth twenty of them—if one could but manage her.

Enter Young Belmont, *repeating,*

"No warning of th' approaching flame,
Swiftly, like sudden death, it came;
Like mariners, by lightning kill'd,
I burnt the moment—

My dear sir, I have not seen you to-day before.

Sir R. What, studying poetry, boy, to help out the year's allowance?

Young B. 'Faith! sir, times are hard, and unless you come down with a fresh hundred now and then, I may go near to disgrace your family, and turn poet.

Sir R. And so want friends all thy life after! But now we talk of money, Charles, what art thou doing with Fidelia's money? I am thinking, that a round sum thrown into the stocks now might turn to a pretty tolerable account.

Young B. The stocks, sir?

Sir R. Ay, boy. My broker will be here after dinner, and he shall have a little chat with thee about laying out a few of her thousands.

Young B. I hope he'll tell us where we shall get these thousands. (*Aside.*)

Sir R. Thou dost not answer me, Charles. Art dumb, boy?

Young B. Why, to be sure, sir, as to that—Fidelia—I can't say, but that she may—however, that is, you know, sir—if, as to possibility—will your broker be here after dinner, sir?

Sir R. Take a little time, Charles; for, at present, thou dost not make thyself so clearly understood.

Young B. Quite right, to be sure, sir. Nothing could, beyond all doubt, be more judicious, or more advantageous. Her interest, sir—why, as to that—a pretty fortune—but, did you know her brother, sir?

Sir R. Who, I, child? No.

Young B. 'Faith! nor I, neither. (*Aside.*) Not know Jack, sir? The rogue would have made you laugh. Did I never read you any of his epigrams? But then, he had such an itch for play! Why, he would set you a whole fortune at a cast. And such a mimic, too! but no economy in the world. Why, it cost him a cool six thousand to stand for member once. Oh! I could tell you such stories of that election, sir—

Sir R. Pr'ythee, what borough did he stand for?

Young B. Lord! sir, he was flung all to nothing. My Lord What-d'ye-call-um's son carried it, fifteen to one, at half the expense. In short, sir, by his extravagance, affairs are so perplexed, so very intricate, that, upon my word, sir, I declare it, I don't know what to think of them. A plague of these questions! (*Aside.*)

Sir R. But she has friends and relations, Charles; I fancy, if I knew who they were, something might be done.

Young B. Yes, yes, sir, she has friends and relations—I see, sir, you know nothing of her affairs—such a string of them! The only wise thing her brother ever did was making me her guardian, to take her out of the reach of those wretches; I shall never forget his last words: "Whatever you do, my dear Charles," says he, taking me by the hand, "keep that girl from her relations." Why, I would not, for a thousand pounds, sir, that any of them should know where she is.

Sir R. Why, we have been a little cautious, Charles. But where does the estate lie?

Young B. Lord! sir, an estate and no estate. I wonder a man of your knowledge should ask the question. An earthquake may swallow it for anything I care.

Sir R. But where does it lie, Charles? In what county, I say?

Young B. And then, there's the six thousand pounds that her father left her—

Sir R. What! that gone too, Charles?

Young B. Just as good, I believe. Every shilling on't in a lawyer's hands.

Sir R. But she is not afraid to see him, too, Charles? Where does he live?

Young B. Live, sir! Do you think such a fellow ought to live? Why, he has trumped up a contract of marriage with this girl, sir, under the penalty of her whole fortune. There's a piece of work for you!

Sir R. But has he no name, Charles? What is he called, I say?

Young B. You can't call him by any name that's too bad for him. But, if I don't draw his gown over his ears, why, say I am a bad guardian, sir, that's all.

Sir R. If this should be apocryphal, now!

Young B. Sir?

Sir R. A fetch, a fib, Charles, to conceal some honest man's daughter, that you have stolen, child.

Young B. And brought into a sober family, to have the entire possession of, without let or molestation! Why, what a deal of money have you lavished away, sir, upon the education of a fool!

Sir R. There is but that one circumstance to bring thee off. For, to be sure, her affairs might have been as well settled in private lodgings. And, besides, Charles, a world of troublesome questions and lying answers might have been saved. But take care, boy, for I may be in the secret before thou art aware on't. A great rogue, Charles! [*Exit.*

Young B. So! the mine's sprung, I see, and Fidelia has betrayed me. And yet, upon cooler thoughts, she durst not break her word with me; for, though she's a woman, the devil has no part in her. Now will I be hanged, if my loving sister is not at the bottom of all this: but if I don't out-plot her—let me see—ay, Faddle shall be called in; for the fool loves mischief, like an old maid, and will outlie an attorney.

Enter Rosetta.

Ros. What, musing, brother! Now would I fain know which, of all the virtues, has been the subject of your contemplations.

Young B. Patience, patience, child; for he that has connexion with a woman, let her be wife, mistress, or sister, must have patience.

Ros. The most useful thing in the world, brother; and Fidelia shall be your tutoress. I'll hold six to four that she leads you into the practice on't, with more dexterity than the best philosopher in England. She shall teach it, and yet keep the heart without hope, brother.

Young B. Why, that's a contrary method to your's, sister: for you give hope where you mean to try patience most, and, I take it, you are the abler mistress in the art. Why, every coxcomb in town has been your scholar, child.

Ros. Not to learn patience; there's your mistake now; for it has been my constant practice to put my scholars out of all patience. What are you thinking of, brother!

Young B. Why, I was thinking, child, that

'twould be a question to puzzle a conjurer, what a coquette was made for.

Ros. Am I one, brother?

Young B. Oh, fie, sister!

Ros. Lord! I, that am no conjurer, can tell you that. A coquette! oh! why, a coquette is a sort of beautiful dessert in wax-work, that tempts the fool to an entertainment, merely to baulk his appetite. And will any one tell me that nature has no hand in the making a coquette, when she answers such wise and necessary purposes? Now, pray, sir, tell me what a rake was made for?

Young B. Am I one, sister?

Ros. Oh, fie, brother!

Young B. Nay, child, if a coquette be so useful in the system of morals, a rake must be the most horrid thing in nature. He was born for her destruction, child; she loses her being at the very sight of him, and drops plump into his arms, like a charmed bird into the mouth of a rattle-snake.

Ros. Bless us all! What a mercy it is, that we are brother and sister!

Young B. Be thankful for't night and morning, upon your knees, hussy; for I should certainly have been the ruin of you. But come, Rosetta, 'tis allowed, then, that we are rake and coquette: and now, do you know, that the essential difference between us lies only in two words—petticoat and breeches.

Ros. Ay! make that out, and you'll do something.

Young B. Pleasure, child, is the business of both; and the same principles that make me a rake, would make you—no better than you should be, were it not for that tax upon the petticoat, called scandal. Your wishes are restrained by fear; mine authorised by custom; and, while you are forced to sit down with the starved comfort of making men fools, I am upon the wing to make girls—women, child.

Ros. Now, as I hope to be married, I would not be a rake for the whole world, unless I were a man; and then, I do verily believe, I should turn out just such another.

Young B That's my dear sister! Give me your hand, child. Why, now, thou art the honestest girl in St. James's parish; and I'll trust thee for the future with all my secrets: I am going to Fidelia, child.

Ros. What a pity 'tis, brother, that she is not such a coquette as I am!

Young B. Not so, neither, my sweet sister; for, 'faith! the conquest will be too easy to keep a man constant.

Ros. Civil creature!

Young B. But here comes the Colonel! Now to our several vocations; you to fooling, and I to business. At dinner we'll meet, and compare notes, child.

Ros. For a pot of coffee, I succeed best.

Young B. 'Faith! I'm afraid so. [*Exit.*

Enter Colonel Raymond.

Col. R. To meet you alone, madam, is a happiness—

Ros. Pray, Colonel, are you a rake? Methinks, I would fain have you a rake.

Col. R. Why so, madam? 'Tis a character I never was fond of.

Ros. Because I am tired of being a coquette; and my brother says that a rake can transform one in the flirt of a fan.

Col. R. I would be anything, madam, to be better in your opinion.

Ros. If you were a rake, now, what would you say to me?

Col. R. Nothing, madam. I would—(*Snatches her hand and kisses it.*)

Ros. Bless me! is the man mad? I only asked what you would say to me.

Col. R. I would say, madam, that you are my life, my soul, my angel! That all my hopes of happiness are built upon your kindness.

Ros. Very well! keep it up!

Col. R. That your smiles are brighter than virtue, and your chains sweeter than liberty.

Ros. Upon my word!

Col. R. Oh! Rosetta, how can you trifle with a heart that loves you?

Ros. Very well! pathetic, too!

Col. R. Psha! this is not in your nature.

Ros. Suspicion! Pretty enough!

Col. R. You know I have not deserved this.

Ros. Anger, too! Go on!

Col. R. No, madam; Faddle can divert you this way at an easier price.

Ros. And jealousy! All the vicissitudes of love! Incomparable!

Col. R. You will force me to tell you, madam, that I can bear to be your jest no longer.

Ros. Or thus:

"Am I the jest of her I love?
Forbid it all the gods above!"

It may be rendered either way; but I am for the rhyme: I love poetry vastly. Don't you love poetry, Colonel?

Col. R. This is beyond all patience, madam. (*Very angrily.*)

Ros. Bless me! Why, you have not been in earnest, Colonel? Lord, lord! how a silly woman may be mistaken!

Col. R. Shall I ask you one serious question, madam?

Ros. Why, I find myself somewhat whimsical this morning, and I don't care if I do take a little stuff; but don't let it be bitter.

Col. R. Am I to be your fool always, madam, or, like other fools, to be made a husband of when my time's out?

Ros. Lord! you men-creatures do ask the strangest questions! Why, how can I possibly say now, what I shall do ten years hence?

Col. R. I am answered, madam. (*Walking in disorder.*)

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Faddle, madam. [*Exit.*

Enter Faddle.

Fad. Ah! my dear, soft toad! And the Colonel, by all that's scarlet! Now, plague catch me, if nature ever formed so complete a couple, since the first pair in Paradise!

Ros. 'Tis well you are come, Faddle; give me something to laugh at, or I shall die with the spleen.

Col. R. Ay, sir, make the lady laugh this moment, or I shall break your bones, rascal.

Fad. Lord! Colonel—what—what—eh?

Col. R. Make her laugh this instant, I say, or I'll make you cry. Not make her laugh when she bids you! Why, sirrah, I have made her laugh this half-hour without bidding.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!

Fad. Why, there, there, there, Colonel!—she does, she does!

Enter Young Belmont *and* Fidelia.

Young B. Why, how now, Faddle? What has been the matter, pr'ythee?

Col. R. A rascal! Not make a lady laugh!

Fad. What, Charles, and my little Fiddy, too! Stand by me a little; for this robust Colonel has relaxed my very sinews, and quite tremulated my whole system. I could not have collected myself, without your presence.

Fid. And was he angry with you, Faddle?

Fad. To a degree, my dear: but I have forgot it; I bear no malice to any one in the world, child.

Ros. Do you know, Faddle, that I have a quarrel with you, too?

Fad. You, child! He, he! What, I am inconstant, I suppose; and have been the ruin of a few families this winter, eh, child? Murder will out, though it's done in the centre. But, come, *vivace!* let the storm loose; and you shall see me weather it, like the osier in the fable—it may bend, but not break me.

Ros. Nay, it shall come in a breeze: I'll whisper it. (*Whispers Faddle.*)

Young B. Colonel!

Col. R. Now I could cut my throat, for being vexed at this puppy; and yet the devil, jealonsy, will have it so. (*Apart to Young B.*)

Fad. Oh! what a creature have you named, child! He, he, he! May grace renounce me, and darkness seal my eye-lids, if I would not as soon make love to a milliner's doll!

Young B. Pr'ythee, what mistress has she found out for thee, Faddle?

Fad. By all that's odious, Charles, Miss Gargle, the 'pothecary's daughter! the toad is fond of me, that's positive; but such a mess of water-gruel! Ugh! To all purposes of joy, she's an armful of dry shavings! and then, she's so jealous of one! "Lord!" says she, "Mr. Faddle, you are eternally at Sir Robert's; one can't set eyes upon you in a whole day." He, he! And then, the tears do so trickle down those white-wash cheeks of her's, that, if she could but warm me to the least bit of the heart-burn, I believe I should be tempted to take her, by way of chalk and water. He, he, he!

Young B. Ros. and Fid. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. Isn't he a pleasant creature, Colonel?

Col. R. Certainly, madam, of infinite wit, with abundance of modesty.

Fad. Pooh! plague of modesty, Colonel! But do you know, you slim toad, you! (*to Ros.*) what a battle I had last night, in a certain company, about you, and that ugly gipsy there?

Fid. Meaning me, sir?

Fad. Pert and pretty! You must know, there was Jack Taffaty, Billy Cruel, Lord Harry Gymp, and I, at Jack's lodgings, all in tip-top spirits, over a pint of burgundy—a pox of all drinking though! I shall never get it out of my head. Well, we were toasting a round of beauties, you must know: "The girl of your heart, Faddle," says my lord. "Rosetta Belmont, my lord," says I: and, 'faith! down you went, you delicate little devil you, in almost half a glass. "Rot your toast," says my lord, "I was fond of her last winter." "She's a wit," says Jack. "And a scold, by all that's noisy!" says Billy. "Isn't she a little freckled?" says my lord. "D——ly padded," says Jack; "and painted like a Dutch doll, by Jupiter!" says Billy. "She's very unsusceptible," says my lord. "No more warmth than a snow-ball," says Jack. "A mere cold bath to a lover, curse catch me!" says Billy. "He, he, he!" says I, "that's because you want heart to warm her, my dears; to me, now, she's all over combustibles; I can electrify her by a look: touch but her lip, and snap she goes off, in a flash of fire!"

Ros. Oh, the wretch! what a picture has he drawn of me! (*To Fidelia.*)

Fid. You must be curious, my dear.

Young B. Ha, ha! But you forgot Fidelia, Faddle.

Fad. Oh! "And there's the new face," says Billy, "Fidelia, I think they call her." "If she were an appurtenance of mine," says my lord, "I'd hang her upon a peg in my wardrobe, amongst my cast clothes." "With those demure looks of her's," says Jack, "I'd send her to my aunt in Worcestershire, to set her face by, when she went to church." "Or, what think you," says Billy, "of keeping her in a shew-glass, by way of—gentlemen and ladies, walk in, and see the curiosity of curiosities, the perfect Pamela in high life! Observe, gentlemen, the blushing of her cheeks, the turning up of her eyes, and her tongue, that says nothing but fie, fie! Ha, ha, ha!" "Incomparable!" said all three. "Pooh! pox!" says I, "not so bad as that, neither: the little toad has not seen much of the town, indeed, but she'll do, in time; and a glass of preniac may serve one's turn, you know, when champagne is not to be had." (*Bowing to Rosetta.*)

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Young B. Why, thou didst give it them, 'faith, bully!

Enter Servant, and whispers Rosetta.

Ros. Come, gentlemen, dinner waits. We shall have all your companies, I hope?

Young B. You know, you dine with me, at the King's Arms, Faddle? (*Apart to Faddle.*)

Fad. Do I? I am sorry, my dear creature, that a particular appointment robs me of the honour. (*To Rosetta.*)

Ros. Psha! you are always engaged, I think. Come, Fidelia. [*Exit with Fidelia.*

Col. R. Why, then, thank heaven, there's some respite. [*Exit.*

Young B. Hark you, Faddle! I hope you are not in the least ignorant, that, upon particular occasions, you can be a very great rascal?

Fad. Who, I, Charles? Pooh, plague! is this the dinner I am to have?

Young B. Courage, boy! And, because I think so well of thee, there, (*gives him a purse*) 'twill buy thee a new laced coat and a feather.

Fad. Why, ay, this is something, Charles. But what am I to do, eh? I won't fight, upon my soul, I won't fight.

Young B. Thou canst lie a little?

Fad. A great deal, Charles, or I have spent my time among women of quality to little purpose.

Young B. I'll tell thee, then. This sweet girl, this angel, this stubborn Fidelia, sticks so at my heart, that I must either get the better of her, or run mad.

Fad. And so, thou wouldst have me aiding and abetting, eh, Charles? Must not be tucked up for a rape, neither.

Young B. Peace, fool! About three months ago, by a very extraordinary adventure, this lady dropped into my arms. It happened, that our hearts took fire at first sight: but, as the devil would have it, in the hurry of my first thoughts, not knowing where to place her, I was tempted, for security, to bring her to this haunted house here; where, between the jealousy of Sir Charles, the gravity of the Colonel, the curiosity of a sister, and the awkward care of a father, she must become a vestal, or I a husband.

Fad. And so, by way of a little simple fornication, you want to remove her to private lodgings, eh, Charles?

Young B. But how, how, how, thou dear rascal?

Fad. Let me see. Hum! And so, you are not her guardian, Charles?

Young B. Nor she the woman she pretends, boy! I tell thee, she was mine by fortune; I tilted for her at midnight; but the devil tempted me, I say, to bring her hither. The family was in bed, which gave me time for contrivance; I prevailed upon her to call me guardian, that, by pretending authority over her, I might remove her at pleasure; but here, too, I was deceived: my sister's fondness for her has rendered every plot of mine to part them

impracticable; and, without thy wicked assistance, we must both die in our virginity.

Fad. Hum! That would be a pity, Charles. But let me see—ay, I have it. Within these three hours, we'll contrive to set the house in such a flame, that the devil himself may take her, if he stand at the street door. To dinner, to dinner, boy! 'Tis here, here, here, Charles!

Young B. If thou dost—

Fad. And if I don't, why, no more purses, Charles. I tell thee, 'tis here, here, here, boy! To dinner, to dinner. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Sir Robert Belmont's house.*

Enter ROSETTA *and* FIDELIA.

Fid. 'Tis all your own doing, my dear. You first tease him into madness, and then wonder to hear his chains rattle.

Ros. And yet, how one of my heavenly smiles sobered him again!

Fid. If I were a man, you should use me so but once, Rosetta.

Ros. Psha! If you were a man, you would do as men do, child. Ha, ha, ha! They are creatures of robust constitutions, and will bear a great deal. Besides, for my part, I can't see what a reasonable fellow ought to expect before marriage, but ill usage. You can't imagine, my dear, how it sweetens kindness afterwards; for, take my word for't, there's no charm like cruelty to keep the men constant; nor no deformity like kindness, to make them loath you.

Enter Servant.

Serv. A letter for your ladyship, madam. [*Exit.*

Ros. For me? I don't remember the hand. (*Opens, and reads the letter to herself.*)

Fid. You seem strangely concerned, madam: I hope no ill news?

Ros. The worst in the world, Fidelia, if it be true.

Fid. Pray heaven it be false, then! But must it be a secret? I hope my dear Rosetta knows, that whatever affects her quiet, can't leave mine undisturbed.

Ros. Who's there?

Enter Servant.

How did you receive this letter?

Serv. From a porter, madam.

Ros. Is he without?

Serv. No, madam; he said it required no answer.

Ros. Had you any knowledge of him?

Serv. Not that I remember, madam.

Ros. Should you know him again?

Serv. Certainly, madam.

Ros. Where did my brother say he dined today?

Serv. At the King's Arms, madam.

Ros. And Mr. Faddle with him?

Serv. They went out together, madam.

Ros. Run this moment, and say I desire to speak with both of them immediately, upon an extraordinary affair.

Serv. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Fid. What can this mean, Rosetta? Am I unfit to be trusted?

Ros. Tell me, Fidelia—but no matter: why should I disturb you? I have been too grave.

Fid. Still more and more perplexing! But my inquiries are at an end: I shall learn to be less troublesome, as you are less kind, Rosetta.

Ros. Pr'ythee, don't talk so, Fidelia; I can never be less kind.

Fid. Indeed, I won't deserve you should.

Ros. I know it, Fidelia. But, tell me, then, is there a circumstance in your life, that would call a blush to your cheeks, if 'twere laid as open to the world's knowledge as to your own?

Fid. If from the letter you ask me that strange question, madam, surely I should see it.

Ros. I think not, Fidelia; for, upon second thoughts, 'tis a trifle not worth your notice.

Fid. Why were you so much alarmed, then?

Ros. I confess it startled me at first; but 'tis a lying letter, and should not trouble you.

Fid. Then it relates to me, madam?

Ros. No matter, Fidelia.

Fid. I have lost my friend, then. I begged, at first, to be a sharer in Rosetta's griefs; but now, I find, they are all my own, and she denies my right to them.

Ros. This is too much, Fidelia. And now, to keep you longer in suspense would be cruelty. But the writer of this scroll has a mind darker than night. You shall join with me in wondering that there is such a monster in the world. (*Reads.*)

"*To Miss Rosetta Belmont. Madam,—As I write without a name, I am alike indifferent to your thanks or resentment. Fidelia is not what she seems. She has deceived you, and may your brother, to his ruin. Women of the town know how to wear the face of innocence, when it serves the purposes of guilt. Faddle, if he pleases, can inform you farther. Bat, be assured, I have my intelligence from more sufficient authority.*

"*P. S. There needs no farther address in this matter, than a plain question to Fidelia:—Is she the sister of Mr. Belmont's friend?*

Fid. Then I am lost! (*Aside.*)

Ros. What, in tears, Fidelia? Nay, I meant to raise your contempt only. Pr'ythee, look up, and let us laugh at the malice of this nameless libeller.

Fid. No, Rosetta: the mind must be wrapped in its own innocence, that can stand against the storms of malice: I fear I have not that mind.

Ros. What mind, Fidelia?

Fid. And yet that letter is a false one.

Ros. Upon my life, it is! for you are innocence itself.

Fid. Oh, Rosetta! No sister of Mr. Belmont's friend kneels to you for pardon; but a poor, wretched outcast of fortune, that, with an artful tale, has imposed upon your nature, and won you to a friendship for a helpless stranger, that never knew herself.

Ros. Rise, Fidelia; but, take care! for, if you have deceived me, honesty is nothing but a name.

Fid. Think not too hardly of me, neither; for, though I am not what I seem, I would not be what that letter calls me, to be mistress of the world.

Ros. I have no words, Fidelia; speak on: but, methinks, you should not weep so.

Fid. Nay, now, Rosetta, you compel me; for this gentleness is too much for me: I have deceived you, and you are kind. If you would dry up my tears, call forth your resentment: anger might turn me into stone, but compassion melts me.

Ros. I have no anger, Fidelia. Pray, go on.

Fid. When my tears will let me. I have played a foolish game, Rosetta; and yet my utmost fault has been consenting to deceive you. What I am, I know not: that I am not what I seem, I know. But why I have seemed otherwise than I am, again I know not. 'Tis a riddle that your brother only can explain. He knows the story of my life, and will, in honour, reveal it. Would he were here!

Ros. Would he were, Fidelia! for I am upon the rack. Pr'ythee, go on, and inform me farther.

Fid. There's my grief, Rosetta; for I am bound by such promises to silence, that, to clear my innocence, would be to wound it. All I have left to say is, that my condition of life only has been assumed, my virtue never.

Enter Servant.

Ros. Well, sir!

Serv. Mr. Belmont, madam, was just gone; but Mr. Faddle will wait upon your ladyship immediately.

Ros. Did they say where my brother went?

Serv. They did not know. Mr. Faddle is here, madam.

Enter FADDLE, *humming a tune.*

Fad. In obedience to your extraordinary commands, madam—but you should have been alone, child.

Ros. No trifling, sir. Do you know this handwriting? (*Gives him the letter.*)

Fad. Hum! Not I, as I hope to be saved! Nor you neither, I believe. (*Aside.*) Is it for my perusal, madam?

Fid. And your answering, too, sir.

Fad. Mighty well, madam! (*Reads.*) Hum! "*Fidelia—women of the town—innocence—guilt—Faddle inform you farther.*" Why, what a plague am I brought in for? "*Intelligence—question—Fidelia—sister of Mr. Belmont's friend.*" (*Stares and whistles.*)

Ros. Well, sir! (*Takes the letter.*)

Fad. Oh! I am to guess at the writer? Can't, upon my soul! Upon my soul, I can't, child! 'Tis a woman, I believe, though, by the d—d blabbing that's in't.

Fid. The letter says, sir, that you can inform this lady farther concerning me. Now, sir, whatever you happen to know, or to have heard, of me, deliver it freely, and without disguise. I entreat it as an act of friendship, that will for ever oblige me.

Fad. Let me see. No, it can't be her, neither; she is a woman of too much honour—and yet, I I don't remember to have opened my lips about it to any soul but her.

Fid. You know me, then, sir?

Ros. Speak out, sir.

Fad. Methinks, if these letter-writers were a little more communicative of their own names, and less so of their neighbours', there would be more honesty in them. Why am I introduced here? Truly, forsooth, because a certain person in the world is overburthened with the secrets of her own slips, and, for a little vent, chooses to blab those of another. Faddle inform you farther! Faddle will be d—d as soon.

Ros. Hark you! sir, if you intend to enter these doors again, tell me all you know, for I will have it. You have owned your telling it elsewhere, sir.

Fid. What is it you told, sir?

Fad. What I sha'n't tell here, madam. Her angry ladyship must excuse me, 'faith!

Fid. Indeed, Rosetta, he knows nothing.

Fad. Nothing in the world, madam, as I hope to be saved. Mine is all hearsay. And, curse upon them! the whole town may be in a lie, for anything I know. So they said of Lady Bridget, that she went off with her footman; but 'twas all slander, for 'twas a horse-grenadier that she bought a commission for last week.

Ros. What has Lady Bridget, or the town, to do with Fidelia, sir?

Fad. So I said, madam; the very words. Says I, "A woman of the town? Does a slip or two with particulars make a lady a woman of the town? Or, if it did," says I, "many a one has taken up, and lived honestly afterwards. A woman of the town, indeed!"

Fid. Hold your licentious tongue, sir! Upon my life, Rosetta, 'tis all malice. 'Tis his own contrivance. I dare him to produce another villain that's base enough to say this of me.

Fad. Right, madam; stick to that, and, egad! I'll be of your side. (*Aloud in her ear.*)

Fid. Insolence! (*Strikes him.*) Oh! I am hurt beyond all bearing!

Ros. And I, lost in perplexity. If thou art linked with any wretch base enough to contrive this paper, or art thyself the contriver, may poverty and a bad heart be thy companions: but if thou art privy to anything that concerns the honour of this family, give it breath, and I'll insure thee both protection and reward.

Fid. I dare him to discovery.

Fad. Ladies, I have had the honour of a blow conferred on me by one of you, and am favoured with the offer of protection and reward from the other; now, to convince both, that, in spite of indignities or obligations, I can keep a secret, if ever I open my lips upon this matter, may plague, famine, and the horned devil, consume and seize me. And so, ladies, I take my leave.

[*Exit, singing.*

Ros. What can this fellow mean, Fidelia? Has he not abused you?

Fid. Is it a doubt, then? Would I had leave to speak!

Ros. And why not, Fidelia? Promises unjustly extorted have no right to observance. You have deceived me by your own acknowledgment; and, methinks, at such a time, matters of punctilio should give place to reason and necessity.

Fid. I dare not, Rosetta. 'Twould be a crime to your brother, and I owe him more than all the world.

Ros. And what are those obligations, Fidelia?

Fid. Not for me to mention. Indeed, I dare not, Rosetta.

Ros. 'Tis well, madam! And when you are inclined to admit me to your confidence, I shall, perhaps, know better how to conduct myself. (*Going.*)

Enter YOUNG BELMONT.

Oh! are you come, brother? Your friend's sister, your ward there, has wanted you, sir.

Young B. What is it, Fidelia?

Fid. I have no breath to speak it. Your sister, sir, can better inform you.

Ros. Read that, sir. (*Gives him the letter, which he reads to himself.*)

Fid. Now, Rosetta, all shall be set right. Your brother will do me justice, and account for his own conduct.

Ros. I expect so, Fidelia.

Young B. Impertinent! (*Gives back the letter.*) I met Faddle as I came in; and, I suppose, in pure love of mischief, he has made my believing sister here a convert to the villany of that letter. But I'll make the rascal unsay everything he has said, or his bones shall ache for't. (*Going.*)

Fid. Stay, sir, I entreat you. That I am a counterfeit, in part, I have already confessed.

Young B. You have done wrong, then.

Fid. But am I a creature of the town, sir? Your sister must learn that from you. You have been once my deliverer, be so now. Tell her, I am poor and miserable, but not dishonest: that I have only consented to deceive her, not desired it. Tell her, I deserve her pity, not her anger. 'Tis my only request; can you deny it me?

Young B. You have said too much, Fidelia. And, for your own sake, I shall forbear to mention what I know of your story. How far your own honour is bound, you are the best judge. But a breach of the most solemn promises, let me tell you, madam, will be a wretched vindication of the innocence you contend for.

Fid. And is this all, sir?

Young B. For my own part, I must have better authority than Faddle, or a nameless writer, to believe anything to your dishonour. And for you, sister, I must not have this lady ill treated. While

I am satisfied of her innocence, your suspicions are impertinent. Nor will I consent to her removal, madam, mark that, whatever you, in your great wisdom, may have privately determined. [*Exit.*

Ros. You are a villain, brother.

Fid. Now I have lost you, Rosetta.

Ros. When you incline to be a friend to yourself, Fidelia, you may find one in me. But while explanations are avoided, I must be allowed to act from my own opinion, and agreeably to the character I am to support. [*Exit*

Fid. Then I am wretched! But that's no novelty. I have wandered from my cradle, the very child of misfortune. To retire and weep must now be my only indulgence. [*Exit.*

Enter YOUNG BELMONT.

Young B. Why, what a rogue am I! Here have I thrown a whole family, and that my own, too, into perplexities, that innocence can't oppose, nor cunning guard against. And all for what? Why, a woman! Take away that excuse, and the devil himself would be a saint to me; for all the rest is sinning without temptation. In my commerce with the world, I am guarded against the mercenary vices. I think I have honour above lying, courage above cruelty, pride above meanness, and honesty above deceit; and yet, throw but coy beauty in my way, and all the vices, by turns, take possession of me. Fortune, fortune, give me success this once, and I'll build churches!

Enter FADDLE.

Fad. What, Charles! Is the coast clear, and the finishing stroke given to my embassy, eh?

Young B. Thou hast been a most excellent rascal, and, 'faith! matters seem to be in a promising condition; for I have flung that in Rosetta's way, which, if she keeps her womanhood, will do the business.

Fad. Pr'ythee, what's that, Charles?

Young B. Why, I have bid her not think of parting with Fidelia.

Fad. Nay, then, tip she goes headlong out at window. But hast thou no bowels, Charles? for, methinks, I begin to feel some twitches of compunction about me.

Young B. I understand you, sir; but I have no more purses.

Fad. Why, look you, Charles, we must find a way to lull this conscience of mine; here will be the devil to do else. That's a very pretty ring, Charles.

Young B. Is it so, sir? Hark you! Mr. Dog, if you demur one moment to fetching and carrying in this business, as I bid you, you shall find my hand a little heavy upon you.

Fad. Pooh, pox! Charles, can't a body speak? People may be in good humour, when they want people to do things for people, methinks.

Young B. Troop this moment, with your rascally conscience, to the King's Arms, and wait there till I come, sir.

Fad. Why, so I will, Charles. A plague of the swaggering son of a—Not so big neither, if one had but a little courage. (*Aside, and going.*)

Young B. Hark you! Faddle: now I think on't, there is a way yet for thee to make another purse out of this business.

Fad. Why, one would not be a rogue for nothing, methinks.

Young B. I saw Sir Charles going into Fidelia's chamber; thou may'st steal upon them unobserved: they'll have their plots too, I suppose.

Fad. And where am I to come and tell thee, eh?

Young B. At the King's Arms, boy.

Fad. But you'll remember the purse, Charles?

Young B. Softly, rascal! [*Exit Faddle.*] Why, there it is again now! I am a fellow of principle! and so I will be, some time or other. But these appetites are the devil, and, at present, I am under their direction. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment.*

SIR CHARLES RAYMOND *and* FIDELIA *discovered, sitting.*

Sir C. He durst not say, directly, you were that creature the letter called!

Fid. Not in terms, sir; but his concealments struck deeper than the sharpest accusations.

Sir C. And could Mr. Belmont be silent to all this?

Fid. He said he had his reasons, sir, and it was my part to submit. I had no heart to disoblige him.

Sir C. You are too nice, madam. Rosetta loves you, and should be trusted.

Fid. Alas, sir! if it concerned me only, I should have no concealment.

Sir C. It concerns you most, madam. I must deal plainly with you. You have deceived your friend; and, though I believe it not, a severer reproach rests upon you. And shall an idle promise, an extorted one too, and that from a man who solicits your undoing, forbid your vindication? You must think better of it.

Fid. 'Tis not an extorted promise, sir, that seals my lips—but I love him—and though he pursues me to my ruin, I will obey him in this, whatever happens. He may desert me, but never shall have reason to upbraid me.

Sir C. 'Tis your own cause, madam, and you must act in it as you think proper. Yet still, if I might advise,—

Fid. Leave it to time, Sir Charles; and if you believe me innocent, your friendly thoughts of me, and my own conscience, shall keep me cheerful.

Enter FADDLE, *listening.*

Fad. Oh! plague, is it so? Now for a secret worth twenty pieces!

Sir C. Has it ever appeared to you, madam, that Faddle was a confidant of Mr. Belmont's?

Fid. Never, sir. On the contrary, a wretch most heartily despised by him.

Fad. If she should be a little mistaken now!—(*Aside.*)

Sir C. Can you guess at any other means of his coming to a knowledge of you?

Fid. None that I know of, sir.

Fad. 'Faith, I believe her. (*Aside.*)

Sir C. One question more, madam, and I have done. Did Mr. Belmont ever solicit your removing from this house?

Fid. Never directly, sir. He has often, when we have been alone, quarrelled with himself for bringing me into it.

Sir C. I thank you, madam. And if my enquiries have been at any time too importunate, allow them to the warmth of an honest friendship: for I have a heart that feels for your distresses, and beats to relieve them.

Fid. I have no words, Sir Charles; let my tears thank you.

Sir C. Be composed, my child; and if Rosetta's suspicions grow violent, I have apartments ready to receive you, with such welcome, as virtue should find with one who loves it.

Fid. Still, Sir Charles, my tears are all that I can thank you with—for this goodness is too much for me.

Fad. And so she's a bit for the old gentleman at last! Rare news for Charles! or, with a little addition, I shall make it so. But I must decamp, to avoid danger. (*Aside, and exit.*)

Sir C. Dry up your tears, Fidelia. For, if my conjectures are well grounded, before night, perhaps, something may be done to serve you. And so I leave you to your best thoughts. [*Exit.*

Fid. Then I have one friend left. How long I am to hold him, Heaven knows! 'Tis a fickle world, and nothing in it is lasting, but misfortune—yet I'll have patience:

That sweet relief, the healing hand of Heav'n
Alone to suff'ring innocence has giv'n;
Come, friend of virtue, balm of every care,
Dwell in my bosom, and forbid despair. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment.*

Enter COLONEL RAYMOND *and* ROSETTA.

Ros. I tell you, I will not be talked to.

Col. R. 'Tis my unhappiness, madam, to raise no passion in you, but anger.

Ros. You are mistaken, Colonel. I am not angry, though I answer so. My gaiety has been disturbed to-day; and gravity always sits upon me like ill humour. Fidelia has engrossed me, and you are talking of yourself. What would you have me say?

Col. R. That your neglect of me has been dissembled, and that I have leave to love you, and to hope for you.

Ros. This is very strange now! Why, 'tis not in your power to avoid loving me, whether you have leave to hope or not. And as to my dissembling, I know nothing of that—all I know is, that I'm a woman; and women, I suppose, dissemble sometimes—I don't pretend to be a bit better than a woman.

Col. R. Be a kind one, and you're an angel.

Ros. But if I were inclined to listen, what have you to say in favour of matrimony?

Col. R. 'Tis happiness, or misery, as minds are differently disposed. The necessary requisites are, love, good sense, and good breeding. The first to unite, the second to advise, and the third to comply. If you add to these, neatness and competency, beauty will always please, and family cares become agreeable amusements.

Ros. Do you know, now, that you never pleased me so much in all your life?

Col. R. If so, Rosetta, one question, and then to apply.

Ros. How if I should not answer your question?

Col. R. 'Tis a fair one, upon my word. Don't you think, that you and I could muster up these requisites between us?

Ros. Let me consider a little—Who must have love, pray?

Col. R. Both of us.

Ros. No, I have no mind to have any thing to do with love. Do you take that, and give understanding, to advise. So then you choose, and have all the good breeding, for compliance; then I neatness; and last of all, competency shall be divided between us.

Col. R. A match, madam, upon your own terms. But if you should ever take it into your head to dispute love with me, what other requisite are you willing to give up for it?

Ros. Why, neatness, I think; 'tis of little use to a married woman, you know.

Col. R. A trifle, madam. But when are we to come together?

Ros. As soon as we can give proof that these ingredients are between us. In a few years, perhaps.

Col. R. If our virtues should starve in that time?

Ros. Psha! You know nothing of the matter. Sense will improve every day, and love and good breeding live an age, if we don't marry them. But we'll have done with these matters; for I can keep the ball up no longer. You did not say Fidelia upbraided me?

Col. R. The very reverse. 'Twas her only affliction, she said, that you had reason to think hardly of her.

Ros, Poor girl! If you would make love to me with success, Colonel, clear up these perplexities. Suppose I were to dismiss my pride a little, and make her a visit?

Col. R. 'Twould be a kind one.

Ros. Lead on then; for, in spite of my resentments, I have no heart to keep from her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter YOUNG BELMONT *and* FADDLE.

Young B. If this should be invention, Faddle?

Fad. I tell thee I was behind the screen, and heard every syllable of it. Why, I'll say it to his face, pr'ythee.

Young B. What, that he proposed to take her into keeping, and that she consented?

Fad. Not in those words, man. No, no; Sir Charles is a gentleman of politer elocution.—"Pray, child, (says he,) did Young Belmont ever propose your removing from this house?"—"No, sir; (says she;) but he has cursed himself to d—n for bringing me into it." (*Mimicking Sir C. and Fidelia.*) "Well, child, (says he,) the thing may be done to-night; apartments are ready for you." And then, in a lower voice, he said something about virtue, that I could not very well hear; but I saw it set the girl a-crying. And, presently, in answer to a whisper of his, I heard her say, in a very pretty manner, that she thought it was too much for her. But what his proposals were, the devil a syllable could I hear.

Young B. Ha, ha! Yonder he is, Faddle; and coming this way. We must not be seen together.

Fad. For a little sport, Charles, suppose I fling myself in his way, and make interest to be commode to him, eh?

Young B. And get thy nose twisted for thy pains?

Fad. Why, I can run, if I can't fight.

Young B. 'Faith, I never doubted thee that way. I'll to my room, then, and wait for thee.

Fad. But leave the door open, Charles.

Young B. Ha, ha, ha!—You'll not be tedious, sir. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR CHARLES RAYMOND.

Fad. If the old gentleman should be in his airs, though. Servant, servant, Sir Charles.

Sir C. Oh! sir, you are the man I was looking for.

Fad. If I can be of any service, Sir Charles—What, and so—ha!—'Faith! you're a sly one.—But you old poachers have such a way with you? Why here has Charles been racking his brains for ways and means, any time these three months; and, just in the nick, snuse comes me down the old kite—and, alack-a-day, poor chick!—the business is done.

Sir C. Make yourself a little intelligible, sir.

Fad. And so, I don't speak plain, eh? Oh! the little rogue! There's more beauty in the veins of her neck, than in a landscape of Claude; and more music in the smack of her lips than in all Handel!

Sir C. Let me understand you, sir.

Fad. Methinks 'twas very laconic, though.—If Rosetta's suspicions grow violent, I have apartments ready to receive you. (*Mimicking Sir C.*) But a word in your ear, old gentleman—those apartments won't do.

Sir C. Oh! sir, I begin to be a little in the secret.

Fad. Mighty quick of apprehension, 'faith!—And the little innocent!—"Still, Sir Charles, my tears are all I can thank you with; for this goodness is too much for me." (*Mimicking Fidelia.*) Upon my soul, you have a great deal of goodness, Sir Charles; a great deal of goodness, upon my soul!

Sir C. Why, now I understand you, sir. And as these matters may require time, for the sake of privacy, we'll shut this door. (*Shuts the door.*)

Fad. Any other time, Sir Charles. But I am really so hurried at present, that—Oh, Lord!—(*Aside.*)

Sir C. Why, what does the wretch tremble at? Broken bones are to be set again; and thou mayest yet die in thy bed. (*Takes hold of him.*) You have been a listener, sir.

Fad. Lord, sir!—Indeed, sir!—Not I, sir!

Sir C. No denial, sir. (*Shakes him.*)

Fad. Oh! sir, I'll confess! I did listen, sir; I did indeed, sir.

Sir C. Does your memory furnish you with any other villany of your's, that may save me the trouble of an explanation?

Fad. I'll think, sir.—What the devil shall I say now? (*Aside.*)

Sir C. Take care; for every lie thou tellest me, shall be scored ten-fold upon thy flesh. Answer me: how came Mr. Belmont's sister by that anonymous letter?

Fad. Letter, sir?

Sir C. Whence came it, I say?

Fad. Is there no remission, sir?

Sir C. None that thou canst deserve; for honesty is not in thy nature.

Fad. If I confess?

Sir C. Do so, then, and trust me.

Fad. Yes, and so be beat to a mummy by Charles.—If you won't tell him, sir—

Sir C. I'll think of it.

Fad. Why, then, sir—But he'll certainly be the death of me—It was by his contrivance I wrote the letter, and sent it from the King's Arms.

Sir C. Very well, sir. And did you know to what purpose it was sent?

Fad. Yes, sir; it was to alarm the family against Fidelia, that Charles might get her into private lodgings. That was all, as I hope to be saved, sir.

Sir C. Was it, sir? And upon what principles were you an accomplice in this villany?

Fad. I was out of money, sir, and not over-valiant; and Charles promised and threatened. 'Twas either a small purse, or a great cudgel; and so I took the one, to avoid the other, sir.

Sir C. And what dost thou deserve for this?

Fad. Pray, sir, coosider my honest confession, and think me paid already, if you please, sir.

Sir C. For that thou art safe. If thou wouldst continue so, avoid me. Begone, I say!

Fad. Yes, sir,—and well off, too, 'faith. (*Aside, and going.*)

Sir C. Yet, stay! If thou art open to any sense of shame, hear me.

Fad. I will, sir.

Sir C. Thy life is a disgrace to humanity. A foolish prodigality makes thee needy: need makes thee vicious, and both make thee contemptible. Thy wit is prostituted to slander and bufloonery; and thy judgment, if thou hast any, to meanness and villany. Thy betters, that laugh with thee, laugh at thee. And who are they? The fools of quality at court, and those who ape them in the city. The varieties of thy life are pitiful rewards and painful abuses; for the same trick that gets thee a guinea to-day, shall get thee beaten out of doors to-morrow. Those who caress thee are enemies to themselves; and when they know it, will be so to thee: in thy distresses they'll desert thee, and leave thee, at last, to sink in thy poverty, unregarded and unpitied. If thou canst be wise, think of me, and be honest. [*Exit.*

Fad. I'll endeavour it, sir. A most excellent discourse, 'faith; and mighty well there was not a larger congregation. So, so! I must be witty, with a vengeance! What the deuce shall I say to Charles, now? And here he comes, like poverty and the plague, to destroy me at once. Let me see—Ay, as truth has saved me with one, I'll try what a little lying will do with t'other.

Enter Young Belmont.

Ha, ha, ha! Oh! the rarest sport, Charles!

Bel. What sport, pr'ythee?

Fad. I shall burst! Ha, ha, ha! The old gentleman has let me into all his secrets!

Young B. And, like a faithful confidant, you are going to reveal them.

Fad. Not a breath, Charles—only that I am in commission, my dear, that's all.

Young B. So I suppose, indeed.

Fad. Nay, Charles, if I tell thee a lie, cut my throat. The short of the matter is, the old poacher, finding me in the secret, thought it the wisest way to make a confidant of me; and this very moment, my dear, I am upon the wing to provide lodgings for the occasion.

Young B. If this should be apocryphal, as my father says—

Fad. Gospel, every syllable, as I hope to be saved. Why, what in the devil's name have I to do, to be inventing lies for thee? But here comes the old gentleman again, 'faith. Oh! the devil!—(*Aside.*) Pr'ythee, stroke him down a little, Charles, if 'tis only to see how awkward he takes it. I must about the lodgings, ha, ha, ha!—But if ever I set foot in this house again, may a horse-pond be my portion! [*Aside, and exit.*

Enter Sir Charles Raymond, *with a letter in his hand, speaking to a Servant.*

Sir C. Bid him wait a little, and I'll attend him. [*Exit Servant.*] What can this mean? Let me read it again. (*Reads.*) "*If the interests of Sir Charles Raymond's family be dear to him, he will follow the bearer with the same haste that he would shun ruin.*" That he would shun ruin! This is strange! But, be it as it will, I have another concern that must take place first.

Young B. Sir Charles, your servant. Any news, sir?

Sir C. Not much, sir; only, that a young gentleman of honour and condition had introduced a virtuous lady to his family; and, when a worthless fellow defamed her innocence, and robbed her of her quiet, he, who might have dried her tears, and vindicated her virtue, forsook her in her injuries, to debauch his mind with the assassin of her reputation.

Young B. If your tale ends there, sir, you have learned but half of it; for my advices add, that a certain elderly gentleman, of title and fortune, pitying the forlorn circumstances of the lady, has offered her terms of friendship and accommodation; and this night she bids farewell to maidenhood, and a female bedfellow in private apartments.

Sir C. You treat me lightly, Mr. Belmont.

Young B. You use me roughly, Sir Charles.

Sir C. How, sir!

Young B. In the person of Fidelia.

Sir C. Make it appear, and you shall find me a very boy in my submissions.

Young B. 'Twould be time lost; and I can employ it to advantage. But remember, sir, that this

house is another's, not your's; that Fidelia is under my direction, not your's; and that my will must determine her removal, not your's.

Sir C. Is she your slave, sir, to bear the burden of your insults without complaining, or the right of choosing another master?

Young B. And who shall be that master? You, sir! The poor bird, that would escape the kite, is like to find warm protection from the fox!

Sir C. Pr'ythee, think me a man, and treat me as such.

Young B. As the man I have found you, Sir Charles. Your grave deportment and honesty of heart are covers only for wantonness and design: you preach up temperance and sobriety to youth, to monopolize, in age, the vices you are unfit for.

Sir C. Harkye! young man, you must curb this impetuous spirit of your's, or I shall be tempted to teach you manners, in a method disagreeable to you.

Young B. Learn them first yourself, sir. You say Fidelia is insulted by me; how is it made out? Why, truly, I would possess her without marriage! I would so. Marriage is the thing I would avoid: 'tis the trick of priests to make men miserable, and women insolent. I have dealt plainly, and told her so. Have you said as much? No; you wear the face of honesty, to quiet her fears; that, when your blood boils, and security has stolen away her guard, you may rush at midnight upon her beauties, and do the ravage you have sworn to protect her from.

Sir C. Hold, sir! You have driven me beyond the limits of my patience; and I must tell you, young man, that the obligations I owe your father, demand no returns that manhood must blush to make: therefore, hold, I say; for I have a sword to do me justice, though it should leave my dearest friend childless.

Young B. I fear it not.

Sir C. Better tempt it not; for your fears may come too late. You have dealt openly with Fidelia, you say; deal so for once with me, and tell me, whence came that vile scroll to Rosetta this afternoon.

Young B. It seems, then, I wrote it? You dare not think so.

Sir C. I dare speak, as well as think, where honour directs me.

Young B. You are my accuser, then?

Sir C. When I become so, I shall take care, Mr. Belmont, that the proof waits upon the accusation.

Young B. I disdain the thought.

Sir C. Better have disdained the deed.

Young B. I do both; and him that suspects me.

Sir C. Away! You fear him that suspects you; and have disdained neither the thought nor the deed.

Young B. How, sir? (*Drawing his sword.*)

Sir C. Put up your sword, young man, and use it in a better cause: this is a vile one, And now you shall be as still through shame, as you have been loud through pride. You should have known, that cowards are unfit for secrets.

Young B. And if I had, sir?

Sir C. Why, then, sir, you had not employed such a wretch as Faddle, to write that letter to Rosetta.

Young B. (*Aside.*) The villain has betrayed me! But I'll be sure of it.—He durst not say I did?

Sir C. You should rather have built your innocence upon the probability of his unsaying it; for the same fear that made him confess to me, may make him deny every syllable to you.

Young B. What has he confessed, sir?

Sir C. That, to-day, at dinner, you prompted the letter that he wrote: that your design was, by vilifying Fidelia, to get her dismissed, and the dismission to prepare her ruin in private lodgings. Was this your open behaviour, sir?

Young B. Go on with your upbraidings, sir. Speak to me as you will, and think of me as you will. I have deserved shame, and am taught patience.

Sir C. Was this well done? Did her innocence, and her undissembled love, deserve this treatment?

Young B. Proceed, sir.

Sir C. No, sir; I have done. If you have sense of your past conduct, you want not humanity to heal the wounds it has given. Something must be done, and speedily.

Young B. What reparation can I make her?

Sir C. Dry up her tears, by an immediate acknowledgment of her wrongs.

Young B. I would do more.

Sir C. Bid her farewell, then; and consent to her removal.

Young B. I cannot, sir.

Sir C. Her peace demands it: but we'll talk of that hereafter. If you have honour, go and do her justice, and undeceive your abused sister. Who waits there? Indeed, you have been to blame, Mr. Belmont.

Enter a Servant.

Shew me to the bearer of this letter.

[*Exit with the Servant.*

Young B. Why, what a thing am I!—But it is the trick of vice, to pay her votaries with shame; and I am rewarded amply. To be a fool's fool, too! to link myself in villany with a wretch below the notice of a man! and to be outwitted by him! So, so! I may have abused Sir Charles, too. Let me think a little—I'll to Fidelia instantly, and tell her what a rogue I have been. But will that be reparation? I know but of one way; and there my pride stops me—And then I lose her—Worse and worse!—I'll think no more of it; but away to her chamber, and bid her think for me. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*An Apartment in Sir Robert Belmont's house.*

Enter Sir Robert Belmont, *with a letter in his hand, followed by a Servant.*

Sir R. Very fine doings, indeed! But I'll teach the dog to play his tricks upon his father. A man had better let a lion loose upon his family, than a town-rake. Where is Sir Charles, I say?

Serv. This moment come in, sir.

Sir R. And why did not you say so, blockhead? Tell him I must speak with him this moment.

Serv. The servant says he waits for an answer to that letter, sir.

Sir R. Do as I bid you, rascal, and let him wait. Fly, I say! [*Exit Serv.*] The riotous, young dog, to bring his harlots home with him! But I'll outwit the baggage.

Enter Sir Charles Raymond.

Oh! Sir Charles, 'tis every word as we said this morning. The boy has stolen her, and I am to be ruined by a law-suit.

Sir C. A law-suit! with whom, sir?

Sir R. Read, read, read! (*Gives the letter.*)

Sir C. (*Reads.*) "*I am guardian to that Fidelia, whom your son has stolen from me, and you unjustly detain. If you deny her to me, the law shall right me. I wait your answer by the bearer, to assert my claim in the person of*—George Villiard."—Why, then, my doubts are at an end. But I must

conceal my transports, and wear a face of coolness, while my heart overflows with passion. (*Aside.*)

Sir R. What, not a word, Sir Charles? There's a piece of work for you! And so I am to be ruined!

Sir C. Do you know this Villiard, Sir Robert?

Sir R. Whether I do or not, sir, the slut shall go to him this moment.

Sir C. Hold a little! This gentleman must be heard, sir; and, if his claim be good, the lady restored.

Sir R. Why, e'en let her go as it is, Sir Charles.

Sir C. That would be too hasty. Go in with me, sir, and we'll consider how to write to him.

Sir R. Well, well, well—I wish she were gone, though. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter Young Belmont *and* Fidelia.

Young B. Ask me not why I did it, but forgive me.

Fid. No, sir; 'tis impossible. I have a mind, Mr. Belmont, above the wretchedness of my fortune; and, helpless as I am, I can feel in this breast a sense of injuries, and spirit to resent them.

Young B. Nay, but hear me, Fidelia.

Fid. Was it not enough to desert me in my distresses, to deny me the poor request I made you, but must you own yourself the contriver of that letter? 'Tis insupportable! If I consented to assume a rank that belonged not to me, my heart went not with the deceit. You would have it so, and I complied. 'Twas shame enough that I had deceived your sister; it needed not that I should bring a prostitute to her friendship. This was too much, too much, Mr. Belmont.

Young B. Yet hear me, I say.

Fid. And, then, to leave me to the malice of that wretch; to have my supposed infamy the tavern jest of his licentious companions! I never flattered myself, Mr. Belmont, with your love; but knew not, till now, that I have been the object of your hatred.

Young B. My hatred!—But I have deserved your thoughts of me. And yet, believe me, Fidelia, when I used you worst, I loved you most.

Fid. Call it by another name; for love delights in acts of kindness: were your's such, sir? And yet, must I forget all? for I owe you more than injuries can cancel, or gratitude repay.

Young B. Generous creature! This is to be amiable, indeed! But must we part, Fidelia?

Fid. I have resolved it, sir; and you must yield to it.

Young B. Never, my sweet obstinate.

Fid. That I have loved you, 'tis my pride to acknowledge; but that must be forgotten: and the hard task remains, to drive the passion from my breast, while I cherish the memory of your humane offices. This day, then, shall be the last of our meeting. Painful though it may be, yet your own, mine, and the family's peace, require it. Heaven, in my distresses, has not left me destitute of a friend; or, if it had, I can find one in my innocence, to make even poverty supportable.

Young B. You have touched me, Fidelia; and my heart yields to your virtues. Here, then, let my follies have an end; and thus let me receive you as the everlasting partner of my heart and fortune. (*Offers to embrace her.*)

Fid. No, sir; the conduct that has hitherto secured my own honour, shall protect your's. I have been the innocent disturber of your family; but never will consent to load it with disgrace.

Young B. Nor can it be disgraced. I mean to honour it, Fidelia: you must comply.

Fid. And repay generosity with ruin! No, Mr. Belmont; I can forego happiness, but never can consent to make another miserable.

Young B. When I repent, Fidelia—But, see, where my sister comes, to be an advocate for my wishes!

Enter Rosetta.

Ros. Oh! sir, you are found! You have done nobly, indeed! But your thefts are discovered, sir. This lady's guardian has a word or two for you.

Young B. Her guardian! Upon my life, Fidelia, Villiard! He comes as I could wish him.

Ros. Say so when you have answered him, brother. Am I to lose you at last, then, Fidelia? And yet my hopes flatter me, that this too, as well as the letter, is a deceit: may I think so, Fidelia?

Fid. As truly as of your goodness, Rosetta. Your brother will tell you all. Oh! he has made me miserable by his generosity.

Young B. This pretended guardian, sister, is a villain, and Fidelia, the most abused of women! Bounteous he has been, indeed; but to his vices, not his virtues, she stands indebted for the best of educations. The story will amaze you. At twelve years old—

Ros. He's here, brother, and with him, my papa, Sir Charles, and the Colonel. Now, Fidelia.

Enter Sir Robert Belmont, Sir Charles Raymond, Colonel Raymond, *and* Villiard.

Sir C. If that be the lady, Mr. Villiard, and your claim as you pretend, Sir Robert has told you, she shall be restored, sir.

Sir R. Yes, sir; and your claim as you pretend.

Vil. (*Going to Fidelia.*) This, gentlemen, is the lady; and this the robber who stole her from me. (*Pointing to Belmont.*) By violence, and at midnight, he stole her.

Young B. Stole her, sir!

Vil. By violence and at midnight, I say.

Young B. You shall be heard, sir.

Vil. Ay, sir, and satisfied. I stand here, gentlemen, to demand my ward.

Sir C. Give us proofs, sir, and you shall have justice.

Vil. Demand them there, sir. (*Pointing to Belmont and Fidelia.*) I have told you I am robbed: if you deny me justice, the law shall force it.

Sir C. A little patience, sir. (*To Villiard.*) Do you know this gentleman, Fidelia?

Fid. Too well, sir.

Sir C. By what means, sir, did you become her guardian? (*To Villiard.*)

Vil. By the will of her who bore her, sir.

Sir C. How will you reply to this, Fidelia?

Fid. With truth and honesty, sir.

Young B. Let him proceed, madam.

Vil. Ay, sir, to your part of the story; though both are practised in a d—d falsehood to confront me.

Young B. Falsehood!—But I am cool, sir.—Proceed.

Vil. My doors were broken open at midnight by this gentleman; (*pointing to Young B.*) myself wounded, and Fidelia ravished from me. He ran off with her in his arms; nor, till this morning, in a coach which brought her hither, have my eyes ever beheld her.

Sir R. A very fine business, truly, young man! (*To Young B.*)

Fid. He has abused you, sir. Mr. Belmont is noble—

Young B. No matter, Fidelia. Well, sir, you have been robbed, you say? (*To Villiard.*)

Vil. And will have justice, sir.

Young B. Take it from this hand, then. (*Drawing his sword.*)

Sir C. Hold, sir! This is adding insult to injuries. Fidelia must be restored, sir.

Sir R. Ay, sir, Fidelia must be restored.

Fid. But not to him. Hear but my story; and, if I deceive you, let your friendship forsake me. He bought me, gentlemen, for the worst of purposes; he bought me of the worst of women. A thousand times has he confessed it, and as often pleaded his right of purchase to undo me. Whole years have I endured his brutal solicitations; till, tired with entreaties, he had recourse to violence. This scene was laid, and I had been ruined beyond redress, had not my cries brought the generous Mr. Belmont to my relief. He was accidentally passing by; and alarmed, at midnight, by a woman's shrieks, he forced open the door, and saved me from destruction.

Sir C. How will you answer this, sir? (*To Villiard.*)

Vil. 'Tis false, sir! That woman was her nurse; these hands delivered her to her care.

Fid. Alas! gentlemen, she found me a helpless infant at her door! so she has always told me: and, at twelve years old, betrayed me to that monster. Search out the woman, if she be alive, and let me be confronted.

Sir R. If this be true, Sir Charles, I shall bless myself as long as I live, for getting my boy. (*Weeps.*)

Vil. 'Tis false, I say! a d—d contrivance to escape me. I stand here, sir, to demand my ward. (*To Sir Robert.*) Deny her to me, at your peril.

Young B. He shall have my life as soon.

Vil. Hark you, sir! (*to Sir Robert*) there are things called laws, to do right to the injured: my appeal shall be to them.

Sir C. That woman must be produced, sir. (*To Villiard.*)

Vil. And shall, sir, in a court of justice. Our next meeting shall be there; till then, madam, you are secure. (*To Fidelia.*)

Young B. Take care that you are so, sir, when we have occasion to call upon you. You shall have justice.

Vil. And will, sir, in defiance of you. [*Exit.*

Sir C. Fear not, Fidelia; we believe, and will protect you.

Ros. My sweet girl!—But whence came the letter this afternoon?

Young B. 'Twas I that wrote it.

Ros. Oh, monstrous! And could you be that wretch, brother?

Young B. And will atone for it by the only recompense that's left me.

Sir R. And what recompense will you make her, eh! rogue?

Young B. I have injured, her, sir, and must do her justice. If you would retrieve my honour, or promote my happiness, give me your consent, sir, to make her your daughter.

Ros. Why, that's my brother! Now I am sure she's innocent; and so you will, papa.

Sir R. But, positively, I will not, child. Marry her, indeed! What! without a shilling, and be ruined by Villiard into the bargain? If your story be true, Fidelia, you shall be provided for: but no marrying, d'ye hear, child?

Fid. You need not doubt me, sir.

Sir R. Why, that's well, said, Fidelia!

Ros. And deserves reward, sir. Pray, Sir Charles, let us have your thoughts upon this matter.

Sir C. Your brother's proposal, madam, and Fidelia's denial, are as generous as your father's determination is just.

Young B. I expected as much, sir.

Sir C. My opinion was asked, sir.

Young B. And you have given it: I thank you, sir.

Sir C. Think of Villiard, Mr. Belmont; his claim may be renewed, sir.

Young B. Fidelia has deceived you, then? You think otherwise, Sir Charles.

Col. R. My life upon her innocence! And where the fortune on one side is more than sufficient, how light is all addition to it, compared to the possession of her one loves! Let me, sir, be happy in Rosetta, (*to Sir Robert,*) and give her fortune to Fidelia, to make her an object worthy of your son.

Ros. There's a colonel for you! What says my sweet Fidelia?

Fid. I intended to be silent, madam; but it's now my duty to speak. You have been my deliverer, sir, from the worst of evils; (*to Young B.*) and now would nobly augment the first obligation by a generosity too mighty for acknowledgment. If I had the wealth of worlds, it would be too little to bestow; but, poor and friendless as I am, my heart may break, but never shall consent to make my benefactor a penitent to his virtues.

Sir C. 'Tis nobly said, Fidelia! And now, Mr. Belmont, our disputes will soon be at an end. You have this day, sir, reproached me often; it remains now, that you should know me as I am.

Young B. If I have erred, sir—

Sir C. Interrupt me not, but hear me. I have watched your follies with concern; and it is with equal pleasure I congratulate your return to honour. If I have opposed your generous inclinations, it was only to give them strength: I am now a suppliant to your father for the happiness you desire.

Young B. This is noble, Sir Charles.

Sir C. And to make Fidelia worthy of his son, a fortune shall be added equal to his warmest expectations.

Sir R. Why, ay, Sir Charles, let that be made out, and I shall have no objection.

Fid. What mean you, sir? (*To Sir C.*)

Sir C. A minute more, and my sweet girl shall be instructed. You have often told me, sir, (*to Young B.*) that I had an interest in this lovely creature. I have an interest! an interest which you shall allow me. My heart dotes upon her!—Oh! I can hold no longer—My daughter, my daughter! (*Embraces Fidelia.*)

Fid. Your daughter, sir!

Sir C. Oh! my sweet child! Sir Robert—Mr. Belmont—my son!—These tears, these tears!—Fidelia is my daughter!

Col. R. Is it possible!

Sir C. Let not excess of wonder overpower you, Fidelia; for I have a tale to tell that will exceed belief.

Fid. Oh, sir!

Sir C. Upbraid me not that I have kept it a moment from your knowledge: 'twas a hard trial; and while my tongue was taught dissimulation, my heart bled for a child's distresses.

Young B. Torture us not, sir, but explain this wonder.

Sir C. My tears must have their way first.—Oh! my child, my child! (*Turning to Sir Robert and the rest.*) Know, then, that wicked woman, so often mentioned, was my Fidelia's governante: when my mistaken zeal drove me into banishment, I left her, an infant, to her care: to secure some jewels of valne I had lodged with her, she became the woman you have heard. My child was taught to believe she was a foundling; her name of Harriet changed to Fidelia; and, to lessen my solicitude for the theft, a letter was despatched to me, in France, that my infant had no longer a being:

thus was the father robbed of his child, and the brother taught to believe he had no sister.

Fid. Am I that sister and that daughter? Oh, heavens! (*Kneels.*)

Young B. (*Running to her, and raising her.*) Be composed, my life! a moment's attention more, and your transports shall have a loose. Proceed, sir.

Sir C. Where she withdrew herself I could never learn. At twelve years old, she sold her, as you have heard; and never, till yesterday, made inquiry about her. 'Twas then that a sudden fit of sickness brought her to repentance: she sent for Villiard, who told her minutely what had happened. The knowledge of her deliverance gave her some consolation. But more was to be done yet: she had information of my pardon and return; and, ignorant of my child's deliverer, or the place of her conveyance, she at last determined to unburden herself to me. A letter was brought to me this afternoon, conjuring me to follow the bearer with the same haste that I would shun ruin. I did follow him, and received from this wretched woman the story I have told you.

Fid. Oh, my heart! My father, (*kneels*) have I at last found you? And were all my sorrows past meant only to endear the present transport? 'Tis too much for me!

Sir C. Rise, my child! To find thee thus virtuous in the midst of temptations, and thus lovely in the midst of poverty and distress, after an absence of eighteen melancholy years, when imaginary death had torn thee from my hopes; to find thee thus unexpectedly, and thus amiable, is happiness that the uninterrupted enjoyments of the fairest life never equalled!

Fid. What must be mine, then? Have I a brother, too? (*Turning to Col. R.*) Oh! my kind fortune!

Col. R. My sister! (*Embracing her.*)

Fid. Still there is a dearer claim than all, and now I can acknowledge it—My deliverer!

Young B. And husband, Fidelia! Let me receive you as the richest gift of fortune! (*Catching her in his arms.*)

Ros. My generous girl! The pride of your alliance is my utmost boast, as it is my brother's happiness!

Sir R. I have a right in her, too; for now you are my daughter, Fidelia. (*Kisses her.*)

Fid. I had forgotten, sir: if you will receive me as such, you shall find my gratitude in my obedience.

Sir C. Take her, Mr. Belmont, and protect the virtue you have tried. (*Joining their hands.*)

Young B. The study of my life, sir, shall be to deserve her.

Fid. Oh! Rosetta, yet it still remains with you to make this day's happiness complete—I have a brother that loves you.

Ros. I would be Fidelia's sister every way: so take me while I am warm, Colonel. (*Giving him her hand.*)

Col. R. And when we repent, Rosetta, let the next minute end us.

Ros. With all my heart!

Fid. Now, Rosetta, we are doubly sisters!

Sir C. And may your lives and your affections know an end together.

Young B. (*Taking Fidelia by the hand.*) And now, Fidelia, what you have made me, take me, a convert to honour. I have at last learnt, that custom can be no authority for vice; and, however the mistaken world may judge, he who solicits pleasure at the expense of innocence, is the vilest of betrayers.

Yet savage man, the wildest beast of prey,
Assumes the face of kindness to betray;
His giant strength against the weak employs,
And woman, whom he should protect, destroys.

[*Exeunt.*

THE GOOD-NATURED MAN;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY DR. GOLDSMITH.



Act V.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

SIR WILLIAM HONEYWOOD	LEONTINE	MRS. CROAKER
HONEYWOOD	JARVIS	MISS RICHLAND
CROAKER	DUBARDIEU	OLIVIA
LOFTY	SERVANTS	GARNET

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Honeywood's house.*

Enter SIR WILLIAM HONEYWOOD *and* JARVIS.

Sir W. Good Jarvis, make no apologies for this honest bluntness. Fidelity, like your's, is the best excuse for every freedom.

Jar. I can't help being blunt, and being very angry too, when I hear you talk of disinheriting so good, so worthy a young gentleman as your nephew, my master. All the world loves him.

Sir W. Say, rather, that he loves all the world; that is his fault.

Jar. I am sure there is no part of it more dear to him than you are, though he has not seen you since he was a child.

Sir W. What signifies his affection to me, or how can I be proud of a place in a heart where every sharper and coxcomb find an easy entrance?

Jar. I grant you that he's rather too good-natured; that he's too much every man's man; that he laughs this minute with one, and cries the next with another; but whose instructions may he thank for all this?

Sir W. Not mine, sure! My letters to him, during my employment in Italy, taught him only that philosophy which might prevent, not defend, his errors.

Jar. Faith! begging your honour's pardon, this same philosophy is a good horse in the stable, but an errant jade on a journey. Whenever I hear him mention the name on't, I am always sure he is going to play the fool.

Sir W. Don't let us ascribe his faults to his philosophy, I entreat you. No, Jarvis, his good nature arises rather from his fears of offending the importunate, than his desire of making the deserving happy.

Jar. What it rises from I don't know; but, to be sure, everybody has it that asks it.

Sir W. Ay, or that does not ask it. I have been now for some time a concealed spectator of his follies, and find them as boundless as his dissipation.

Jar. And yet, faith, he has some fine name or other for them all. He calls his extravagance generosity, and his trusting everybody universal benevolence. It was but last week, he went security for a fellow whose face he scarce knew, and that he called an act of exalted mu—mu—munificence; ay, that was the name he gave it.

Sir W. And upon that I proceed, as my last effort, though with very little hopes to reclaim him. That very fellow has just absconded, and I have taken up the security. Now my intention is to involve him in fictitious distress, before he has plunged himself in real calamity; to arrest him for that very debt, to clap an officer upon him, and then let him see which of his friends will come to his relief.

Jar. Well, if I could but any way see him thoroughly vexed—yet, faith, I believe it impossible. I have tried to fret him myself every morning these three years; but, instead of being angry, he sits as calmly to hear me scold, as he does to his hair-dresser.

Sir W. We must try him once more, however; and I don't despair of succeeding; as, by your means, I can have frequent opportunities of being about him, without being known. What a pity it is, Jarvis, that any man's good will to others should produce so much neglect of himself as to require correction; yet there are some faults so nearly allied to excellence, that we can scarce weed out the vice without eradicating the virtue. [*Exit.*

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Honey. Well, Jarvis, what messages from my friends this morning?

Jar. You have no friends.

Honey. Well, from my acquaintance, then?

Jar. (*Pulls out bills.*) A few of our usual cards of compliment, that's all. This bill from your tailor, this from your mercer, and this from the little broker in Crooked-lane. He says he has been at a great deal of trouble to get back the money you borrowed.

Honey. That I don't know; but I am sure we were at a great deal of trouble in getting him to lend it.

Jar. He has lost all patience.

Honey. Then he has lost a very good thing.

Jar. There's that ten guineas you were sending to the poor gentleman and his children in the Fleet. I believe that would stop his mouth, for awhile at least.

Honey. Ay, Jarvis, but what will fill their mouths in the meantime? Must I be cruel because he happens to be importunate; and, to relieve his avarice, leave them to insupportable distress?

Jar. 'Sdeath! sir, the question now is how to relieve yourself—yourself! Haven't I reason to be out of my senses, when I see things going at sixes and sevens?

Honey. Whatever reason you may have for being out of your senses, I hope you'll allow that I'm not quite unreasonable for continuing in mine.

Jar. You're the only man alive in your present situation that could do so. Everything upon the waste. There's Miss Richland and her fine fortune gone already, and upon the point of being given to your rival.

Honey. I am no man's rival.

Jar. Your uncle in Italy preparing to disinherit you; your own fortune almost spent; and nothing but pressing creditors, false friends, and a pack of drunken servants that your kindness has made unfit for any other family.

Honey. Then they have the more occasion for being in mine.

Jar. So! What will you have done with him that I caught stealing your plate in the pantry? In the fact; I caught him in the fact.

Honey. In the fact! If so, I really think that we should pay him his wages, and turn him off.

Jar. Yes, he shall be turned off; the dog! we'll hang him, if it be only to frighten the rest of the family.

Honey. No, Jarvis; it's enough that we have lost what he has stolen, let us not add to it the loss of a fellow-creature.

Jar. Well, here was the footman just now to complain of the butler; he says he does most work, and ought to have most wages.

Honey. That's but just; though, perhaps, here comes the butler to complain of the footman.

Jar. Ay, it's the way with them all, from the scullion to the privy-counsellor. If they have a bad master, they keep quarrelling with him; if they have a good master, they keep quarrelling with one another.

Enter Butler, drunk.

But. Sir, I'll not stay in the family with Jonathan; you must part with him, or part with me, that's the ex—ex—position of the matter, sir.

Honey. Explicit enough. But what's his fault, good Philip?

But. Sir, he's given to drinking, sir; and I shall have my morals corrupted by keeping such company.

Honey. Ha, ha! he has such a diverting way.

Jar. O, quite amusing!

But. I find my wines a going, sir; and liquors don't go without mouths. I hate a drunkard, sir.

Honey. Well, well, Philip, I'll hear you upon that another time; so go to bed now.

Jar. To bed! Let him go to the devil!

But. Begging your honour's pardon, and begging your pardon, master Jarvis, I'll not go to bed, nor to the devil neither; I have enough to do to mind my cellar. I forgot, your honour, Mr. Croaker is below. I came on purpose to tell you.

Honey. Why didn't you shew him up, blockhead?

But. Shew him up, sir? With all my heart, sir. Up or down, all's one to me. [*Exit.*

Jar. Ay, we have one or other of that family in this house from morning till night. He comes on the old affair, I suppose; the match between his son, that's just returned from Paris, and Miss Richland, the young lady he is guardian to.

Honey. Perhaps so. Mr. Croaker, knowing my friendship for the young lady, has got it into his head that I can persuade her to what I please.

Jar. Ah! if you loved yourself but half as well as she loves you, we should soon see a marriage that would set all things to rights again.

Honey. Love me! Sure, Jarvis, you dream. No; that she is the most lovely woman that ever warmed the human heart with desire, I own; but never let me harbour a thought of making her unhappy, by a connexion with one so unworthy her merits as I am. No, Jarvis, it shall be my study to serve her, even in spite of my wishes; and to secure her happiness, though it destroys my own.

Jar. Was ever the like? I want patience.

Honey. Besides, Jarvis, though I could obtain Miss Richland's consent, do you think I could succeed with her guardian, or Mrs. Croaker, his wife? who, though both very fine in their way, are yet a little opposite in their dispositions, you know.

Jar. Opposite enough, heaven knows! the very reverse of each other: she, all laugh and no joke; he, always complaining and never sorrowful; a fretful, poor soul, that has a new distress for every hour in the four-and-twenty. [you.

Honey. Husb, husb! he's coming up, he'll hear

Jar. One whose voice is a passing-bell—

Honey. Well, well, go, do.

Jar. A raven that bodes nothing but mischief; a coffin and cross-bones; a bundle of rue; a sprig of deadly night-shade; a—(*Honeywood stops his mouth and pushes him off.*)

Honey. I must own my old monitor is not entirely wrong. There is something in my friend Croaker's conversation that quite depresses me. His very mirth is an antidote to all gaiety, and his appearance has a stronger effect on my spirits than an undertaker's shop.

Enter Croaker.

Mr. Croaker, this is such a satisfaction—

Croak. A pleasant morning to Mr. Honeywood, and many of them. How is this? You look most shockingly to-day, my dear friend. I hope this weather does not affect your spirits. To be sure, if this weather continues—I say nothing; but God send we be all better this day three months.

Honey. I heartily concur in the wish, though I own not in your own apprehensions.

Croak. May be not. Indeed, what signifies what weather we have in a country going to ruin like ours? Then, so many foreigners, that I'm afraid for our wives and daughters.

Honey. I have no apprehensions for the ladies, I assure you.

Croak. May be not. And what signifies? The women in my time were good for something. I have seen a lady dressed from top to toe in her own manufactures formerly; but, now-a-days, the devil a thing of their own manufactures about them, except their faces.

Honey. But, however these faults may be practised abroad, you don't find them at home, either with Mrs. Croaker, Olivia, or Miss Richland.

Croak. By-the-by, my dear friend, I don't find this match between Miss Richland and my son much relished, either by one side or t'other.

Honey. I thought otherwise.

Croak. Ah! Mr. Honeywood, a little of your fine serious advice to the young lady might go far: I know she has a very exalted opinion of your understanding.

Honey. But would not that be usurping an authority that more properly belongs to yourself?

Croak. My dear friend, you know but little of my authority at home. People think, indeed, because they see me come out in a morning thus, with a pleasant face, and to make my friends merry, that all's well within. But I have cares that would break a heart of stone. My wife has so encroached upon every one of my privileges, that I am now no more than a mere lodger in my own house.

Honey. But a little spirit exerted on your side might, perhaps, restore your authority.

Croak. No; though I had the spirit of a lion. I do rouse sometimes. But what then? Always haggling and haggling. A man is tired of getting the better, before his wife is tired of losing the victory.

Honey. It's a melancholy consideration, indeed, that our chief comforts often produce our greatest anxieties, and that an increase of our possessions is but an inlet to new disquietudes.

Croak. Ah, my dear friend! these were the very words of poor Dick Doleful to me not a week before he made away with himself. Indeed, Mr. Honeywood, I never see you but you put me in mind of poor Dick. Ah! there was merit neglected for you! and so true a friend: we loved each other for thirty years, and yet he never asked me to lend him a single farthing.

Honey. Pray, what could induce him to commit so rash an action at last?

Croak. I don't know: some people were malicious enough to say it was keeping company with me; because we used to meet now and then, and open our hearts to each other. To be sure, I loved to hear him talk, and he loved to hear me talk; poor dear Dick! He used to say that Croaker rhymed to joker, and so we used to laugh: poor Dick! (*Going to cry.*)

Honey. His fate affects me.

Croak. Ay, he grew sick of this miserable life, where we do nothing but eat and grow hungry, dress and undress, get up and lie down; while reason, that should watch like a nurse by our side, falls as fast asleep as we do.

Honey. Very true, sir; nothing can exceed the vanity of our existence, but the folly of our pursuits. We wept when we came into the world, and every day tells us why.

Croak. Ah, my dear friend! it is a perfect satisfaction to be miserable with you. My son Leontine sha'n't lose the benefit of such fine conversation. I'll just step home for him. And what if I bring my last letter to the Gazetteer on the increase and progress of earthquakes? It will amuse us, I promise you. I there prove how the late earthquake is coming round to pay us another visit from London to Lisbon, from Lisbon to the Canary Islands, from the Canary Islands to Palmyra, from Palmyra to Constantinople, and so from Constantinople back to London again. [*Exit.*

Honey. Poor Croaker! I shall scarce recover my spirits these three days. Sure, to live upon such terms is worse than death itself. And yet, when I consider my own situation, a broken fortune, an hopeless passion, friends in distress; the wish, but not the power to serve them—

Re-enter Butler.

But. More company below, sir; Mrs. Croaker and Miss Richland; shall I shew them up? But they're shewing up themselves. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. CROAKER *and* MISS RICHLAND.

Miss R. You're always in such spirits.

Mrs. C. We have just come, my dear Honeywood, from the auction. There was the old deaf dowager, as usual, bidding like a fury against herself. And, then, so curious in antiques! Herself the most genuine piece of antiquity in the whole collection.

Honey. Excuse me, ladies, if some uneasiness from friendship makes me unfit to share this good humour: I know you'll pardon me.

Mrs. C. I vow he seems as melancholy as if he had taken a dose of my husband this morning. Well, if Richland here will pardon you, I must.

Miss R. You would seem to insinuate, madam, that I have particular reasons for being disposed to refuse it.

Mrs. C. Whatever I insinuate, my dear, don't be so ready to wish an explanation.

Miss R. I own I should be sorry Mr. Honeywood's long friendship and mine should be misunderstood.

Honey. There's no answering for others, madam; but I hope you'll never find me presuming to offer more than the most delicate friendship may readily allow.

Miss R. And I shall be prouder of such a tribute from you than the most passionate professions from others.

Honey. My own sentiments, madam: friendship is a disinterested commerce between equals; love, an abject intercourse between tyrants and slaves.

Miss R. And, without a compliment, I know none more disinterested or more capable of friendship than Mr. Honeywood.

Mrs. C. And, indeed, I know nobody that has more friends, at least, among the ladies. Miss Fruzz, Miss Odbody, and Miss Winterbottom, praise him in all companies. As for Miss Biddy Bundle, she is his professed admirer.

Miss R. Indeed! an admirer! But is she seriously so handsome? Is she the mighty thing talked of?

Honey. The town, madam, seldom begins to praise a lady's beauty, till she's beginning to lose it. (*Smiling.*)

Mrs. C. But she's resolved never to lose it, it seems. For as her natural face decays, her skill improves in making the artificial one. Well, nothing diverts me more than one of those fine, old, dressy things, who thinks to conceal her age, by everywhere exposing her person; sticking herself up in the front of a side-box; trailing through a minuet at Almack's; and then, in the public gardens, looking for all the world like one of the painted ruins of the place.

Honey. Every age has its admirers, ladies. While you, perhaps, are trading among the warmer climates of youth, there ought to be some to carry on a useful commerce in the frozen latitudes beyond fifty.

Miss R. But then the mortifications they must suffer before they can be fitted out for traffic. I have seen one of them fret a whole morning at her hair-dresser, when all the fault was her face.

Honey. And yet, I'll engage, has carried that face at last to a very good market. This good-natured town, madam, has husbands, like spectacles, to fit every age, from fifteen to fourscore.

Mrs. C. Well, you're a dear good-natured creature. But you know you're engaged with us this morning upon a strolling party. I want to shew Olivia the town, and the things; I believe I shall have business for you for the whole day.

Honey. I am sorry, madam, I have an appointment with Mr. Croaker, which it is impossible to put off.

Mrs. C. What! with my husband? Then I am resolved to take no refusal. Nay, I protest you must. You know I never laugh so much as with you.

Honey. Why if I must, I must. Do you find jest, and I'll find laugh, I promise you. We'll wait for the chariot in the next room. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LEONTINE *and* OLIVIA.

Leon. There they go, thoughtless and happy. My dearest Olivia, what would I give to see you capable of sharing in their amusements, and as cheerful as they are.

Oli. How, my Leontine, how can I be cheerful, when I have so many terrors to oppress me? The fear of being detected by this family, and the ap-

prehensions of a censuring world when I must be detected—

Leon. The world, my love, what can it say? At worst, it can only say, that being compelled by a mercenary guardian to embrace a life you disliked, you formed a resolution of flying with the man of your choice; that you confided in his honour, and took refuge in my father's house; the only one where your's could remain without censure.

Oli. But, consider, Leontine, your being sent to France to bring home a sister; and, instead of a sister, bringing home—

Leon. One dearer than a thousand sisters. One that I am convinced will be equally dear to the rest of the family, when she comes to be known.

Oli. And that, I fear, will shortly be.

Leon. Impossible, till we ourselves think proper to make the discovery. My sister, you know, has been with her aunt, at Lyons, since she was a child, and you find every creature in the family takes you for her.

Oli. But mayn't she write? mayn't her aunt write?

Leon. Her aunt scarce ever writes, and all my sister's letters are directed to me.

Oli. But won't your refusing Miss Richland, for whom, you know, the old gentleman intends you, create a suspicion?

Leon. There, there's my master-stroke. I have resolved not to refuse her; nay, an hour hence, I have consented to go with my father, to make her an offer of my heart and fortune.

Oli. Your heart and fortune!

Leon. Don't be alarmed, my dearest. Can Olivia think so meanly of my honour or my love, as to suppose I could ever hope for happiness from any but her? No, my Olivia, neither the force nor, permit me to add, the delicacy of my passion, leave any room to suspect me. I only offer Miss Richland a heart I am convinced she will refuse; as I am confident that, without knowing it, her affections are fixed upon Mr. Honeywood.

Oli. Mr. Honeywood! You'll excuse my apprehensions, but when your merits come to be put in the balance—

Leon. You view them with too much partiality. However, by making this offer, I shew a seeming compliance with my father's commands; and, perhaps, upon her refusal, I may have his consent to choose for myself.

Oli. And yet, my Leontine, I own I shall envy her even your pretended addresses. I consider every look, every expression of your esteem, as due only to me. This is folly, perhaps; I allow it; but it is natural to suppose, that merit which has made an impression on one's own heart, may be powerful over that of another.

Leon. Don't, my life's treasure, don't let us make imaginary evils, when you know we have so many real ones to encounter. At worst, you know, if Miss Richland should consent, or my father refuse his pardon, it can but end in a trip to Scotland; and—

Re-enter Croaker.

Croak. Where have you been, boy? I have been seeking you. My friend Honeywood here has been saying such comfortable things. Ah! he's an example, indeed. Where is he? I left him here.

Leon. Sir, I believe you may see him, and hear him too in the next room; he's preparing to go out with the ladies.

Croak. Can I believe my eyes or ears? I am struck dumb with his vivacity, and stunned with the loudness of his laugh. Was there ever such a transformation! (*A laugh behind the scenes; Croaker mimics it.*) Ha, ha, ha! there it goes; a plague take their balderdash; yet I could expect nothing less, when my precious wife was one of the party.

Leon. Since you find so many objections to a wife, sir, how can you be so earnest in recommending one to me?

Croak. I have told you, and tell you again, boy, that Miss Richland's fortune must not go out of the family.

Leon. But, sir, it may be possible she has no inclination to me.

Croak. I'll tell you once for all how it stands; a good part of Miss Richland's large fortune consists in a claim upon government, which my good friend, Mr. Lofty, assures me the Treasury will allow. One half of this she is to forfeit, by her father's will, in case she refuses to marry you. So, if she rejects you, we seize half her fortune; if she accepts you, we seize the whole, and a fine girl into the bargain.

Leon. But, sir, if you will but listen to reason—

Croak. I tell you, I am fixed, determined; so now produce your reasons. When I am determined, I always listen to reason, because it can then do no harm.

Leon. You have alleged that a mutual choice was the first requisite in matrimonial happiness.

Croak. Well, and you have both of you a mutual choice. She has her choice—to marry you, or lose half her fortune; and you have your choice—to marry her, or pack out of doors without any fortune at all. [dulgence.

Leon. An only son, sir, might expect more in-

Croak. An only father, sir, might expect more obedience; besides, has not your sister here, that never disobliged me in her life, as good a right as you? He's a sad dog, Livy, my dear, and would take all from you.

Oli. Dear sir, I wish you'd be convinced that I can never be happy in any addition to my fortune, which is taken from his.

Croak. Well, well; say no more; but come with me, and we shall see something that will give us a great deal of pleasure, I promise you; old Ruggins, the curry-comb maker, lying in state; I am told he becomes his coffin prodigiously. He was an intimate friend of mine; and these are friendly things we ought to do for each other. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*Croaker's House.*

Enter Miss Richland *and* Garnet.

Miss R. Olivia not his sister? Olivia not Leontine's sister?

Gar. No more his sister than I am; I had it all from his own servant; I can get anything from that quarter.

Miss R. But how? Tell me again, Garnet.

Gar. Why, madam, as I told you before, instead of going to Lyons to bring home his sister, who has been there with her aunt these ten years, he never went further than Paris; there he saw and fell in love with this young lady; by-the-by, of a prodigious family.

Miss R. And brought her home to my guardian as his daughter.

Gar. Yes, and daughter she will be. If he don't consent to their marriage, they talk of trying what a Scotch parson can do.

Miss R. Well, I own they have deceived me. And so demurely has Olivia carried it too! Would you believe it, Garnet, I told her all my secrets; and yet the sly cheat concealed all this from me?

Gar. And, upon my word, madam, I don't much blame her; she was loth to trust one with her secrets, that was so very bad at keeping her own.

Miss R. But, to add to their deceit, the young gentleman, it seems, pretends to make me serious proposals; and you know I am to lose half my fortune if I refuse him.

Gar. Yet, what can you do? for being, as you are, in love with Mr. Honeywood, madam—

Miss R. Well, no more of this! As to my guardian and his son, they shall find me prepared to receive them; I am resolved to accept their proposal with seeming pleasure, to mortify them by compliance, and throw the refusal at last upon them.

Gar. Delicious! and that will secure your whole fortune to yourself. Well, who could have thought so innocent a face could cover so much cuteness?

Miss R. Why, girl, I only oppose my prudence to their cunning, and practise a lesson they have taught me against themselves.

Gar. Then you're likely not long to want employment, for here they come.

Enter CROAKER *and* LEONTINE.

Leon. Excuse me, sir, if I seem to hesitate upon the point of putting the lady so important a question.

Croak. Lord, good sir! moderate your fears; I tell you we must have the half or the whole. Come, let me see with what spirit you begin. Well, why don't you? Eh! what? Well, then, I must it seems: Miss Richland, my dear, I believe you guess at our business; an affair which nearly concerns your happiness, as well as my son's.

Miss R. I should be ungrateful not to be pleased with anything that comes recommended by you.

Croak. How, boy! could you desire a finer opening? Why don't you begin, I say? (*To Leontine.*)

Leon. 'Tis true, madam, my father, madam, has some intentions—hem—of explaining an affair—which—himself can best explain, madam.

Croak. Yes, my dear, it comes entirely from my son; it's all a request of his own, madam.

Leon. The whole affair is only this, madam; my father has a proposal to make, which he insists none but himself shall deliver.

Croak. In short, madam, you see before you one that loves you; one whose whole happiness is all in you.

Miss R. I never had any doubts of your regard, sir; and I hope you can have none of my duty.

Croak. That's not the thing, my little sweeting; my love! No, no; there he stands, madam; his very looks declare the force of his passion. Call up a look, you dog! (*To Leon.*) But, then, had you seen him, as I have, weeping, speaking soliloquies and blank verse, sometimes melancholy, and sometimes absent—

Miss R. I fear, sir, he's absent now; or such a declaration would have come most properly from himself.

Croak. Himself, madam! he would die before he could make such a confession.

Miss R. I must grant, sir, that a silent address is the genuine eloquence of sincerity.

Croak. Madam, he has forgot to speak any other language; silence is become his mother tongue.

Miss R. And it must be confessed, sir, it speaks very powerfully in his favour. And yet, I shall be thought too forward in making such a confession; sha'n't I, Mr. Leontine?

Leon. Confusion! my reserve will undo me. But, if modesty attracts her, impudence may disgust her. I'll try. (*Aside.*) Don't imagine, from my silence, madam, that I want a due sense of the honour and happiness intended me. My father, madam, tells me, your humble servant is not totally indifferent to you; he admires you, I adore you; and when we come together, upon my soul, I believe we shall be the happiest conple in all St. James's.

Miss R. If I could flatter myself you thought as you speak, sir—

Leon. Doubt my sincerity, madam? By your dear self I swear. Ask the brave if they desire glory; ask cowards if they covet safety—

Croak. Well, well, no more questions about it.

Leon. Ask the sick if they long for health; ask misers if they love money; ask—

Croak. Ask a fool if he can talk nonsense! What signifies asking, when there's not a soul to give you an answer? If you would ask to the purpose, ask this lady's consent to make you happy.

Miss R. Why, indeed, sir, his uncommon ardour almost compels me, forces me to comply. And yet I am afraid he'll despise a conquest gained with too much ease; won't you, Mr. Leontine?

Leon. Confusion! (*Aside.*) O, by no means, madam; by no means. And yet, madam, you talk of force; there is nothing I would avoid so much as compulsion in a thing of this kind. No, madam, I will still be generous, and leave you at liberty to refuse.

Croak. But I tell you, sir, the lady is not at liberty. It's a match. You see she says nothing: silence gives consent. [inclinations.

Leon. Consider, sir, the cruelty of constraining her

Croak. But I say there's no cruelty. Don't you know, blockhead, that girls have always a round-about way of saying yes before company? So get you gone both together into the next room; and hang him that interrupts the tender explanation. Get you gone, I say; I'll not hear a word.

Leon. But, sir, I must beg leave to insist—

Croak. Get off, you puppy, or I'll beg leave to insist upon knocking you down. Stupid whelp! But I don't wonder; the boy takes entirely after his mother. [*Exeunt Miss Richland and Leontine.*

Enter MRS. CROAKER.

Mrs. C. Mr. Croaker, I bring you something, my dear, that I believe will make you smile.

Croak. I'll hold you a guinea of that, my dear.

Mrs. C. A letter; and, as I knew the hand, I ventured to open it.

Croak. And how can you expect your breaking open my letters should give me pleasure?

Mrs. C. Pho! it's from your sister at Lyons, and contains good news: read it.

Croak. What a Frenchified cover is here! That sister of mine has some good qualities, but I could never teach her to fold a letter. [tains.

Mrs. C. Fold a fiddlestick. Read what it con-

Croak. (*Reads.*) "*Dear Nick—An English gentleman, of large fortune, has for some time made private, though honourable, proposals to your daughter Olivia. They love each other tenderly; and I find she has consented, without letting any of the family know, to crown his addresses. As such good offers don't come every day, your own good sense, his large fortune, and family considerations, will induce you to forgive her. Your's ever,* RACHEL CROAKER." My daughter Olivia privately contracted to a man of large fortune! This is good news, indeed: my heart never foretold me of this. And yet, how slyly the little baggage has carried it on since she came home! Not a word on't to the old ones for the world. Yet I thought I saw something she wanted to conceal.

Mrs. C. Well, if they have concealed their amour, they sha'n't conceal their wedding; that shall be public, I am resolved.

Croak. I tell thee, woman, the wedding is the most foolish part of the ceremony.

Mrs. C. But, come, tell me, my dear, don't you owe more to me than you care to confess? Would you have ever been known to Mr. Lofty, who has undertaken Miss Richland's claim at the Treasury, but for me? Who was it first made him an acquaintance at Lady Shabbaroon's rout? Who got him to promise us his interest? Is not he a back-stairs favourite; one that can do what he pleases with those that do what they please? Isn't he an acquaintance that all your groaning and lamentations could never have got us?

Croak. He is a man of importance, I grant you. And yet, what amazes me is, that while he is giving away places to all the world, he can't get one for himself.

Mrs. C. That, perhaps, may be owing to his nicety. Great men are not easily satisfied.

Enter a French Servant.

Serv. An expresse from Monsieur Lofty. He vil be vait upon your honours instrammant. He be only giving four five instruction, read two tree memorial, call upon von ambassadeur. He vil be vid you in one tree minutes.

Mrs. C. You see now, my dear. What an extensive department! Well, friend, let your master know, that we are extremely honoured by this honour. [*Exit French Serv.*] Was there anything ever

in a higher style of breeding? All messages among the great are now done by express.

Croak. To be sure, no man does little things with more solemnity, or claims more respect than he; but he's in the right on't. In our bad world, respect is given where respect is claimed.

Mrs. C. Never mind the world, my dear; you were never in a pleasanter place in your life. Let us now think of receiving him with proper respect; (*a loud rapping at the door*) and there he is, by the thundering rap.

Croak. Ay, verily, there he is; as close upon the heels of his own express, as an indorsement upon the back of a bill. Well, I'll leave you to receive him, whilst I go to chide my little Olivia for intending to steal a marriage without mine or her aunt's consent. [*Exit.*

Enter Lofty, *speaking to his Servant.*

Lofty. And if the Venetian ambassador, or that teasing creature, the marquis, should call, I am not at home. D—me, I'll be pack-horse to none of them. My dear madam, I have just snatched a moment—and if the expresses to his grace be ready, let them be sent off; they're of importance. Madam, I ask a thousand pardons.

Mrs. C. Sir, this honour—

Lofty. And, Dubardieu, if the person calls about the commission, let him know that it is made out. As for Lord Cumbercourt's stale request, it can keep cold; you understand me. Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons.

Mrs. C. Sir, this honour—

Lofty. And, Dubardieu, if the man comes from the Cornish borough, you must do him; you must do him, I say. Madam, I ask you ten thousand pardons—and if the Russian ambassador calls—but he will scarce call to day, I believe. And now, madam, I have just got time to express my happiness, in having the honour of being permitted to profess myself your most obedient humble servant.

Mrs. C. Sir, the happiness and honour are all mine; and yet, I am only robbing the public while I detain you.

Lofty. Sink the public, madam, when the fair are to be attended. Ah! could all my hours be so charmingly devoted! Thus it is eternally: solicited for places here; teased for pensions there; and courted everywhere. I know you pity me.

Mrs. C. Excuse me, sir. "Toils of empires, pleasures are," as Waller says—

Lofty. Waller, Waller! is he of the house?

Mrs. C. The modern poet of that name, sir.

Lofty. Oh, a modern! we men of business despise the moderns; and as for the ancients, we have no time to read them. Poetry is a pretty thing enough for our wives and daughters; but not for us. Why, now, here I stand, that know nothing of books. I say, madam, I know nothing of books; and yet, I believe, upon a land-carriage fishery, a stamp act, or a jaghire, I can talk my two hours without feeling the want of them.

Mrs. C. The world is no stranger to Mr. Lofty's eminence in every capacity.

Lofty. I am nothing, nothing, nothing in the world; a mere obscure gentleman. To be sure, indeed, one or two of the present ministers are pleased to represent me as a formidable man. I know they are pleased to bespatter me at all their little dirty levees; yet, upon my soul, I wonder what they see in me to treat me so! Measures, not men, have always been my mark; and I vow, by all that's honourable, my resentment has never done the men, as mere men, any manner of harm; that is, as mere men. [desty.

Mrs. C. What importance! and, yet, what mo-

Lofty. Oh! if you talk of modesty, madam, there I own I am accessible to praise: modesty is my foible. It was so the Duke of Brentford used to say of me: "I love Jack Lofty," he used to say; "no man has a finer knowledge of things; quite a man of information; and when he speaks upon his legs, by the Lord, he's prodigious! he scouts them; and yet all men have their faults: too much modesty is his," says his grace.

Mrs. C. And yet, I dare say, you don't want assurance when you come to solicit for your friends.

Lofty. O, there, indeed, I'm in bronze! Apropos, I have just been mentioning Miss Richland's case to a certain personage; we must name no names. When I ask, I am not to be put off, madam. No, no; I take my friend by the button: a fine girl, sir; great justice in her case. A friend of mine. Borough interest. Business must be done, Mr. Secretary. I say, Mr. Secretary, her business must be done, sir. That's my way, madam.

Mrs. C. Bless me! you said all this to the secretary-of-state, did you?

Lofty. I did not say the secretary, did I? Well, curse it! since you have found me out, I will not deny it: it was to the secretary.

Mrs. C. This was going to the fountain-head at once; not applying to the understrappers, as Mr. Honeywood would have had us.

Lofty. Honeywood! he, he! He was, indeed, a fine solicitor. I suppose you have heard what has just happened to him?

Mrs. C. Poor, dear man! no accident, I hope.

Lofty. Undone, madam, that's all. His creditors have taken him into custody. A prisoner in his own house.

Mrs. C. A prisoner in his own house? How! I am quite unhappy for him.

Lofty. Why, so am I. The man, to be sure, was immensely good-natured; but, then, I could never find that he had anything in him.

Mrs. C. His manner, to be sure, was excessive harmless; some, indeed, thought it a little dull: for my part, I always concealed my opinion.

Lofty. It can't be concealed, madam, the man was dull; dull as the last new comedy. A poor, impracticable creature! I tried once or twice to know if he was fit for business; but he had scarce talents to be groom-porter to an orange-harrow.

Mrs. C. How differently does Miss Richland think of him! for, I believe, with all his faults, she loves him.

Lofty. Loves him! Does she? You should cure her of that, by all means. Let me see: what if she were sent to him this instant, in his present doleful situation? My life for it, that works her cure. Distress is a perfect antidote to love. Suppose we join her in the next room? Miss Richland is a fine girl, has a fine fortune, and must not be thrown away. Upon my honour, madam, I have a regard for Miss Richland; and, rather than she should be thrown away, I should think it no indignity to marry her myself. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Leontine, *with* Olivia.

Leon. And yet trust me, Olivia, I had every reason to expect Miss Richland's refusal, as I did everything in my power to deserve it. Her indelicacy surprises me.

Oli. Sure, Leontine, there is nothing so indelicate in being sensible of your merit. If so, I fear I shall be the most guilty thing alive.

Leon. But you mistake, my dear. The same attention I used to advance my merit with you, I practised to lessen it with her.

Oli. We have both dissembled too long! I have always been ashamed; I am now quite weary of it. Sure I could never have undergone so much for any other but you. [your compliance.

Leon. And you shall find my gratitude equal to

Oli. Then why should we defer our scheme of humble happiness, when it is now in our power? I may be the favourite of your father, it is true; but can it ever be thought that his present kindness to a supposed child will continue to a known deceiver.

Leon. As his attachments are but few, they are lasting. His own marriage was a private one, as ours may be. Besides, I have sounded him already

at a distance, and find all his answers exactly to our wish. Nay, by an expression or two that dropped from him, I am induced to think that he knows of this affair. [great to be expected.

Oli. Indeed! But that would be a happiness too

Leon. However it be, I'm certain you have power over him; and am persuaded, if you informed him of our situation, that he would be disposed to pardon it.

Oli. You had equal expectations, Leontine, from your last scheme with Miss Richland, which you find has succeeded most wretchedly.

Leon. And that's the best reason for trying another. As we could wish, he comes this way. Now, my dearest Olivia, be resolute. I'll just retire within hearing, to come in at a proper time, either to share your danger or confirm your victory. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Croaker.

Croak. Yes, I must forgive her; and yet not too easily, neither. It will be proper to keep up the decorums of resentment a little, if it be only to impress her with an idea of my authority. (*Aside.*)

Oli. How I tremble to approach him! (*Aside.*) Might I presume, sir? If I interrupt you—

Croak. No, child, where I have an affection, it is not a little thing can interrupt me.

Oli. Sir, I am sensible how ill I deserve this partiality; yet, heaven knows! there is nothing I would not do to gain it.

Croak. And you have but too well succeeded, you little hussy you. With those endearing ways of your's, on my conscience, I could be brought to forgive anything.

Oli. But when you know my guilt—yes, you shall know it, though I feel the greatest pain in the confession.

Croak. Why, then, if it be so very great a pain, you may spare yourself the trouble, for I know every syllable of the matter before you begin.

Oli. Indeed! Then I'm undone.

Croak. Ay, miss, you wanted to steal a match. I'm not worth being consulted, I suppose, when there's to be a marriage in my own family. No, I'm to have no hand in the disposal of my own children; no, I'm nobody. I'm to be a mere article of family lumber; a piece of cracked china, to be stuck up in a corner.

Oli. Dear sir, nothing but the dread of your authority could induce us to conceal it from you.

Croak. No, no; my consequence is no more; I'm as little minded as a dead Russian in winter, just stuck up, with a pipe in his mouth, till there comes a thaw.

Oli. I was prepared, sir, for your anger, and despaired of pardon, even while I presumed to ask it. [Livy.

Croak. And yet you should not despair neither,

Oli. And do you permit me to hope, sir? Can I ever expect to be forgiven? But hope has too long deceived me.

Croak. Why, then, child, it sha'n't deceive you now, for I forgive you this very moment. I forgive you all; and now you are indeed my daughter.

Oli. O transport! this kindness overpowers me.

Croak. I was always against severity to our children. We have been young and giddy ourselves, and we can't expect boys and girls to be old before their time.

Oli. What generosity! But can you forget the many falsehoods, the dissimulation—

Croak. You did indeed dissemble; but where's the girl that will not dissemble for a husband? My wife and I had never been married, if we had not dissembled a little before hand.

Oli. It shall be my future care never to put such generosity to a second trial. And as for the partner of my offence and folly, from his native honour and the just sense he has of his duty, I can answer for him, that—

Re-enter Leontine.

Leon. Permit him thus to answer for himself. (*Kneels.*) Thus, sir, let me speak my gratitude for this unmerited forgiveness. Yes, sir, this even exceeds all your former tenderness: I now can boast the most indulgent of fathers. The life he gave, compared to this, was but a trifling blessing.

Croak. And, good sir, who sent for you, with that fine tragedy face and flourishing manner? I don't know what we have to do with your gratitude upon this occasion.

Leon. How, sir, is it possible to be silent when so much obliged? Would you refuse me the pleasure of being grateful? of adding my thanks to Olivia's? of sharing in the transports that you have thus occasioned?

Croak. Lord, sir! we can be happy enough, without your coming in to make up the party.

Leon. But, sir, I that have so large a part in the benefit, is it not my duty to shew my joy? Is the happiness of marrying my Olivia so small a blessing?

Croak. Marrying Olivia! marrying Olivia! marrying his own sister! Sure the boy is out of his senses. His own sister!

Leon. My sister! [any meaning?

Croak. What does the booby mean? or has he

Leon. Mean, sir? Why, sir—only when my sister is to be married, that I have the pleasure of marrying her, sir; that is, of giving her away, sir. I have made a point of it.

Croak. O, is that all? Give her away. You have made a point of it. Then you had as good make a point of first giving yourself away, as I am going to prepare the writings between you and Miss Richland this very minute. What a fuss is here about nothing! Why, what's the matter now? I thought I had made you at least as happy as you could wish. [mistaken. (*Aside.*)

Oli. O yes, sir, very happy. How have I been

Croak. Do you foresee anything, child? You look as if you did. I think if anything was to be foreseen, I have as sharp a look-out as another; and yet I foresee nothing. [*Exit.*

Oli. What can it mean?

Leon. He knows something; and yet, for my life, I cannot tell what: but whatever it be I'm resolved to put it out of fortune's power to repeat our mortification. I'll haste and prepare for our journey to Scotland this very evening. My friend Honeywood has promised me his advice and assistance; and I know so much of his honest heart, that if he can't relieve our uneasiness, he will at least share them. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Young Honeywood's House.*

Enter Honeywood, *Bailiff, and Follower.*

Bail. Lookye, sir, I have arrested as good men as you in my time; no disparagement of you neither. Men that would go forty guineas on a game of cribbage. I challenge the town to shew a man in more genteeler practice than myself.

Honey. Without all question, Mr. ——. I forget your name, sir.

Bail. How can you forget what you never knew?

Honey. May I beg leave to ask your name?

Bail. Yes, you may.

Honey. Then pray, sir, what is your name, sir?

Bail. That I didn't promise to tell you; he, he, he! A joke breaks no bones, as we say among us that practice the law. [secret, perhaps.

Honey. You may have a reason for keeping it a

Bail. The law does nothing without reason. I'm ashamed to tell my name to no man, sir. If you can shew cause, as why upon a special capus, that I prove my name,—But come, Timothy Twitch is my name. And now you know my name, what have you to say to that?

Honey. Nothing in the world, good Mr. Twitch, but that I have a favour to ask, that's all.

Bail. Ay, favours are more easily asked than granted, as we say among us that practice the law. I have taken an oath against granting favours. Would you have me perjure myself?

Honey. But my request will come recommended in so strong a manner, as, I believe, you'll have no scruple. (*Pulls out his purse.*) The thing is only this: I believe I shall be able to discharge this trifle in two or three days at furthest; but as I would not have the affair known for the world, I have thoughts of keeping you and your good friend here about me till the debt is discharged; for which I shall be properly grateful.

Bail. Oh! that's another maxum, and altogether withio my oath. For certain, if an honest man is to get anything by a thing, there's no reason why all things should not be done in civility.

Honey. Doubtless, all trades must live, Mr. Twitch; and your's is a necessary one. (*Gives him money.*)

Bail. Oh! your honour; I hope your honour takes nothing amiss, as I does, as I does nothing but my duty in so doing. I'm sure no man can say I ever give a gentleman, that was a gentleman, ill usage. If I saw that a gentleman was a gentleman, I have taken money not to see him for ten weeks together. [humanity—

Honey. Tenderness is a virtue, Mr. Twitch, and

Bail. Humanity, sir, is a jewel; it's better than gold. I love humanity. People may say, that we, in our way, have no humanity; but I'll shew you my humanity this moment. There's my follower here, little Flanigan, with a wife and four children; a guinea or two would be more to him than twice as much to another. Now, as I can't shew him any humanity myself, I must beg leave you'll do it for me.

Honey. I assure you, Mr. Twitch, your's is a most powerful recommendation. (*Gives money to the Follower.*)

Bail. Sir, you're a gentleman: I see you know what to do with your money. But to business: we are to be with you here as your friends, I suppose; but set in case company comes. Little Flanigan here, to be sure, has a good face, a very good face; but then he is a little seedy, as we say among us that practice the law. Not well in clothes. Smoke the pocket-holes. [delay.

Honey. Well, that shall be remedied without

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Miss Richland is below.

Honey. How unlucky. Detain her a moment. We must improve, my good friend, little Mr. Flanigan's appearance first. Here, let Mr. Flanigan have a suit of my clothes; quick—the brown and silver. Do you hear?

Serv. That your honour gave away to the begging gentleman that makes verses, because it was as good as new.

Honey. The white and gold, then.

Serv. That, your honour, I made bold to sell, because it was good for nothing.

Honey. Well, the first that comes to hand, then: the blue and gold. I believe Mr. Flanigan will look best in blue. [*Exeunt Servant and Follower.*

Bail. Rabbit me, but little Flanigan will look well in anything. There's not a prettier scout in the four counties after a shy-cock than he: scents like a hound; sticks like a weazle. He was master of the ceremonies to the black queen of Morocco when I took him to follow me.

Re-enter Follower.

Eh! ecod, I think he looks so well, that I don't care if I have a suit from the same place myself.

Honey. Well, well, I hear the lady coming. Dear Mr. Twitch, I beg you'll give your friend directions not to speak. As for yourself, I know you will say nothing without being directed.

Bail. Never you fear me; I'll shew the lady that I have something to say for myself as well as another. One man has one way of talking, and another man has another; that's all the difference between them.

Enter Miss Richland *and Maid.*

Miss R. You'll be surprised, sir, at this visit; but you know I am yet to thank you for choosing my little library.

Honey. Thanks, madam, are unnecessary, as it was I that was obliged by your commands. Chairs here. Two of my good friends, Mr. Twitch and Mr. Flanigan. Sit, gentlemen, without ceremony.

Miss R. Who can these odd-looking men be? I fear it is as I was informed. It must be so. (*Aside.*)

Bail. (*After a pause.*) Pretty weather, very pretty weather for the time of the year.

Fol. Very good circuit weather in the country.

Honey. You officers are generally favourites among the ladies. My friends, madam, have been upon very disagreeable duty, I assure you. The fair should, in some measure, recompense the toils of the brave.

Miss R. Our officers do indeed deserve every favour. The gentlemen are in the marine service, I presume, sir?

Honey. Why, madam, they do—occasionally serve in the Fleet, madam: a dangerous service.

Miss R. I am told so; and I own it has often surprised me, that while we have had so many instances of bravery there, we have had so few of wit at home to praise it.

Honey. I grant, madam, that our poets have not written as our soldiers have fought; but they have done all they could.

Miss R. I am quite displeased when I see a fine subject spoiled by a dull writer.

Honey. We should not be so severe against dull writers, madam; it is ten to one but the dullest writer exceeds the most rigid French critic who presumes to despise him.

Fol. D— the French, and all that belongs to them.

Miss R. Sir!

Honey. Ha, ha, ha! honest Mr. Flanigan. A true English officer, madam; he's not contented with beating the French, but he will scold them, too.

Miss R. Yet, Mr. Honeywood, this does not convince me but that severity in criticism is necessary: it was our first adopting the severity of French taste, that has brought them in turn to taste us.

Bail. Taste us! by the Lord, madam, they devour us. Give monseers but a taste, and I'll be d——d but they come in for a bellyful.

Miss R. Very extraordinary this.

Fol. But very true. What makes the bread rising? the parle vous that devour us. What makes the mutton ten-pence a pound? the parle vons that eat it up. What makes the beer three-pence halfpenny a pot?—

Honey. Ah, the vulgar rogues! all will be out. (*Aside.*) Right, gentlemen; very right, upon my word, and quite to the purpose. They draw a parallel, madam, between the mental taste and that of our senses. We are injured as much by French severity in one, as by French capacity in the other. That is their meaning.

Miss R. Though I do not see the force of the parallel, yet I'll own that we should sometimes pardon books, as we do our friends, that have now and then agreeable absurdities to recommend them.

Bail. That's all my eye; the king can only pardon, as the law says: for set in case—

Honey. I am quite of your opinion, sir: I see the whole drift of your argument. Yes, certainly, our presuming to pardon any work, is arrogating a power that belongs to another, If all have power to condemn, what writer can be free?

Bail. By his habus corpus. His habus corpus can set him free at any time: for set in case—

Honey. I am obliged to you, sir, for the hint. If, madam, as my friend observes, our laws are so careful of a gentleman's person, sure we ought to be equally careful of his dearer part, his fame.

Fol. Ay, but if so be a man's nabb'd, you know—

Honey. Mr. Flanigan, if you spoke for ever, you could not improve the last observation. For my own part, I think it conclusive.

Bail. As to the matter of that, mayhap—

Honey. Nay, sir, give me leave in this instance to be positive: for where is the necessity of censuring works without genius, which must shortly sink of themselves? what is it but aiming our unnecessary blow against a victim already under the hands of justice.

Bail. Justice! O, by the elevens, if you talk about justice, I think I am at home there; for, in a course of law—

Honey. My dear Mr. Twitch, I discern what you would be at perfectly; I believe the lady must be sensible of the art with which it is introduced. I suppose you perceive the meaning, madam, of his course of law?

Miss R. I protest, sir, I do not. I perceive only that you answer one gentleman before he has finished, and the other before he has well begun.

Bail. Madam, this here question is about severity, and justice, and pardon, and the like of they. Now to explain the thing—

Honey. O! curse your explanations. (*Aside.*)

Re-enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Leontine, sir, below, desires to speak with you upon earnest business. [*Exit.*

Honey. That's lucky. (*Aside.*) Dear madam, you'll excuse me, and my good friends here, for a few minutes. There are books, madam, to amuse you. Come, gentlemen, you know I make no ceremony with such friends. After you, sir. Excuse me. Well, if I must; but I know your natural politeness.

Bail. Before and behind, you know.

Fol. Ay, ay, before and behind; before and behind. [*Exeunt Honeywood, Bailiff, and Follower.*

Miss R. What can all this mean, Garnet?

Gar. Mean, madam! why, what should it mean, but what Mr. Lofty sent you here to see? These people he calls officers, are officers sure enough: sheriff's officers.

Miss R. Ay, it is certainly so. Well, though his perplexities are far from giving me pleasure, yet, I own, there's something very ridiculous in them, and a just punishment for his dissimulation.

Gar. And so they are. But I wonder, madam, that the lawyer you just employed to pay his debts, and set him free, has not done it by this time: he ought at least to have been here before now.

Enter SIR WILLIAM HONEYWOOD.

Sir W. For Miss Richland to undertake setting him free, I own, was quite unexpected; it has totally unhinged my schemes to reclaim him. Yet, it gives me great pleasure to find, that, among a number of worthless friendships, he has made one acquisition of real value; for there must be some softer passion on her side that prompts this generosity. Ha! here before me! I'll endeavour to sound her affections. (*Aside.*) Madam, as I am the person that have had some demands upon the gentleman of this house, I hope you'll excuse me, if, before I enlarged him, I wanted to see yourself.

Miss R. The precaution was very unnecessary, sir. I suppose your wants were only such as my agent had power to satisfy.

Sir W. Partly, madam; but I was also willing you should be fully apprized of the character of the gentleman you intended to serve.

Miss R. It must come, sir, with a very ill grace from you. To censure it, after what you have done, would look like malice; and to speak favourably of a character you have oppressed, would be impeaching your own. And sure his tenderness, his humanity, his universal friendship, may attone for many faults.

Sir W. That friendship, madam, which is exerted in too wide a sphere, becomes totally useless: our bounty, like a drop of water, disappears when diffused too widely. They who pretend most to this universal benevolence, are either deceivers, or dupes; men who desire to cover their private ill nature, by a pretended regard for all; or men who, reasoning themselves into false feelings, are more earnest in pursuit of splendid, than of useful virtues.

Miss R. I am surprised, sir, to hear one who has probably been a gainer by the folly of others, so severe in his censure of it.

Sir W. Whatever I may have gained by folly, madam, you see I am willing to prevent your losing by it.

Miss R. Your cares for me, sir, are unnecessary. I always suspected those services which are denied where they are wanted; and offered, perhaps, in hopes of a refusal. No, sir, my directions have been given, and I insist upon their being complied with.

Sir W. Thou amiable woman! I can no longer contain the expressions of my gratitude—my pleasure. You see before you one who has been equally careful of his interest: one who has for some time been a concealed spectator of his follies; and only punished, in hopes to reclaim them—his uncle.

Miss R. Sir William Honeywood! You amaze me. How shall I conceal my confusion? (*Aside.*) I fear, sir, you'll think I have been too forward in my services. I confess I—

Sir W. Do not make any apologies, madam: I only find myself unable to repay the obligation. And yet, I have been trying my interest of late to serve you. Having learned, madam, that you had some demands upon government, I have, though unasked, been your solicitor there.

Miss R. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to your intentions; but my guardian has employed another gentleman, who assures him of success.

Sir W. Who? the important little man that visits here? Trust me, madam, he's quite contemptible among men in power, and utterly unable to serve you. Mr. Lofty's promises are much better known to people of fashion than his person, I assure you. [as can be, here he comes.

Miss R. How have we been deceived! As sure

Sir W. Does he? Remember I am to continue unknown: my return to England has not as yet been made public. With what impudence he enters!

Enter LOFTY.

Lofty. Let the chariot—let my chariot drive off; I'll visit to his grace's in a chair. Miss Richland here before me! Punctual, as usual, to the calls of humanity. I am very sorry, madam, things of this kind should happen, especially to a man I have shewn every where, and carried amongst us as a particular acquaintance.

Miss R. I find, sir, you have the art of making the misfortunes of others your own.

Lofty. My dear madam, what can a private man like me do? one man can't do everything: and then, I do so much in this way every day. Let me see: something considerable might be done for him by subscription: it could not fail if I carried the list. I'll undertake to set down a brace of dukes, two dozen lords, and half the lower house, at my own peril.

Sir W. And after all, it is more than probable, sir, he might reject the offer of such powerful patronage.

Lofty. Then, madam, what can we do? You know, I never make promises. In truth, I once or twice tried to do something with him in the way of business; but, as I often told his uncle, Sir William Honeywood, the man was utterly impracticable.

Sir W. His uncle! Then that gentleman, I suppose, is a particular friend of your's?

Lofty. Meaning me, sir? Yes, madam, as I often said, "My dear Sir William, you are sensible I would do anything, as far as my poor interest goes, to serve your family;" but what can be done? there's no procuring first-rate places for ninth-rate abilities

Miss R. I have heard of Sir William Honeywood; he's abroad in employment; he confided in your judgment, I suppose.

Lofty. Why, yes, madam; I believe Sir William had some reason to confide in my judgment; one little reason, perhaps.

Miss R. Pray, sir, what was it?

Lofty. Why, madam—but let it go no further, it was I procured him his place.

Sir W. Did you, sir?

Lofty. Either you or I, sir.

Miss R. This, Mr. Lofty, was very kind, indeed.

Lofty. I did love him, to be sure; he had some amusing qualities; no man was fitter to be toast-master to a club, or had a better head.

Miss R. A better head?

Lofty. Ay, at a bottle. To be sure he was as dull as a choice spirit; but, hang it, he was grateful, very grateful; and gratitude hides a multitude of faults.

Sir W. He might have reason, perhaps. His place is pretty considerable, I am told.

Lofty. A trifle, a mere trifle among us men of business. The truth is, he wanted dignity to fill up a greater.

Sir W. Dignity of person, do you mean, sir? I am told he is much about my size and figure, sir.

Lofty. Ay, tall enough for a marching regiment; but then he wanted a something; a consequence of form; a kind of a—I believe the lady perceives my meaning. [thing, I see.

Miss R. O perfectly; you courtiers can do any-

Lofty. My dear madam, all this is but a mere exchange; we do greater things for one another every day. Why, as thus, now: let me suppose you the first Lord of the Treasury, you have an employment in you that I want; I have a place in me that you want; do me here, do you there: interest of both sides, few words, flat, done and done, and it's over.

Sir W. A thought strikes me. (*Aside.*) Now you mention Sir William Honeywood, madam; and as he seems, sir, an acquaintance of your's; you'll be glad to hear he's arrived from Italy; I had it from a friend who knows him as well as he does me, and you may depend on my information.

Lofty. The devil he is. (*Aside.*)

Sir W. He is certainly returned; and as this gentleman is a friend of your's, he can be of signal service to us, by introducing me to him: there are some papers relative to your affairs, that require despatch and his inspection.

Miss R. This gentleman, Mr. Lofty, is a person employed in my affairs: I know you will serve us.

Lofty. My dear madam, I live but to serve you. Sir William shall even wait upon him, if you think proper to command it.

Sir W. That would be quite unnecessary.

Lofty. Well, we must introduce you, then. Call upon me—let me see—ay, in two days. [ever.

Sir W. Now, or the opportunity will be lost for

Lofty. Well, if it must be now, now let it be. But, d—— it, that's unfortunate; my Lord Grig's cursed Pensacola business comes on this very hour, and I'm engaged to attend—another time—

Sir W. A short letter to Sir William will do.

Lofty. You shall have it; yet, in my opinion, a letter is a very bad way of going to work; face to face, that's my way.

Sir W. The letter, sir, will do quite as well.

Lofty. Zounds, sir! do you pretend to direct me; direct me in the business of office? Do you know me, sir? who am I?

Miss R. Dear Mr. Lofty, this request is not so much his as mine; if my commands—but you despise my power.

Lofty. Sweet creature! your commands could even control a debate at midnight; to a power so constitutional, I am all obedience and tranquility. He shall have a letter; where is my secretary, Dubardieu? And yet, I protest I don't like this way of doing business. I think if I spoke first to Sir William. But you will have it so.

[*Exit with Miss Richland.*

Sir W. Ha, ha, ha! This too is one of my nephew's hopeful associates. O vanity! thou constant deceiver, how do all thy efforts to exalt, serve but to sink us. Thy false colourings, like those employed to heighten beauty, only seem to mend that bloom which they contribute to destroy. I am not displeased at this interview; exposing this fellow's impudence to the contempt it deserves, may be of use to my design; at least, if he can reflect, it will be of use to himself. [*Enter* JARVIS.] How now, Jarvis, where's your master, my nephew?

Jar. At his wits end, I believe; he is scarce gotten out of one scrape, but he's running his head

Sir W. How so? [into another.

Jar. The house has but just been cleared of the bailiffs, and now he's again engaging, tooth and nail, in assisting old Croaker's son to patch up a clandestine match with the young lady that passes in the house for his sister.

Sir W. Ever busy to serve others.

Jar. Ay, anybody but himself. The young couple, it seems, are just setting out for Scotland, and he supplies them with money for the journey.

Sir W. Money! how is he able to supply others, who has scarce any for himself?

Jar. Why, there it is; he has no money, that's true; but then, as he never said no to any request in his life, he has given them a bill drawn by a friend of his upon a merchant in the city, which I am to get changed; for you must know that I am to go with them to Scotland myself.

Sir W. How?

Jar. It seems the young gentleman is obliged to take a different road from his mistress, as he is to call upon an uncle of his that lives out of the way, in order to prepare a place for their reception when they return; so they have borrowed me from my master, as the properest person to attend the young lady down.

Sir W. To the land of matrimony! A pleasant journey, Jarvis. [on't.

Jar. Ay, but I'm only to have all the fatigues

Sir W. Well, it may be shorter, and less fatiguing than you imagine. I know but too much of the young lady's family and connexions, whom I have seen abroad. I have also discovered that Miss Richland is not indifferent to my thoughtless nephew; and will endeavour, though I fear in vain, to establish that connexion. But, come, the letter I wait for must be almost finished; I'll let you further into my intentions in the next room. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—*Croaker's House.*

Enter LOFTY.

Lofty. Well, sure the devil's in me of late, for running my head into such defiles, as nothing but a genius like my own could draw me from. I was formerly contented to husband out my places and pensions with some degree of frugality; but, curse it, of late, I have given out the whole Court Register in less time than they could print the title-page: yet, hang it, why scruple a lie or two to come at a fine girl, when I every day tell a thousand for nothing. Ha! Honeywood here before me. Could Miss Richland have set him at liberty?

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Mr. Honeywood, I'm glad to see you abroad again. I find my concurrence was not necessary in your unfortunate affairs. I had put things in a train to do your business; but it is not for me to say what I intended doing.

Honey. It was unfortunate, indeed, sir. But what adds to my uneasiness is, that while you seem to be acquainted with my misfortune, I myself continue still a stranger to my benefactor.

Lofty. How? not know the friend that served you?

Honey. Can't guess at the person.

Lofty. Inquire.

Honey. I have; but all I can learn is, that he chooses to remain concealed, and that all inquiry must be fruitless.

Lofty. Must be fruitless?

Honey. Absolutely fruitless.

Lofty. Sure of that?

Honey. Very sure. [it from me.

Lofty. Then I'll be d—— if you shall ever know

Honey. How, sir?

Lofty. I suppose, Mr. Honeywood, you think my rent-roll very considerable; and that I have vast sums of money to throw away; I know you do. The world to be sure say such things of me.

Honey. The world, by what I learn, is no stranger to your generosity. But where does this tend?

Lofty. To nothing; nothing in the world. The town, to be sure, when it makes such a thing as me the subject of conversation, has asserted, that I never patronised any man of merit.

Honey. I have heard instances to the contrary, even from yourself,

Lofty. Yes, Honeywood, and there are instances to the contrary, that you shall never hear from myself. [one question.

Honey. Ha! dear sir, permit me to ask you but

Lofty. Sir, ask me no questions: I say, sir, ask me no questions; I'll be d——d if I answer them.

Honey. I will ask no further. My friend, my benefactor, it is, it must be here, that I am indebted for freedom, for honour. Yes, thou worthiest of men, from the beginning I suspected it, but was afraid to return thanks; which, if undeserved, might seem reproaches.

Lofty. Blood, sir, can't a man be permitted to enjoy the luxury of his own feelings without all this parade?

Honey. Nay, do not attempt to conceal an action that adds to your honour. Your looks, your air, your manner, all confess it.

Lofty. Confess it, sir. Torture itself, sir, shall never bring me to confess it. Mr. Honeywood, make me happy, and let this be buried in oblivion. I hate ostentation; you know I do. I always loved to be a friend, and not a patron. I beg this may make no kind of distance between us.

Honey. Heavens! Can I ever repay such friendship?

Lofty. A bagatelle, a mere bagatelle. But I see your heart is labouring to be grateful. You shall be grateful. It would be cruel to disappoint you. [any way?

Honey. How? Teach me the manner. Is there

Lofty. From this moment you're mine. Yes, my friend, you shall know it—I'm in love.

Honey. And can I assist you?

Lofty. Nobody so well.

Honey. In what manner? I'm all impatience.

Lofty. You shall make love for me.

Honey. And to whom?

Lofty. To a lady with whom you have great interest: Miss Richland. [unfortunate.

Honey. Miss Richland! Was ever anything more

Lofty. Unfortunate, indeed! And yet I can endure it. Between ourselves, I think she likes me. I'm not apt to boast, but I think she does.

Honey. Indeed! But do you know the person you apply to?

Lofty. Yes, I know you are her friend and mine: that's enough. To you, therefore, I commit the success of my passion. Let friendship do the rest. I have only to add, that if at any time my little interest can be of service—but hang it, I'll make no promises; you know my interest is your's at any time. No apologies, my friend, I'll not be answered; it shall be so. [*Exit.*

Honey. Open, generous, unsuspecting man! He little thinks that I love her too; and with such an ardent passion! But, then, it was ever but a vain and hopeless one; my torment, my persecution! What shall I do? Love, friendship, a hopeless passion, a deserving friend! Love, that has been my tormentor; a friend, that has, perhaps, distressed himself to serve me. It shall be so. Yes, I will discard the fondling hope from my bosom, and exert all my influence in his favour. And yet, to see her in the possession of another! Insupportable! But, then, to betray a generous, trusting friend! Worse, worse! Yes, I am resolved. Let me but be the instrument of their happiness, and then quit a country where I must for ever despair of finding my own. [*Exit.*

Enter OLIVIA, *and* GARNET, *who carries a millinner's box.*

Oli. Dear me, I wish this journey were over. No news of Jarvis, yet? I believe the old peevish creature delays purely to vex me.

Gar. Why, to be sure, madam, I did hear him say, "a little snubbing before marriage would teach you to bear it the better afterwards."

Oli. To be gone a full hour, though he had only to get a bill changed in the city! How provoking!

Gar. I'll lay my life, Mr. Leontine, that had twice as much to do, is setting off by this time from his inn; and here you are left behind.

Oli. Well, let us be prepared for his coming, however. Are you sure you have omitted nothing, Garnet?

Gar. Not a stick, madam; all's here. Yet I wish you could take the white and silver to be married in. It's the worst luck in the world, in anything but white. I knew one Bett Stubbs, of our town, that was married in red; and, as sure as eggs is eggs, the bridegroom and she had a miff before morning. [out of the house.

Oli. No matter. I am all impatience till we are

Gar. Bless me, madam! I had almost forgot the wedding-ring. The sweet little thing! I don't think it would go on my little finger. And what if I put in a gentleman's night-cap, in case of necessity, madam? But here's Jarvis.

Enter JARVIS.

Oli. O, Jarvis! are you come at last? We have been ready this half hour. Now let us be going. Let us fly.

Jar. Ay, to Jericho; for we shall have no going to Scotland this bout, I fancy.

Oli. How? What's the matter?

Jar. Money, money, is the matter, madam. We have got no money. What the plague do you send me of your fool's errand for? My master's bill upon the city is not worth a rush. Here it is: Mrs. Garnet may pin up her hair with it.

Oli. Undone! How could Honeywood serve us so? What shall we do? Can't we go without it?

Jar. Go to Scotland without money? To Scotland without money! Lord, how some people understand geography!

Oli. What a base, insincere man was your master, to serve us in this manner. Is this his good-nature?

Jar. Nay, don't talk ill of my master. I won't bear to hear anybody talk ill of him but myself.

Gar. Bless us! now I think on't, madam, you need not be under any uneasiness: I saw Mr. Leontine receive forty guineas from his father just before he set out, and he can't yet have left the inn. A short letter will reach him there.

Oli. I'll write immediately. How's this? Bless me, my hand trembles so I can't write a word. Do you write, Garnet; and, upon second thoughts, it will be better from you.

Gar. Truly, madam, I write and indite but poorly. I never was cute at my larning. But I'll do what I can to please you. Let me see. All out of my own head, I suppose?

Oli. Whatever you please. [neas, madam?

Gar. (*Writes.*) "*Muster Croaker*"—Twenty gui-

Oli. Ay, twenty will do.

Gar. "*At the bar of the Talbot, till called for. Expedition—will be blown up—all of a flame—quick, despatch—Cupid, the little god of love.*" I conclude it, madam, with Cupid; I love to see a love-letter end like poetry.

Oli. Well, well, what you please; anything.—But how shall we send it? I can trust none of the servants of this family.

Gar. Odso, madam, Mr. Honeywood's butler is in the next room; he's a dear, sweet man; he'll do anything for me.

Jar. He! the dog, he'll certainly commit some blunder; he's drunk and sober ten times a day.

Oli. No matter. Fly, Garnet. Anybody we can trust will do. [*Exit Garnet.*] Well, Jarvis, now we can have nothing more to interrupt us. You may take up the things and carry them to the inn. Have you no hands, Jarvis?

Jar. Soft and fair, young lady. You, that are going to be married, think things can never be done too fast; but we that are old, and know what we are about, must elope methodically, madam.

Oli. Well, sure, if my indiscretions were to be done over again— [over.

Jar. My life for it, you would do them ten times

Oli. Why will you talk so? If you knew how unhappy they make me—

Jar. Very unhappy, no doubt; I was once just as unhappy when I was going to be married myself. I'll tell you a story about that.

Oli. A story! when I'm all impatience to be away. Was there ever such a dilatory creature!

Jar. Well, madam, if we must march, why we will march, that's all. Though, ods bobs, we have still forgot one thing we should never travel without—a case of good razors, and a box of shaving-powder. But no matter, I believe we shall be pretty well shaved by the way. (*Going.*)

Re-enter Garnet.

Gar. Undone, undone, madam! Ah, Mr. Jarvis, you said right enough. As sure as death, Mr. Honeywood's rogue of a drunken butler dropped the letter before he went ten yards from the door. There's old Croaker has just picked it up, and is this moment reading it to himself in the hall.

Oli. Unfortunate! We shall be discovered.

Gar. No, madam, don't be uneasy; he can make neither head nor tail of it. To be sure, he looks as if he was broke loose from Bedlam about it, but he can't find what it means, for all that. O lud, he is coming this way all in the horrors!

Oli. Then let us leave the house this instant, for fear he should ask further questions. In the meantime, Garnet, do you write and send off just such another. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Croaker.

Croak. Death and destruction! Are all the horrors of air, fire, and water to be levelled only at me? Am I only to be singled out for gunpowder-plots, combustibles, and conflagration? Here it is, an incendiary letter dropped at my door. (*Reads.*) "*To Muster Croaker, these with speed.*" Ay, ay, plain enough the direction. All in the genuine incendiary spelling, and as cramp as the devil. "*With speed.*" O, confound your speed! But let me read it once more: "*Muster Croaker, as sone as yoew see this, leve twenty gunnes at the bar of the Talboot tell caled for, or yowe and yower experetion will be al blown up.*" Ah! but too plain. Blood and gunpowder in every line of it. Blown up! murderous dog! All blown up! Heavens! what have I and my poor family done, to be all blown up? "*Our pockets are low, and money we must have.*" Ay, there's the reason; they'll blow us up, because they have got low pockets. "*It is but a short time you have to consider; for if this takes wind, the house will quickly be all of a flame.*" Inhuman monsters! blow us up, and then burn us! The earthquake at Lisbon was but a bonfire to it. "*Make quick despatch. And so no more at present, but may Cupid, the little god of love go with you wherever you go.*" The little god of love! Cupid, the little god of love go with me! Go you to the devil, you and your little Cupid together; I'm so frightened, I scarce know whether I sit, stand, or go. Perhaps this moment I'm treading on lighted matches, blazing brimstone, and barrels of gunpowder. They are preparing to blow me up into the clouds. Murder! we shall be all burnt in our beds! we shall be all burnt in our beds!

Enter Miss Richland.

Miss R. Lord, sir, what's the matter?

Croak. Murder's the matter. We shall be all blown up in our beds before morning.

Miss R. I hope not, sir.

Croak. What signifies what you hope, madam, when I have a certificate of it here in my hand? Will nothing alarm my family? Sleeping and eating, sleeping and eating, is the only work from morning till night in my house. My insensible crew could sleep, though rocked by an earthquake, and fry beef-steaks at a volcano.

Miss R. But, sir, you have alarmed them so often already, we have nothing but earthquakes, famines, plagues, and mad dogs, from year's end to year's end. You remember, sir, it is not above a month ago, you assured us of a conspiracy among the bakers to poison us in our bread; and so kept the whole family a week upon potatoes.

Croak. And potatoes were too good for them. But why do I stand talking here with a girl, when I should be facing the enemy without? Here, John! Nicodemus! search the house. Look into the cellars, to see if there be any combustibles below; and above, in the apartments, that no matches be thrown in at the windows. Let all the fires be put out, and let the engine be drawn out in the yard, to play upon the house in case of necessity. [*Exit.*

Miss R. What can he mean by all this? Yet why should I inquire, when he alarms us in this manner almost every day? But Honeywood has desired an interview with me in private. What can he mean? or rather what means this palpitation at his approach? It is the first time he ever shewed anything in his conduct that seemed particular. Sure he cannot mean to—But he's here.

Re-enter Honeywood.

Honey. I presumed to solicit this interview, madam, before I left town, to be permitted—

Miss R. Indeed! Leaving town, sir?

Honey. Yes, madam; perhaps the kingdom. I have presumed, I say, to desire the favour of this interview, in order to disclose something which our long friendship prompts. And yet my fears—

Miss R. His fears! What are his fears to mine? (*Aside.*) We have indeed been long acquainted, sir; very long. If I remember, our first meeting was at the French ambassador's. Do you recollect how you were pleased to rally me upon my complexion there?

Honey. Perfectly, madam. I presumed to reprove you for painting; but your warmer blushes soon convinced the company that the colouring was all from nature.

Miss R. And yet you only meant it, in your good-natured way, to make me pay a compliment to myself. In the same manner, you danced that night with the most awkward woman in company, because you saw nobody else would take her out.

Honey. Yes, and was rewarded the next night by dancing with the finest woman in company, whom everybody wished to take out.

Miss R. Well, sir, if you thought so then, I fear your judgment has since corrected the errors of a first impression. We generally shew to most advantage at first. Our sex are like poor tradesmen, that put all their best goods to be seen at the windows.

Honey. The first impression, madam, did indeed deceive me. I expected to find a woman with all the faults of conscious, flattered beauty; I expected to find her vain and insolent. But every day has since taught me that it is possible to possess sense without pride, and beauty without affectation.

Miss R. This, sir, is a style very unusual with Mr. Honeywood; and I should be glad to know

why he thus attempts to increase that vanity which his own lessons hath taught me to despise.

Honey. I ask pardon, madam. Yet, from our long friendship, I presumed, I might have some right to offer, without offence, what you may refuse without offending.

Miss R. Sir, I beg you'd reflect, though I fear I shall scarce have any power to refuse a request of your's; yet you may be precipitate; consider, sir.

Honey. I own my rashness; but as I plead the cause of friendship, of one who loves—don't be alarmed, madam—who loves you with the most ardent passion, whose whole happiness is placed in you.

Miss R. I fear, sir, I shall never find whom you mean by this description of him.

Honey. Ah, madam! it but too plainly points him out, though he should be too humble himself to urge his pretensions, or you too modest to understand them.

Miss R. Well, it would be affectation any longer to pretend ignorance; and I will own, sir, I have long been prejudiced in his favour. It was but natural to wish to make his heart mine, as he seemed himself ignorant of its value.

Honey. I see she always loved him. (*Aside.*) I find, madam, you're already sensible of his worth, his passion. How happy is my friend, to be the favourite of one with such sense to distinguish merit, and such beauty to reward it.

Miss R. Your friend, sir? What friend?

Honey. My best friend; my friend, Mr. Lofty,

Miss R. He, sir? [madam.

Honey. Yes, he, madam. He is, indeed, what your warmest wishes might have formed him; and to his other qualities, he adds that of the most passionate regard for you. [of you, sir.

Miss R. Amazement! No more of this, I beg

Honey. I see your confusion, madam, and know how to interpret it. And since I so plainly read the language of your heart, shall I make my friend happy, by communicating your sentiments?

Miss R. By no means. [it.

Honey. Excuse me, I must; I know you desire

Miss R. Mr. Honeywood, let me tell you, that you wrong my sentiments and yourself. When I first applied to your friendship, I expected advice and assistance; but now, sir, I see that it is vain to expect happiness from him, who has been so bad an economist of his own; and that I must disclaim his friendship, who ceases to be a friend to himself. [*Exit.*

Honey. How is this? She has confessed she loved him, and yet she seemed to part in displeasure. Can I have done anything to reproach myself with? No, I believe not; yet, after all, these things should not be done by a third person.

Re-enter Croaker, *with a letter in his hand, and* Mrs. Croaker.

Mrs. C. Ha, ha, ha! and so my dear, it's your supreme wish that I should be quite wretched upon this occasion? Ha, ha!

Croak. (*Mimics.*) Ha, ha, ha, and so, my dear it's your supreme pleasure to give me no better consolation?

Mrs. C. Positively, my dear, what is this incendiary stuff and trumpery to me? Our house may travel through the air, like the house of Loretto, for aught I care, if I'm to be miserable in it.

Croak. Would to heaven it were converted into a house of correction, for your benefit! Have we not everything to alarm us? Perhaps this very moment the tragedy is beginning.

Mrs. C. Then let us reserve our distress till the rising of the curtain, or give them the money they want, and have done with them.

Croak. Give them my money? And pray, what right have they to my money?

Mrs. C. And pray, what right, then, have you to my good humour?

Croak. And so your good humour advises me to part with my money?. Why, then, to tell your good humour a piece of my mind, I'd sooner part with my wife. Here's Mr. Honeywood, see what he'll say to it. My dear Honeywood, look at this incendiary letter dropped at my door. It will freeze you with terror; and yet lovey here can read it—can read it, and laugh.

Mrs. C. Yes, and so will Mr. Honeywood.

Croak. If he does, I'll suffer to be hanged the next minute in the rogue's place, that's all.

Mrs. C. Speak, Mr. Honeywood, is there anything more foolish than my husband's fright upon this occasion?

Honey. It would not become me to decide, madam; but doubtless the greatness of his terrors now, will but invite them to renew their villany another time.

Mrs. C. I told you he'd be of my opinion.

Croak. How, sir! do you maintain that I should lie down under such an injury, and shew, neither by my tears or complaints, that I have something of the spirit of a man in me?

Honey. Pardon me, sir; the surest way to have redress is to be earnest in the pursuit of it.

Croak. Ay, whose opinion is he of now?

Mrs. C. But don't you think that laughing off our fears is the best way?

Honey. What is the best, madam, few can say; but I'll maintain it to be a very wise way.

Croak. But we're talking of the best. Surely the best way is to face the enemy in the field, and not wait till he plunders us in our very bed-chamber.

Mrs. C. But can anything be more absurd than to double our distresses by our apprehensions, and put it in the power of every low fellow, that can scrawl ten words of wretched spelling, to tormentus?

Honey. Without doubt, nothing more absurd.

Croak. How! would it not be more absurd to to despise the rattle till we are bit by the snake?

Honey. Without doubt, perfectly absurd.

Croak. Then you are of my opinion?

Honey. Entirely.

Mrs. C. And you reject mine?

Honey. Heavens forbid, madam! No, sure no reasoning can be more just than your's. [right.

Croak. A plague of plagues, we can't be both

Honey. And why may not both be right, madam? Mr. Croaker, is earnestly seeking redress, and you in waiting the event with good humour. Pray let me see the letter again. I have it. This letter requires twenty guineas to be left at the bar of the Talbot-inn. If it be indeed an incendiary letter, what if you and I, sir, go there; and when the writer comes to be paid his expected booty, seize him?

Croak. My dear friend, its the very thing—the very thing. While I walk by the door, you shall plant yourself in ambush near the bar, burst out upon the miscreant like a masked battery, extort a confession at once, and so hang him up by surprise.

Honey. Yes; but I would not choose to exercise too much severity. It is my maxim, sir, that crimes generally punish themselves.

Croak. Well, but we may upbraid him a little, I suppose? (*Ironically.*)

Honey. Ay, but not punish him too rigidly.

Croak. Well, leave that to my own benevolence.

Honey. Well, I do; but remember that universal benevolence is the first law of nature.

[*Exeunt Honeywood and Mrs. Croaker.*

Croak. Yes, and my universal benevolence will hang the dog, if he had as many necks as a hydra. [*Exit.*

ACT V.—Scene I.—*An Inn.*

Enter Olivia *and* Jarvis.

Oli. Well, we have got safe to the inn, however. Now, if the post-chaise were ready—

Jar. The horses are just finishing their oats; and, as they are not going to be married, they choose to take their own time. Besides, you don't consider, we have got no answer from our fellow traveller yet. If we hear nothing from Mr. Leontine, we have only one way left us.

Oli. What way?

Jar. The way home again.

Oli. No; I have made a resolution to go, and nothing shall induce me to break it.

Jar. Well, I'll go hasten things without; and I'll call too at the bar, to see if anything should be left for us there. Don't be in such a plaguy hurry, madam, and we shall go the faster. [*Exit.*

Enter LEONTINE.

Leon. My dear Olivia, my anxiety till you were out of danger, was too great to be resisted. I could not help coming to see you set out, though it exposes us to a discovery.

Oli. May everything you do prove as fortunate. Indeed, Leontine, we have been most cruelly disappointed. Mr. Honeywood's bill upon the city has, it seems, been protested, and we have been utterly at a loss how to proceed.

Leo. How! an offer of his own too. Sure he could not mean to deceive us.

Oli. Depend upon his sincerity; he only mistook the desire for the power of serving us. But let us think no more of it. I wish the post-chaise were ready. (*They retire.*)

Enter CROAKER, *unperceived.*

Croak. Well, while my friend Honeywood is upon the post of danger at the bar, it must be my business to have an eye about me here. I think I know an incendiary's look; for wherever the devil makes a purchase, he never fails to set his mark. Ha! who have we here? My son and daughter! What can they be doing here? (*Aside.*)

Oli. Every moment we stay increases our danger, and adds to my apprehensions.

Leon. There's no danger, if Honeywood has kept my father, as he promised, in employment.

Oli. My fears are from your father's suspicions.

Leon. But, believe me, Olivia, you have no great reason to dread his resentment. His repining temper, as it does no manner of injury to himself, so will it never do harm to others; he only frets to keep himself employed, and scolds for his private amusement.

Oli. I don't know that; but I'm sure, on some occasions, it makes him look most shockingly.

Croak. (*Discovering himself.*) How does he look now?

Oli. Ah! [now?

Leon. Undone.

Croak. How do I look now? Sir, I am your very humble servant. Madam, I am your's. What, you are going off, are you? Then first, if you please, take a word or two from me before you go. Tell me first where you are going? and when you have told me that, perhaps I shall know as little as I did before.

Leon. If that be so, our answer might but increase your displeasure, without adding to your information.

Croak. I want no information from you, puppy; and you too, good madam, what answer have you got, eh? (*A cry without,* "Stop him.") I think I heard a noise. My friend, Honeywood, without —has he seized the incendiary? Ah! no; for now I hear no more on't.

Leon. Honeywood without! Then, sir, it was Mr. Honeywood that directed you hither?

Croak. No, sir, it was Mr. Honeywood conducted [me hither.

Leon. Then, sir, he's a villain.

Croak. How, sirrah, a villain! because he takes most care of your father? Honeywood is a friend to the family, and I'll have him treated as such.

Leon. I shall study to repay his friendship as it deserves.

Croak. Ah! rogue, if you knew how earnestly he entered into my griefs, you would love him as I do. (*A cry without,* "Stop him.") Fire and fury! they have seized the incendiary; they have the villain, the incendiary in view. Stop him, stop an incendiary, a murderer! stop him! [*Exit.*

Oli. Oh, my terrors! what can this new tumult mean?

Leon. Some new mark, I suppose, of Mr. Honeywood's sincerity; but we shall have satisfaction; he shall give me instant satisfaction.

Oli. It must not be, my Leontine; whatever be our fate, let us not add guilt to our misfortunes: you must forgive him.

Leon. Forgive him! Has he not in every instance betrayed us? Forced me to borrow money from him, which appears a mere trick to delay us? promised to keep my father engaged till we were out of danger, and here brought him to the very scene of our escape? [taken.

Oli. Don't be precipitate; we may yet be mis-

Enter Postboy, dragging in JARVIS, *followed by* HONEYWOOD.

Post. Ay, master, we have him fast enough: here is the incendiary dog. I'm entitled to the reward. I'll take my oath I saw him ask for the money at the bar, and then run for it.

Honey. Come, bring him along; let us see him. (*Discovers his mistake.*) Death! what's here? Jarvis, Leontine, Olivia! What can all this mean?

Jar. Why, I'll tell you what it means; that I was an old fool, and that you are my master, that's [all.

Honey. Confusion.

Leon. Yes, sir, I find you have kept your word with me. After such baseness, I wonder how you can venture to see the man you have injured.

Honey. My dear Leontine, by my life, my honour—

Leon. Peace, peace, for shame; I know you, sir, I know you. [just, I knew not—

Honey. Why, won't you hear me? By all that's

Leon. Hear you, sir! to what purpose? I now see through all your low arts; your ever complying with every opinion; your never refusing any request; your friendship as common as a prostitute's favours, and as fallacious; all these, sir, have long been contemptible to the world, and are now perfectly so to me. [reaches me. (*Aside.*)

Honey. Ha! contemptible to the world! that

Leon. All the seeming sincerity of your professions, I now find were only allurements to betray; and all your seeming regret for their consequences, only calculated to cover the cowardice of your heart. Draw, villain!

Re-enter CROAKER, *out of breath.*

Croak. Where is the villain? Where is the incendiary? (*Seizes the Postboy.*) Hold him fast, the dog; he has the gallows in his face. Come, you dog, confess; confess all, and hang yourself.

Post. Zounds! master, what do you throttle me for? [you resist?

Croak. (*Beats him.*) Dog, do you resist? do

Post. Zounds! master, I'm not he; there's the man that we thought was the rogue, and turns out to be one of the company.

Croak. How?

Honey. Mr. Croaker, we have all been under a strange mistake here; I find there is nobody guilty; it was all an error; entirely an error of our own.

Croak. What, you intend to bring them off, I suppose; I'll hear nothing. [to hear reason.

Honey. Madam, you seem at least calm enough

Oli. Excuse me.

Honey. Good Jarvis, let me then explain it to you. [is done?

Jar. What signifies explanations when the thing

Honey. Will nobody hear me? Was there ever such a set, so blinded by passion and prejudice! My good friend, I believe you'll be surprised when I assure you—(*To the Postboy.*)

Post. Sure me nothing—I'm sure of nothing but a good beating.

Croak. Come then, you, madam, if you ever hope for any favour or forgiveness, tell me sincerely all you know of this affair.

Oli. Unhappily, sir, I'm but too much the cause of your suspicions; you see before you, sir, one that with false pretences has stept into your family to betray it: not your daughter.

Croak. Not my daughter!

Oli. Not your daughter; but a mean deceiver—who—support me—I cannot—

Honey. Help—give her air.

Croak. Ay, ay, take the young woman to the air; I would not hurt a hair of her head, whose ever daughter she may be—not so bad as that neither. [*Exeunt all but Croaker.*] Yes, yes, all's out; I now see the whole affair; my son is either married, or going to be so, to this lady, whom he imposed upon me as his sister. Ay, certainly so. And yet I don't find it afflicts me so much as one might think; there's the advantage of fretting away our misfortunes beforehand; we never feel them when they come.

Enter MISS RICHLAND *and* SIR WILLIAM HONEYWOOD.

Sir W. But how do you know, madam, that my nephew intends setting off from this place?

Miss R. My maid assured me he was come to this inn; and my own knowledge of his intending to leave the kingdom, suggested the rest. But what do I see? my guardian here before us! Who, my dear sir, could have expected meeting you here? to what accident do we owe this pleasure?

Croak. To a fool, I believe.

Miss R. But to what purpose did you come?

Croak. To play the fool.

Miss R. But with whom?

Croak. With greater fools than myself.

Miss R. Explain.

Croak. Why, Mr. Honeywood brought me here, to do nothing now I am here; and my son is going to be married to I don't know who, that is here; so now you are as wise as I am.

Miss R. Married! to whom, sir?

Croak. To Olivia; my daughter, as I took her to be; but who the devil she is, or whose daughter she is, I know no more than the man in the moon.

Sir W. Then, sir, it will be enough, at present, to assure you, that, both in point of birth and fortune, the young lady is at least your son's equal. Being left by her father, Sir James Woodville—

Croak. Sir James Woodville! What, of the west?

Sir W. Being left by him, I say, to the care of a mercenary wretch, whose only aim was to secure her fortune to himself, she was sent into France, under pretence of education; and there every art was tried to fix her for life in a convent, contrary to her inclinations. Of this I was informed upon my arrival at Paris; and, as I had been once her father's friend, I did all in my power to frustrate her guardian's base intentions. I had even meditated to rescue her from his authority, when your son stept in with more pleasing violence, gave her liberty, and you a daughter.

Croak. But I intend to have a daughter of my own choosing, sir. A young lady, sir, whose fortune, by my interest with those that have interest, will be double what my son has a right to expect. Do you know Mr. Lofty, sir?

Sir W. Yes, sir; and know that you are deceived in him. But step this way, and I'll convince you. (*Croaker and Sir William Honeywood talk apart.*)

Re-enter HONEYWOOD.

Honey. Obstinate man, still to persist in his outrage! Insulted by him, despised by all, I now begin to grow contemptible even to myself. How have I sunk by too great an assiduity to please! How have I overtaxed all my abilities, lest the approbation of a single fool should escape me. But all is now over; I have survived my reputation, my fortune, my friendships, and nothing remains henceforward for me but solitude and repentance.

Miss R. Is it true, Mr. Honeywood, that you are setting off, without taking leave of your friends? The report is, that you are quitting England. Can it be?

Honey. Yes, madam, I leave you to happiness; to one who loves you, and deserves your love; to one who has power to procure you affluence, and generosity to improve your enjoyment of it.

Miss R. And are you sure, sir, that the gentleman you mean, is what you describe him?

Honey. I have the best assurances of it. As for me, weak and wavering as I have been, obliged by all, and incapable of serving any, what happiness can I find but in solitude? what hope but in being forgotten?

Miss R. A thousand! to live among friends that esteem you, whose happiness it will be to be permitted to oblige you.

Honey. No, madam; my resolution is fixed. Inferiority among strangers is easy; but among those that once were equals, insupportable. Nay, to shew you how far my resolution can go, I can now speak with calmness of my former follies. I will even confess, that, among the number of my other presumptions, I had the insolence to think of loving you. Yes, madam, while I was pleading the passion of another, my heart was tortured with its own.

Miss R. You amaze me!

Honey. But you'll forgive it, I know you will; since the confession should not have come from me even now, but to convince you of the sincerity of my intention of—never mentioning it more. (*Going.*)

Miss R. Stay, stir, one moment. Ha! he here.

Enter LOFTY.

Lofty. Is the coast clear? None but friends. I have followed you here with a trifling piece of intelligence; but it goes no further, things are not yet ripe for a discovery. I have spirits working at a certain board; your affair at the Treasury will be done in less than—a thousand years. Mum!

Miss R. Sooner, sir, I should hope.

Lofty. Why, yes, I believe it may, if it falls into proper hands, that know where to push and where to parry; that know how the land lies. Eh,

Miss R. It is fallen into your's. [Honeywood!

Lofty. Well, to keep you no longer in suspense, your thing is done. It is done, I say; that's all. I have just had assurances from Lord Neverout, that the claim has been examined, and found admissible. Quietus is the word, madam.

Honey. But how? his lordship has been at Newmarket these ten days.

Lofty. Indeed! Then Sir Gilbert Goose must have been most d——y mistaken. I had it of him.

Miss R. He? Why, Sir Gilbert and his family have been in the country this month.

Lofty. This month? It must certainly be so. Sir Gilbert's letter did come to me from Newmarket, so that he must have met his lordship there; and so it came about. I have his letter about me; I'll read it to you. (*Taking out a large bundle.*) That's from Paoli of Corsica, that from the Marquis of Squilachi. Have you a mind to see a letter from Count Poniatowski, now King of Poland? Honest Pon—(*Searching.*) O, sir, what are you here too? I'll tell you what, honest friend, if you have not absolutely delivered my letter to Sir William Honeywood, you may return it. The thing will do without him.

Sir W. Sir, I have delivered it, and must inform you, it was received with the most mortifying contempt.

Croak. Contempt! Mr. Lofty, what can that mean?

Lofty. Let him go on, let him go on, I say. You'll find it come to something presently.

Sir W. Yes, sir, I believe you'll be amazed, if, after waiting some time in the anti-chamber, after being surveyed with insolent curiosity by the passing servants, I was at last assured, that Sir William Honeywood knew no such person, and I must certainly have been imposed upon.

Lofty. Good; let me die, very good. Ha, ha, ha!

Croak. Now, for my life, I can't find out half the goodness of it.

Lofty. You can't? Ha, ha!

Croak. No, for the soul of me; I think it was as

confounded a bad answer as ever was sent from one private gentleman to another.

Lofty. And so you can't find out the force of the message? Why, I was in the house at that very time. Ha, ha! It was I that sent that very answer to my own letter. Ha, ha!

Croak. Indeed! How? why?

Lofty. In one word, things between Sir William and me must be behind the curtain. A party has many eyes. He sides with Lord Buzzard, I side with Sir Gilbert Goose. So that unriddles the mystery. [cious are over.

Croak. And so it does, indeed, and all my suspi-

Lofty. Your suspicions! What, then, you have been suspecting, you have been suspecting, have you? Mr. Croaker, you and I were friends, we are friends no longer.

Croak. As I hope for your favour, I did not mean to offend. It escaped me. Don't be discomposed.

Lofty. Zounds, sir! but I am discomposed, and will be discomposed. To be treated thus! Who am I? Was it for this I have been dreaded both by ins and outs? Have I been libelled in the Gazetteer, and praised in the St. James's? Have I been chaired at Wildman's, and a speaker at Merchant-tailors' Hall? Have I had my hand to addresses, and my head in the print-shops, and talk to me of suspects!

Croak. My dear sir, be pacified. What can you have but asking pardon?

Lofty. Sir, I will not be pacified! Suspects! Who am I? To be used thus, have I paid court to men in favour to serve my friends, the Lords of the Treasury, Sir William Honeywood, and the rest of the gang, and talk to me of suspects! Who am I, I say, who am I?

Sir W. Since, sir, you're so pressing for an answer, I'll tell you who you are. A gentleman, as well acquainted with politics, as with men in power; as well acquainted with persons of fashion, as with modesty; with the Lords of the Treasury, as with truth; and with all, as you are with Sir William Honeywood. I am Sir William Honeywood. (*Discovers his ensigns of the Bath.*)

Croak. Sir William Honeywood!

Honey. Astonishment! my uncle! (*Aside.*)

Lofty. So, then, my confounded genius has been all this time only leading me up to the garret, in order to fling me out of the window.

Croak. What, Mr. Importance, and are these your works? Suspect you! You who have been dreaded by the ins and outs. You who have had your hand to addresses, and your head stuck up in print-shops. If you were served right, you should have your head stuck up in the pillory.

Lofty. Ay, stick it where you will; for, by the lord, it cuts but a very poor figure where it sticks at present.

Sir W. Well, Mr. Croaker, I hope you now see how incapable this gentleman is of serving you, and how little Miss Richland has to expect from his influence.

Croak. Ay, sir, too well I see it, and I can't but say I have had some boding of it these ten days. So, I'm resolved, since my son has placed his affections on a lady of moderate fortune, to be satisfied with his choice, and not run the hazard of another Mr. Lofty, in helping him to a better.

Sir W. I approve your resolution; and here they come to receive a confirmation of your pardon and consent.

Re-enter Mrs. Croaker, Jarvis, Leontine, *and* Olivia.

Mrs. C. Where's my husband? Come, come, lovey, you must forgive them. Jarvis here has been to tell me the whole affair; and, I say, you must forgive them. Our own was a stolen match, you know, my dear; and we never had any reason to repent of it.

Croak. I wish we could both say so; however, this gentleman, Sir William Honeywood, has been beforehand with you in obtaining their pardon. So, if the two poor fools have a mind to marry, I think we can tack them together without crossing the Tweed for it. (*Joining their hands.*)

Leon. How blest and unexpected! What, what can we say to such goodness? But our future obedience shall be the best reply. And, as for this gentleman, to whom we owe—

Sir W. Excuse me, sir, if I interrupt your thanks, as I have here an interest that calls me. (*Turning to Honeywood.*) Yes, sir, you are surprised to see me; and I own that a desire of correcting your follies led me hither. I saw, with indignation, the errors of a mind that only sought applause from others; that easiness of disposition, which, though inclined to the right, had not courage to condemn the wrong. I saw, with regret, those splendid errors, that still took name from some neighbouring duty. Your charity, that was but injustice; your benevolence, that was but weakness; and your friendship but credulity. I saw, with regret, great talents and extensive learning only employed to add sprightliness to error, and increase your perplexities. I saw your mind with a thousand natural charms; but the greatness of its beauty served only to heighten my pity for its prostitution.

Honey. Cease to upbraid me, sir; I have for some time but too strongly felt the justice of your reproaches. But there is one way still left me. Yes, sir, I have determined, this very hour, to quit, for ever, a place where I have made myself the voluntary slave of all; and to seek among strangers that fortitude which may give strength to the mind, and marshal all its dissipated virtues. Yet, ere I depart, permit me to solicit favour for this gentleman; who, notwithstanding what has happened, has laid me under the most signal obligations. Mr. Lofty—

Lofty. Mr. Honeywood, I'm resolved upon a reformation, as well as you. I now begin to find, that the man who first invented the art of speaking truth was a much cunninger fellow than I thought him. And to prove that I design to speak truth for the future, I must now assure you, that you owe your late enlargement to another; as, upon my soul, I had no hand in the matter. So now, if any of the company has a mind for preferment, he may take my place. I'm determined to resign. [*Exit.*

Honey. How have I been deceived?

Sir W. No, sir, you have been obliged to a kinder, fairer friend for that favour. To Miss Richland. Would she complete our joy, and make the man she has honoured by her friendship, happy in her love, I should then forget all, and be as blest as the welfare of my dearest kinsman can make me.

Miss R. After what is past, it would be but affectation to pretend to indifference. Yes, I will own an attachment, which I find was more than friendship. And if my entreaties cannot alter his resolution to quit the country, I will even try if my hand has not power to detain him. (*Giving her hand.*)

Honey. Heavens! how can I have deserved all this? How express my happiness, my gratitude? A moment like this overpays an age of apprehension.

Croak. Well, now I see content in every face; but heaven send we be all better this day three months.

Sir W. Henceforth, nephew, learn to respect yourself. He who seeks only for applause from without, has all the happiness in another's keeping.

Honey. Yes, sir, I now too plainly perceive my errors: my vanity, in attempting to please all, by fearing to offend any; my meanness in approving folly, lest fools should disapprove. Henceforth, therefore, it shall be my study to reserve my pity for real distress; my friendship for true merit; and love for her who first taught me what it is to be happy. [*Exeunt.*

THE HEIRESS;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY GENERAL BURGOYNE.



Act III.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

LORD GAYVILLE	ALSCRIP	MRS. SAGELY
SIR CLEMENT FLINT	CHIGNON	MISS ALSCRIP
BLANDISH	PROMPT	MISS ALTON
RIGHTLY	LADY EMILY	TIFFANY
CLIFFORD	MRS. BLANDISH	SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Lady's Apartment.*

MR. BLANDISH *and* MRS. LETITIA BLANDISH *discovered, writing.*

Mrs. B. (*Lays down the pen.*) There it is, complete. (*Reads, conceitedly.*)

"Adieu, my charming friend, my amiable, my all Accomplish'd associate! conceive the ardour of Your lovers united with your own sensibility; Still will the compound be but faintly expressive Of the truth and tenderness of your

"LETITIA BLANDISH."

There's phrase, there's a period; match it, if you can.

Mr. B. Not I, indeed; I am working upon quite a different plan: but, in the name of the old father of adulation, to whom is that perfect phrase addressed?

Mrs. B. To one worth the pains, I can tell you; Miss Alscrip.

Mr. B. What, sensibility to Miss Alscrip! My dear sister, this is too much, even in your own way: had you run changes upon her fortune, stocks, bonds, and mortgages; upon Lord Gayville's coronet at her feet, or forty other coronets, to make footballs of, if she pleased, it would have been plausible; but the quality you have selected—

Mrs. B. Is one she has no pretensions to; therefore, the flattery is more persuasive: that's my maxim.

Mr. B. And mine also, but I don't try it quite so high. Sensibility to Miss Alscrip! you might as well have applied it to her uncle's pig-iron, from which she derives her first fifty thousand; or the harder heart of the old usurer, her father, from which she expects the second. But come, (*rings*) to the business of the morning.

Enter PROMPT.

Here, Prompt, send out the chairman with the billets and cards. Have you any orders, madam?

Mrs. B. (*Delivering her letter.*) This to Miss Alscrip, with my impatient inquiries after her last night's rest; and that she shall have my personal salute in half an hour. You take care to send to all the lying-in ladies?

Prompt. At their doors, madam, before the first load of straw.

Mr. B. And to all great men that keep the house, whether for their own disorders, or those of the nation?

Prompt. To all, sir; their secretaries, and principal clerks.

Mr. B. (*Aside to Prompt.*) How goes on the business you have undertaken for Lord Gayville?

Prompt. I have conveyed his letter, and expect this morning to get an answer.

Mr. B. He does not think me in the secret?

Prompt. Mercy forbid you should be! (*Archly.*)

Mr. B. I should never forgive your meddling.

Prompt. Oh! never, never!

Mr. B. (*Aloud.*) Well, despatch—

Mrs. B. Hold! apropos, to the lying-in list: at

Mrs. Barbara Winterbloom's, to inquire after the Angola kittens, and the last hatch of Java sparrows.

Prompt. (*Reading his memorandum as he goes out.*) Ladies in the straw; ministers, &c.; old maids, cats, and sparrows; never had a better list of how d'ye's? since I had the honour to collect for the Blandish family. [*Exit.*

Mrs. B. These are the attentions that establish valuable friendships in female life. By adapting myself to the whims of one, submiting to the jest of another, assisting the little plots of a third, and taking part against the husbands with all, I am become an absolute essential in the polite world; the very soul of every fashionable party in town or country.

Mr. B. The country! Psha! time thrown away.

Mrs. B. Time thrown away! As if women of fashion left London to turn freckled shepherdesses. No, no; cards and backgammon are the delights of rural life; and, slightly as you may think of my skill, at the year's end, I am no inconsiderable sharer in the pin-money of my society.

Mr. B. A paltry resource; gambling is a d—d trade, and I have done with it.

Mrs. B. Indeed!

Mr. B. Yes; 'twas high time. The women don't pay; and as for the men, the age grows circumspect in proportion to its poverty. It's odds but one loses a character to establish a debt, and must fight a duel to obtain the payment. I have a thousand better plans, but two principal ones; and I am only at a loss which to choose.

Mrs. B. Out with them, I beseech you.

Mr. B. Whether I shall marry my friend's intended bride, or his sister.

Mrs. B. Marry his intended bride? What, pig-iron and usury? Your opinion of her must advance your addresses admirably.

Mr. B. My lord's opinion of her will advance them; he can't bear the sight of her; and, in defiance of Sir Clement Flint's eagerness for the match, is running mad after an adventure, which I, who am his confidant, shall keep going till I determine. There's news for you.

Mrs. B. And his sister, Lady Emily, the alternative. The first match in England, in beauty, wit, and accomplishment.

Mr. B. Pooh! A fig for her personal charms; she will bring me connexion that would soon supply fortune; the other would bring fortune enough to make connexion unnecessary.

Mrs. B. And as to the certainty of success with the one or the other—

Mr. B. Success! Are they not women? But I must away. And first for Lord Gayville and his fellow student, Clifford.

Mrs. B. Apropos! Look well to Clifford. Lady Emily and he were acquainted at the age of first impressions.

Mr. B. I dare say he always meant to be the complete friend of the family; for, besides his design on Lady Emily, his game, I find, has been to work upon Lord Gayville's understanding: he thinks he must finally establish himself in his esteem, by inexorably opposing all his follies. Poor simpleton! Now, my touch of opposition goes only to enhance the value of my acquiescence. So, adieu for the morning; you to Miss Alscrip, with an unction of flattery, fit for a house-painter's brush; I to Sir Clement and his family, with a composition as delicate as ether, and to be applied with the point of a feather. (*Going.*)

Mrs. B. Harkye! Blandish, a good wish before you go: to make your success complete, may you find but half your own vanity in those you have to work on.

Mr. B. Thank you, my dear Letty; this is not the only tap you have hit me to-day, and you are right; for if you and I did not sometimes speak truth to each other, we should forget there was such a quality incident to the human mind.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Lord Gayville's Apartment.*

Enter LORD GAYVILLE *and* MR. CLIFFORD.

Lord G. My dear Clifford, urge me no more. How can a man of your liberality of sentiment descend to be the advocate of my uncle's family avarice?

Clif. My lord, you do not live for yourself. You have an ancient name and title to support.

Lord G. Preposterous policy! Whenever the father builds, games, or electioneers, the heir and title must go to market. Oh! the happy families Sir Clement Flint will enumerate, where this practice has prevailed for centuries; and the estate been improved in every generation, though specifically spent by each individual.

Clif. But you thought with him a month ago, and wrote with transport of the match,—"Whenever I think of Miss Alscrip, visions of equipage and splendour, villas and hotels, the delights of independence and profuseness, dance in my imagination."

Lord G. It is true, I was that dissipated, fashionable wretch.

Clif. Come, this reserve betrays a consciousness of having acted wrong: you would not hide what would give me pleasure: but I'll not be officious.

Lord G. Hear me without severity, and I'll tell you all. Such a woman, such an assemblage of all that's lovely in the sex!

Clif. Well, but, the who, the how, the where?

Lord G. I met her walking, and alone; and, indeed, so humbly circumstanced as to carry a parcel in her own hand.

Clif. I cannot but smile at this opening of your adventure. But proceed.

Lord G. Her dress was such as a judicious painter would choose to characterise modesty. But natural grace and elegance stole upon the observation; and, through the simplicity of a quaker, shewed all we could conceive of a goddess. I gazed, and turned idolater.

Clif. You may as well finish the description in poetry, at once; you are on the very verge of it.

Lord G. She was under the persecution of one of those beings peculiar to this town, who assume the name of gentlemen, upon the sole credentials of a boot, a switch, and round hat; the things that escape from counters and writing-desks, to disturb public places, insult foreigners, and put modest women out of countenance. I had no difficulty in the rescue.

Clif. And, having silenced the dragon, in the true spirit of chivalry, you conducted the damsel to her castle.

Lord G. The utmost I could obtain was leave to put her into a hackney-coach, which I followed, unperceived, and lodged her in the house of an obscure milliner, in a by-street, whose favour was soon conciliated by a few guineas. I almost lived in the house; and often, when I was not suspected to be there, passed whole hours listening to a voice that would have captivated my very soul, though it had been her only attraction. At last—

Clif. What is to follow?

Lord G. By the persuasions of the woman, (who laughed at my scruples with an unknown girl, a lodger upon a second floor,) I hid myself in the closet of her apartment; and the practised trader assured me, I had nothing to fear from the interruption of the family.

Clif. Oh! for shame, my lord! whatever may be the end of your adventure, such means were very much below you.

Lord G. I confess it, and have been punished. Upon the discovery of me, fear, indignation, and resolution, agitated the whole frame of the sweet girl, by turns. I should as soon have committed sacrilege, as have offered an affront to her person. Confused—overpowered—I stammered out a few incoherent words: interest in her fortune—respect—entreaty of forgiveness; and left her to detest me.

Clif. You need go no farther. I meant to rally you, but your proceedings and emotion alarm me for your peace and honour. You are on a double precipice; on one side impelled by folly, on the other—

Lord G. Hold! Clifford, I am not prepared for so much admonition. Your tone is changed since our separation; you seem to drop the companion, and assume the governor.

Clif. No, my lord; I scorn the sycophant, and assert the friend.

Enter a Servant, followed by Blandish.

Serv. My lord, Mr. Blandish. [*Exit.*

Clif. I hope every man will do the same.

Mr. B. Mr. Clifford, do not let me drive you away; I want to learn your power to gain and to preserve dear Lord Gayville's esteem.

Clif. (*With a seeming effort to withdraw his hand, which Blandish holds.*) Sir, you are quite accomplished to be an example.

Mr. B. I have been at your apartment, to look for you: we have been talking of you with Sir Clement; Lady Emily threw in her word.

Clif. Oh! sir, you make me too proud. (*Aside.*) Practised parasite! [*Exit.*

Mr. B. (*Aside.*) Sneering puppy. (*To Lord G.*) My lord, you seem disconcerted; has anything new occurred?

Lord G. No; for there is nothing new in being disappointed in a friend.

Mr. B. Have you told your story to Mr. Clifford?

Lord G. I have, and I might as well have told it to the cynic, my uncle; he could not have discouraged or condemned me more.

Mr. B. They are both in the right. I see things exactly as they do; but I have less fortitude, or more attachment than others. The inclinations of the man I love, are spells upon my opposition.

Lord G. Kind Blandish! you are the confidant I want.

Mr. B. What has happened since your discovery in the closet?

Lord G. The lovely wanderer left her lodgings the next morning; but I have again found her; she is in a house of equal retirement, but of very different character, in the city, and inaccessible. I have wrote to her, and knowing her to be distressed, I have enclosed bank-bills for two hundred pounds, the acceptance of which I have urged with all the delicacy I am master of, and, by heaven! without a purpose of corruption.

Mr. B. Two hundred pounds, and Lord Gayville's name—

Lord G. She has never known me but by the name of Mr. Heartly. Since my ambition has been to be loved for my own sake, I have been jealous of my title.

Mr. B. And, pr'ythee, by what diligence or chance did Mr. Heartly trace his fugitive?

Lord G. By the acuteness of Mr. Prompt, your valet de chambre. You must pardon me for pressing into my service, for this occasion, the fellow in the world fittest for it. Here he comes.

Enter Prompt.

Prompt. Are you alone, my lord? (*Starts at seeing Mr. B.*)

Lord G. Don't be afraid, Prompt; your peace is made.

Prompt. Then there is my return for your lordship's goodness. (*Giving a letter.*) This letter was just now brought to the place appointed, by a porter.

Lord G. By a Cupid, honest Prompt; and these characters were engraved by the point of his arrow! "To —— Heartly, Esq." Blandish, did you ever see anything like it?

Mr. B. If her style be equal to her hand-writing—

Lord G. If it be equal! Infidel! you shall have proof directly. (*Opens the letter.*) Heyday! what the devil's here? my bills again, and no line; not a word.—Death and disappointment, what's this?

Prompt. 'Gad it's well if she is not off again.—'Faith I never asked where the letter came from.

Lord G. Should you know the messenger again?

Prompt. I believe I should, my lord. For a Cupid he was somewhat in years; about six feet high, and a nose rather given to purple.

Lord G. Spare your wit, sir, till you find him.

Prompt. I have a shorter way; my life upon it, I start her myself.

Mr. B. And what is your device, sirrah?

Prompt. Lord, sir, nothing so easy as to bring every living creature in this town to the window: a tame bear, or a mad ox; two men, or two dogs fighting; a balloon in the air, (or tied up to the ceiling, 'tis the same thing); make but noise enough, and out they come, first and second childhood, and everything between: I am sure I shall know her by inspiration.

Lord G. Shall I describe her to you?

Prompt. No, my lord, time is too precious; I'll be at her last lodgings, and afterwards half the town over, before your lordship will travel from her forehead to her chin.

Lord G. Away, then, my good fellow. He cannot mistake her; for when she was formed, nature broke the mould. [*Exit Prompt.*

Mr. B. Now, for the blood of me, I cannot call that fellow back; it is absolute infatuation. Ah! I see how this will end.

Lord G. What are your apprehensions?

Mr. B. That my ferret yonder will do his part completely; that I shall set all your uncle's doctrine at nought; and thus lend myself to this wild intrigue, till the girl is put into your arms.

Lord G. Propitious be the thought, my best friend. My uncle's doctrine! but advise me how shall I keep my secret from him for the present? 'Faith, it is not very easy; Sir Clement is suspicion personified: his eye probes one's very thought.

Mr. B. Your best chance would be to double your assiduities to Miss Alscrip. But, then, dissimulation is so mean a vice.

Lord G. It is so, indeed; and if I give into it for a moment, it is upon the determination of never being her husband. I may despise and offend a woman; but disgust would be no excuse for betraying her. Adieu, Blandish; if you see Prompt first, I trust to you for the quickest communication of intelligence.

Mr. B. I am afraid you may; I cannot resist you. [*Exit Lord G.*] Ah! wrong, wrong, wrong; I hope that exclamation is not lost. A blind compliance with a young man's passions, is a poor plot upon his affections. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*Mrs. Sagely's House.*

Enter Mrs. Sagely *and* Miss Alton.

Mrs. S. Indeed, Miss Alton, (since you are resolved to continue that name,) you may bless yourself for finding me out in this wilderness. Wilderness! this town is ten times more dangerous to youth and innocence; every man you meet is a wolf.

Miss Alton. Dear madam, I see you dwell upon

my indiscretion in flying to London; but remember the safeguard I expected to find here. How cruel was the disappointment! how dangerous have been the consequences! I thought the chance happy that threw a retired lodging in my way: I was upon my guard against the other sex, but for my own to be treacherous to an unfortunate—could I expect it?

Mrs. S. Suspect everybody, if you would be safe; but, most of all, suspect yourself. Ah! my pretty truant, the heart that is so violent in its aversions, is in sad danger of being the same in its affections, depend upon it.

Miss Alton. Let them spring from a just esteem, and you will absolve me; my aversion was to the character of the wretch I was threatened with; can you reprove me?

Mrs. S. And tell me truly, now, do you feel the same detestation for this worse character you have made acquaintance with? This rake, this abominable Heartly? Ah! child, your look is suspicious.

Miss Alton. Madam, I have not a thought, that I will not sincerely lay open to you. Mr. Heartly is made to please, and to be avoided; I resent his attempts, and desire never to see him more: his discovery of me here; his letters, his offers, have have greatly alarmed me. I conjure you lose not an hour in placing me under the sort of protection I solicited.

Mrs. S. If you are resolved, I believe I can serve you. Miss Alscrip, the great heiress, (you may have heard of the name in your family,) has been inquiring among decayed gentry for a companion. She is too fine a lady to bear to be alone, and, perhaps, does not look to a husband's company as a certain dependence. Your musical talents will be a great recommendation; she is already apprized, and a line from me will introduce you.

Miss Alton. I will avail myself of your kindness immediately.

Prompt. (*Without.*) I tell you I have business with Mrs. Sagely: I must come in.

Mrs. S. As I live, here is an impudent fellow forcing himself into the passage!

Miss Alton. Oh! heaven, if Mr. Heartly should be behind!

Mrs. S. Get into the back parlour; be he who he will, I'll warrant I protect you.

[*Exit Miss Alton.*

Enter PROMPT, *looking about.*

Mrs. S. Who are you, sir? What are you looking for?

Prompt. Madam, I was looking—I was looking—for you.

Mrs. S. Well, sir, and what do you want?

Prompt. Madam, I want—I want—I want.

Mrs. S. To rob the house, perhaps.

Prompt. Just the contrary, madam; to see that all is safe within it. You have a treasure in your possession that I would not have lost for the world: a young lady.

Mrs. S Indeed! Begone about your business, friend; there are no young ladies to be spoken with here.

Prompt. Lord, madam, I don't desire to speak with her; my attentions go to ladies of the elder sort; I come to make proposals to you alone.

Mrs. S. You make proposals to me? Did you know my late husband, sir?

Prompt. Husband! My good Mrs. Sagely, be at ease, I have no more views upon you, that way, than upon my grandmother. My proposals are of quite a different nature.

Mrs. S. Of a different nature? Why, you audacious varlet!—Here, call a constable!

Prompt. Dear madam, how you continue to misunderstand me; I have a respect for you, that will set at nought all the personal temptations about you, depend upon it, powerful as they are; and, as for the young lady, my purpose is only that you shall guard her safely. I would offer you a pretty snug house, in a pleasant quarter of the town, where you two would be much more commodiously lodged: the furniture new, and in the prettiest taste; a neat little sideboard of plate; a black boy, with a turban, to wait upon you—

Mrs. S. And for what purpose am I to be bribed? I am above it, sirrah. I have but a pittance, 'tis true, and heavy out-goings. My husband's decayed book-keeper to maintain, and poor old Smiler, that so many years together drew our whole family in a chaise—heavy charges—but by cutting off my luxuries, and stopping up a few windows, I can jog on, and scorn to be beholden to you, or him that sent you. (*Prompt tries at the door, and peeps through the key-hole.*) What would the impertinent fellow be at now? Keep the door bolted, and don't stand in sight.

Prompt. (*Aside.*) Oh, oh! She is here, I find, and that's enough My good Mrs. Sagely, your humble servant; I would fain be better acquainted with you, in a modest way; but must wait, I see, a more happy hour. (*Aside.*) When honesty and poverty do happen to meet, they grow so fond of each other's company, it is labour lost to try to separate them. [*Exit.*

Mrs. S. Shut the street-door after him, and never let him in again.

Enter MISS ALTON, *from the inner room.*

Miss Alton. For mercy, madam, let me begone immediately. I am very uneasy; I am certain Mr. Heartly is at the bottom of this.

Mrs. S. I believe it, my dear, and now see the necessity of your removal. I'll write your letter, and heaven protect you. Remember my warning; suspect yourself. [*Exit.*

Miss Alton. In truth I will. I'll forget the forbearance of this profligate, and remember only his intentions. And is gratitude then suspicious? Painful lesson! A woman must not think herself secure because she has no bad impulse to fear; she must be upon her guard, lest her very best thought should betray her.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Sir Clement Flint's House.*

LADY EMILY GAYVILLE *and* CLIFFORD *discovered at chess.* SIR CLEMENT *sitting at a distance, pretending to read a parchment, but slyly observing them.*

Lady E. Check! If you do not take care, you are gone the next move.

Clif. I confess, Lady Emily, you are on the point of complete victory.

Lady E. Pooh! I would not give a farthing for victory without a more spirited defence.

Clif. Then you must engage with those (if those there are) that do not find you irresistible.

Lady E. I could find a thousand such; but I'll engage with none whose triumph I could not submit to with pleasure.

Sir C. (*Apart.*) Pretty significant on both sides. I wonder how much farther it will go.

Lady E. Uncle, did you speak?

Sir C. (*Reading to himself.*) "And the parties to this indenture do farther covenant and agree, that all and every the said lands, tenements, hereditaments—um—um." How useful, sometimes, is ambiguity. (*Loud enough to be heard.*)

Clif. A very natural observation of Sir Clement's upon that long parchment. (*Pauses again upon the chess-board.*) To what a dilemma have you reduced me, Lady Emily! If I advance, I perish by my temerity; and it is out of my power to retreat.

Sir C. (*Apart.*) Better and better! To talk in cipher is a curious faculty.

Clif. Sir?

Sir C. (*Still reading.*) "In witness whereof, the said parties have hereunto, interchangeably, set their hands and seals, this—um—um—day of—um—um—."

Lady E. Come, I trifle with you too long. There's your *coup de grace*. Uncle, I have conquered. (*Both rise from the table.*)

Sir C. Niece, I do not doubt it; and in the style of the great proficients, without looking upon the board. Clifford, was not your mother's name Charlton? (*Rises.*)

Clif. It was, sir.

Sir C. In looking over the writings Alscrip has sent me, preparatory to his daughter's settlement, I find mention of a conveyance from a Sir William Charlton, of Devonshire. Was he a relation?

Clif. My grandfather, sir. The plunder of his fortune was one of the first materials for raising that of Mr. Alscrip, who was steward to Sir William's estate, then manager of his difficulties, and, lastly, his sole creditor.

Sir C. And no better monopoly than that of a needy man's distresses. Alscrip has had twenty such, or I should not have singled out his daughter to be Lord Gayville's wife.

Clif. It is a compensation for my family losses, that in the event, they will conduce to the interest of the man I most love.

Sir C. Heyday! Clifford, take care, don't trench upon the Blandish; your cue, you know, is sincerity.

Clif. You seem to think, sir, there is no such quality. I doubt whether you believe there is an honest man in the world.

Sir C. You do me great injustice; several, several; and upon the old principle, that "honesty is the best policy." Self-interest is the great end of life, says human nature. Honesty is a better agent than craft, says the proverb.

Clif. But, as for ingenuous, or purely disinterested motives—

Sir C. Clifford, do you mean to laugh at me?

Clif What is your opinion, Lady Emily?

Lady E. That there may be such; but it's odds they are troublesome or insipid. Pure ingenuousness, I take it, is a rugged sort of thing, which scarcely will bear the polish of common civility; and for disinterestedness, young people sometimes set out with it; but it is like travelling upon a broken spring, one is glad to get it mended at the next stage.

Sir C. Emily, I protest, you seem to study after me; proceed, child, and we will read together every character that comes in our way.

Lady E. Read one's acquaintance, delightful! What romances, novels, satires, and mock heroics present themselves to my imagination! Our young men are flimsy essays; old ones, political pamphlets; coquettes, fugitive pieces; and fashionable beauties, a compilation of advertised perfumery, essence of pearl, milk of roses, and Olympian dew. Lord, I should now and then though, turn over an acquaintance with a sort of fear and trem-

Clif. How so? [bling.

Lady E. Lest one should pop, unawares, upon something one should not, like a naughty speech in an old comedy; but it is only skipping what would make one blush.

Sir C. Or if you did not skip, when a woman reads by herself, and to herself, there are wicked philosophers who doubt whether her blushes are very troublesome.

Lady E. (*To Sir C.*) Do you know now that, for that speech of your's, and for that saucy smile of your's, (*to Clifford*) I am strongly tempted to read you both aloud.

Sir C. Come, try; I'll be the first to open the book.

Lady E. A treatise of the Houyhnhnms, after the manner of Swift, tending to make us odious to ourselves, and to extract morose mirth from our imperfections: (*Turning to Clifford.*) contrasted with an exposition of ancient morality addressed to the moderns: a chimerical attempt upon an obsolete subject.

Sir C. Clifford! we must double down that page. And now we'll have a specimen of her ladyship.

Lady E. I'll give it you myself, and with justice; which is more than either of you would.

Sir C. And without skipping.

Lady E. Thus, then; a light, airy, fantastic sketch of genteel manners as they are; with a little endeavour at what they ought to be, rather entertaining than instructive, not without art, but sparing in the use of it.

Sir C. But the passions, Emily. Do not forget what should stand in the foreground of a female treatise.

Lady E. They abound; but mixed and blended cleverly enough to prevent any from predominating; like the colours of a shot lutestring, that change as you look at it sideways or full: they are sometimes brightened by vivacity, and now and then subject to a shade of caprice, (but meaning no ill,) not afraid of a Critical Review; and thus, gentlemen, I present myself to you fresh from the press, and I hope not inelegantly bound.

Sir C. Altogether, making a perfectly desirable companion for the closet: I am sure, Clifford, you will agree with me. 'Gad we are got into such a pleasant freedom with each other, it is a pity to separate while any curiosity remains in the company. Pr'ythee, Clifford, satisfy me a little as to your history. Old Lord Hardacre, if I am rightly informed, disinherited your father, his second son.

Clif. For the very marriage we have been speaking of. The little fortune my father could call his own, was sunk before his death, as a provision for my mother; upon an idea, that whatever resentment he might personally have incurred, it would not be extended to an innocent offspring.

Sir C. A very silly confidence. How readily, now, should you and I, Emily, have discovered in a sensible old man, the irreconcilable offence of a marriage of the passions.—You understand me?

Lady E. Perfectly. (*Aside.*) Old petrifaction, your hints always speak forcibly.

Sir C. But your uncle, the present Lord, made amends?

Clif. Amply. He offered to send me from Cambridge to an academy in Germany, to fit me for foreign service; well judging that a cannon-ball was a fair and quick provision for a poor relation.

Sir C. Upon my word, I have known uncles less considerate.

Clif. When Lord Gayville's friendship, and your indulgence, made me the companion of his travels, Lord Hardacre's undivided cares devolved upon my sister; whose whole independent possession, at my mother's death, was five hundred pounds; all our education had permitted that unhappy parent to lay by.

Lady E. Oh! for an act of justice and benevolence to reconcile me to the odious man. Tell me, this instant, what did he do for Miss Clifford?

Clif. He bestowed upon her forty pounds a-year, upon condition that she resided with one of his dependents in a remote county, to save the family from disgrace; and that allowance, when I heard last from her, he had threatened to withdraw, upon her refusing a detestable match he had endeavoured to force upon her.

Lady E. Poor girl!

Sir C. Upon my word, an interesting story! Emily, you look grave, child.

Lady E. (*Aside.*) I shall not own it, however. (*To Sir C.*) For once, my dear uncle, you want your spectacles. My thoughts are on a diverting subject; my first to Miss Alscrip, to take a near view of that collection of charms destined to my happy brother.

Sir C. You need not go out of the room for that purpose. The schedule of an heiress' fortune is a compendium of her merits, and the true security for marriage happiness.

Lady E. I am sure I guess at your system; that union must be most wise, which has wealth to support it, and no affections to disturb it.

Sir C. Right.

Lady E. That makes a divorce the first promise of wedlock, and widowhood the best blessing of life; that separates the interest of husband, wife, and child—

Sir C. To establish the independent comfort of all—

Lady E. Upon the broad basis of family hatred. Excellent, my dear uncle, excellent indeed; and upon that principle, though the lady is likely to be your niece, and my sister, I am sure you will have no objection to my laughing at her a little.

Sir C. You'll be puzzled to make her more ridiculous than I think her. What is your plan?

Lady E. Why, though her pride is to be thought a leader in fashions, she is sometimes a servile copyist. Blandish tells me I am her principal model; and what is most provoking, she is intent upon catching my manner as well as my dress, which she exaggerates to an excess that vexes me. Now, if she will take me in shade, I'll give her a new outline, I am resolved; and if I do not make her a caricature for a printshop—

Clif. Will all this be strictly consistent with your good-nature, Lady Emily?

Lady E. No; nor I don't know when I shall do anything consistent with it again, except leaving you two critics to a better subject than your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Sir C. Well, Clifford! what do you think of her?

Clif. That when she professes ill-temper, she is a very awkward counterfeit.

Sir C. But her beauty, her wit, her improvement, since you went abroad? I expected from a man of your age and taste, something more than a cold compliment upon her temper. Could not you, compatibly with the immaculate sincerity you profess, venture as far as admiration?

Clif. I admire her, sir, as I do a bright star in the firmament, and consider the distance of both as equally immeasurable.

Sir C. (*Aside.*) Specious rogue! Well, leave Emily, then, to be winked at through telescopes; and now to a matter of nearer observation: what is Gayville doing?

Clif. Everything you desire, sir, I trust; but you know I have been at home only three days, and have hardly seen him since I came.

Sir C. Nor I neither; but I find he has profitted wonderfully by foreign experience. After rambling half the world over without harm, he is caught, like a travelled woodcock, at his landing.

Clif. If you suspect Lord Gayville of indiscretion, why do you not put him candidly to the test? I'll be bound for his ingenuousness not to withhold any confession you may require.

Sir C. You may be right; but he'll confess more to you in an hour, than to me in a month, for all that. Come, Clifford, look as you ought to do at your interest; sift him, watch him; you cannot guess how much you will make me your friend, and how grateful I may be if you will discover—

Clif. Sir, you mistake the footing upon which Lord Gayville and I live; I am often the partner of his thoughts, but never a spy upon his actions. [*Exit.*

Sir C. (*Alone.*) Well played, Clifford! Good air and emphasis, and well suited to the trick of the scene. He would do, if the practical part of deceit were as easy at his age, as discernment of it is at mine. Gayville and Emily, if they had not a vigilant guard, would be his prey; for they are examples of the generous affections coming to maturity with their stature; while suspicion, art, and interest are still dormant in the seed. I must employ Blandish in this business; a rascal of a different cast, below Clifford in hypocrisy, but greatly above him in the scale of impudence. They shall both forward my ends, while they think they are pursuing their own. I shall ever be sure of a man's endeavours to serve me, while I hold out a lure to his knavery and interest. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*An Ante-chamber.*

Alscrip. (*Without.*) Dinner not ordered till seven o'clock; bid the kitchen-maid get me some eggs and bacon. Plague, what with the time of dining, and the French cookery, I am in the land of starvation, with half St. James's-market upon my weekly bills.

Enter ALSCRIP.

What a change have I made to please my unpleasable daughter? Instead of my regular meal at Furnival's-inn, here am I transported to Berkeley Square, to fast at Alscrip-house, till my fine company come from their morning, ride two hours after dark; nay, it's worse, if I am carried among my great neighbours in Miss Alscrip's suite, as she calls it. My lady looks over me; my lord walks over me; and sets me in a little tottering cane chair, at the cold corner of the table; though I have a mortgage upon the house and furniture, and arrears due of the whole interest. It's a pleasure, though, to be well dressed. My daughter maintains all fashions are founded in sense; ecod, the tightness of my wig, and the stiffness of my cape, give me the sense of the pillory: plaguy scanty about the hips, too; and the breast something of a merrythought reversed; but there is some sense in that, for if one sex pares away in proportion where the other swells, we shall take up no more room in the world than we did before.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Miss Alscrip wishes to see you.

Alscrip. Who is with her?

Serv. Only Mrs. Blandish, sir.

Alscrip. She must content herself with that company, till I have had my whet. Order up the eggs and bacon. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Miss Alscrip's Dressing-room.*

MISS ALSCRIP *discovered at her toilet.* CHIGNON *dressing her head.* MRS. BLANDISH *sitting by, and* TIFFANY *in attendance.*

Miss Als. And so, Blandish, you really think that the introduction of Otaheite feathers in my trimming succeeded?

Mrs. B. Oh! with the mixture of those charming Italian flowers, and the knots of pearl that gathered up the festoons, never anything had so happy an effect; it put the whole ball-room out of humour. Monsieur Chignon, that pin a little more to the front.

Miss Als. And what did they say?

Mrs. B. You know it is the first solicitude of my life to see the friend of my heart treated with justice. So, when you stood up to dance, I got into the thick of the circle—Monsieur, don't you think this large diamond would be well placed just in the middle?

Chig. Eh! non, madame; ce ne relevé pas.—Dat give no relief to de weight of de curl; full in de front un gros bouton, von great nob of diamond! pardie ce seroit un accommodage à la Polyphême;

de big eye of de geant in de centre of de fore-head.

Miss Als. Chignon is right in point of taste, though not quite so happy in his allusions as he is sometimes.

Chig. Ah! Madame, you have done von grande injure to my contrée: You go for von month, and bring away all de good taste. At Paris, all von side, de diamond, de cap, de glance, de bon mot même; all von side, nothing direct à Paris.

Miss Als. (*Smiling at Chig. and then turning to Mrs. B.*) Well!. And so—

Mrs. B. So it was all admiration! "Elegant! (says Lady Spite;) it may do very well for Miss Alscrip, who never looks at expense."—"The dress of a bridal princess; (cries Mrs. Scanty;) and for one night's wear, too!"

Miss Als. Delightful! the very language I wished for. Oh! how charmingly apropos was my accident! Did you see when my trimming in the passe-pied of a cotillion came luckily in contact with Billy Skim's great shoe-buckle, how it ripped away?

Mrs. B. Did I see it?

Miss Als. One of the great feathers stuck fast on the shoe, and looked for all the world like the heel-wing of a Mercury in a pantomime.

Mrs. B. Oh! you witty creature, how you de-scribe.

Miss Als. It was a most becoming rent.

Mrs. B. And what a display of indifference; what an example for a woman of fortune did you exhibit in the bustle of picking up the scattered fragments!

Miss Als. When the pearls were trundling about, and I insisted upon the company being no longer disturbed, but would leave what remained for fairy favours to the maid who swept the room. He, he, he! Do you think Lady Emily would have done that better?

Mrs. B. Lady Emily? poor girl! How soon must she submit to be the humble second of the family.

Miss Als. He, he, he! Do you sincerely think so, Blandish? And yet it would be strange if it were otherwise, for I could buy her ten times over.

Chig. Madame, vat humeure vould you vear to-day?

Miss Als. Humour, Chiguon? What am I dresed for now?

Chig. The parfaite aimable, madam; but my briuging de point of de hair more down to de eye-brow, or adding a little blowse to de sides, I can give you de look severe, capricieuse: vat you please.

Miss Als. We'll put it off for half an hour, I am not quite decided. I was in the capricieuse yester-day; I believe I shall keep on the perfect amiable. [*Exit Chignon.*] Tiffany, take off my powdering gown. Ah! ho! How the wench tugs; do you think you are pulling off the coachman's great coat?

Mrs. B. My dear amiable! do not let that sweet temper be ruffled. Why will you not employ me in these little offices. Delicacy like your's should be waited upon by the softness of a sylph.

[*Exit Tiffany, peevishly.*

Miss Als. I am promised a creature to be about me out of the common way.

Mrs. B. A new woman?

Miss Als. No; something to be raised much higher, and, at the same time, fitted better to receive one's ill-humour. An humble companion, well born, well educated, and perfectly dependent, is a most use-tul appurtenance in the best families.

Mrs. B. Well, do not raise her to the rank of a friend, lest I should be jealous.

Miss Als. You may be perfectly secure; I shall take particular care that friendship shall be out of the question, on both sides. I had once thought of a restoration of pages to sit in scarlet and silver (as one reads in former times) upon the forepart of the coach, and to hold up one's train: but I have a new male attendant in a valet de chambre, who has possession of my bust; my two women will have the charge from the point of the shoulder to the toe: so my person being provided for, the Countess of Gayville shall have an attendant to wait upon her mind.

Mrs. B. I vow, a most elegant and uncommon thought.

Miss Als. One that can pen a note in the familiar, the punctilious, or the witty; it's quite trouble-some to be always writing wit for one's self; but, above all, she is to have a talent for music.

Mrs. B. Ay, your very soul is framed for har-mony.

Miss Als. I have not quite determined what to call her—Governante of the private chamber, keeper of the boudoir, with a silver key at her breast—

Enter Chignon.

Chig. Madame, a young lady beg to know if you be visible.

Miss Als. A young lady! It is not Lady Emily Gayville?

Chig. Non, madam; but if you were absente, and I had the adjustment of her head, she would be the most charmante personne I did ever see.

Miss Als. Introduce her. [*Exit Chignon.*] Who can this be?

Mrs. B. Some woman of taste, to inquire your correspondent at Paris; or—

Re-enter Chignon, *with* Miss Alton.

Miss Als. Of taste, indeed, by her appearance! Who's in the ante-chamber? Why did they not open the folding-doors? Chignon, approach a fau-teuil for the lady.

Miss Alton. Madam, I come—

Miss Als. Madam, pray be seated.

Miss Alton. Excuse me, madam,—

Miss Als. Madam, I must beg—

Miss Alton. Madam, this letter will inform you how little pretension I have to the honours you are offering.

Miss Als. (*Reads.*) "*Miss Alton, the bearer of this, is the person I recommended as worthy the honour of attending you as a companion. She is born a gentlewoman; I dare say her talents and good qualities will speak more in her favour, than any words I could use. I am, madam, your most obe-dient—Um—um.*—Blandish." Was there ever such a mistake?

Mrs. B. Oh! you dear, giddy, absent creature, what could you be thinking of?

Miss Als. Absent, indeed. Chignon, give me the fauteuil. (*Throws herself into it.*) Young wo-wan, where were you educated?

Miss Alton. Chiefly, madam, with my parents.

Miss Als. But finished, I take it for granted, at a country boarding-school; for we have young ladies, you know, Blandish, boarded and educated, upon blue boards, in gold letters, in every village; with a strolling player for a dancing-master, and a deserter from Dunkirk to teach the French gram-mar.

Mrs. B. How that genius of your's does paint! nothing escapes you. I dare say you have antici-pated this young lady's story.

Miss Alton. It is very true, madam, my life can afford nothing to interest the curiosity of you two ladies; it has been too insignificant to merit your concern, and attended with no circumstances to excite your pleasantry.

Miss Als. I hope, child, it will be attended with such, for the future, as will add to your own. I cannot bear a mope about me. I am told you have a talent for music; can you touch that harp? It stands here as a piece of furniture, but I have a

notion it is kept in tune, by the man who comes to wind up my clocks.

Miss Alton. Madam, I dare not disobey you. But I have been used to perform before a most partial audience; I am afraid strangers will think my talent too humble to be worthy attention.

SONG.—Miss Alton.

For tenderness fram'd in life's earliest day,
A parent's soft sorrows to mine led the way;
The lesson of pity was caught from her eye,
And, ere words were my own, I spoke in a sigh.

The nightingale plunder'd, the mate-widow'd dove,
The warbled complaint of the suffering grove,
To youth, as it ripen'd, gave sentiment new,
The object still changing, the sympathy true.

Soft embers of passion yet rest in the glow;
A warmth of more pain may this breast never know!
Or, if too indulgent the blessing I claim,
Let reason awaken, and govern the flame.

Miss Als. I declare, not amiss, Blandish; only a little too plaintive: but I dare say she can play a country dance, when the enlivening is required. So, Miss Alton, you are welcome to my protection; and, indeed, I wish you to stay from this hour. My toilet being nearly finished, I shall have a horrid vacation till dinner.

Miss Alton. Madam, you do me great honour, and I very readily obey you.

Mrs. B. I wish you joy, Miss Alton, of the most enviable situation a young person of elegant talents could be raised to. You and I will vie with each other, to prevent our dear countess ever knowing a melancholy hour. She has but one fault to correct—the giving way to the soft effusions of a too tender heart.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, a letter. [*Exit.*

Miss Als. It's big enough for a state packet. Oh, mercy! a petition! For heaven's sake! Miss Alton, look it over. (*Miss Alton reads.*) I should as soon read one of Lady Newchapel's methodist sermons. What does it contain?

Miss Alton. Madam, an uncommon series of calamities, which prudence could neither see, nor prevent: the reverse of a whole family from affluence and content to misery and imprisonment; and it adds, that the parties have the honour, remotely, to be allied to you.

Miss Als. Remote relations! ay, they always think one's made of money.

Enter another Servant.

Serv. A messenger, madam, from the animal repository, with the only puppy of the Peruvians, and the refusal at twenty guineas.

Miss Als. Twenty guineas! Were he to ask fifty, I must have him. [*Exit Serv.*

Mrs. B. (*Offering to run out.*) I vow, I'll give him the first kiss.

Miss Als. (*Stopping her.*) I'll swear you sha'n't.

Miss Alton. Madam, I was just finishing the petition.

Miss Als. It's throwing money away; but give him a crown.

[*Exit with Mrs. B. striving which shall be first.*

Miss Alton. "The soft effusions of a too tender heart." The proof is excellent. That the covetous should be deaf to the miserable, I can conceive; but I should not have believed, if I had not seen, that a taste for profusion did not find its first indulgence in benevolence. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Miss Alscrip's Dressing-room.*

Miss Alton *discovered.*

Miss Alton. Thanks to Mrs. Blandish's inexhaustible talent for encomium, I shall be relieved from one part of a companion that my nature revolts at. But who comes here? It's well if I shall not be exposed to impertinences I was not aware of.

Enter Chignon.

Chig. (*Aside.*) Ma foi, la voila; I will lose no time to pay my addresse. Now for de humble maniere, and de unperplex assurance of my contrée. (*Bowing with a French shrug. Miss Alton turning over music-books.*) Mademoiselle, est-il permis? may I presume to offer you my profound homage? Mademoiselle, if you vill put your head into my hands, I vill give a distinction to your beauty, that shall make you and me de conversation of all de town.

Miss Alton. I request, Mr. Chignon, you will devote your ambition to your own part of the compliment.

Alscrip. (*Without.*) Where is my daughter?

Miss Alton. Is that Mr. Alscrip's voice, Mr. Chignon? It's awkward for me to meet him before I am introduced.

Chig. Keep a little behind, mademoiselle; he vill only pashe de room. He vill not see through me.

Enter Alscrip.

Alscrip. Ha! my daughter gone already! but (*sees Chignon*) there's a new specimen of foreign vermin. A lady's valet-de-chambre! Taste for ever! Now if I were to give the charge of my person to a waiting-maid, they'd say I was indelicate. (*As he crosses the stage, Chignon keeps sideling to intercept his sight, and bowing as he looks towards him.*) What the devil is mounseer at? I thought all his agility lay in his fingers: what antics is the monkey practising? He twists and doubles himself as if he had a raree-shew at his back.

Chig. (*Aside.*) Be gar, no raree-show for you, Monsieur Alscrip, if I can help.

Alscrip. (*Sees Miss Alton.*) Ah, ah! What have we got there? Monsieur, who is that?

Chig. Sir, my lady wish to speak to you in her boudoir. She sent me to conduct you, sir.

Alscrip. (*Imitating.*) Yes, sir; but I will first conduct myself to this lady. Tell me, this minute, who she is?

Chig. Sir, she come to live here, companion to my lady. Mademoiselle study some musique; she must not be disturbed.

Alscrip. Get about your business, monsieur, or I'll disturb every comb in your head. Go tell my daughter to stay till I come to her. I shall give her companion some cautions against saucy Frenchmen, sirrah.

Chig. (*Aside.*) Cautions! peste! you are subject a' cautions yourself. I suspecte you to be von old rake, but no ver dangerous rival. [*Exit.*

Alscrip. (*Aside.*) The devil is never tired of throwing baits in my way. (*She comes forward.*) By all that's delicious! I must be better acquainted with her. But how to begin? My usual way of attacking my daughter's maids will never do.

Miss Alton. (*Aside.*) My situation is very embarrassing.

Alscrip. Beauteous stranger! give me leave to add my welcome to my daughter's. Since Alscrip House was established, she never brought anything into it to please me before.

Miss Alton. Sir, it is a great additional honour to that Miss Alscrip has done me, to be thought worthy so respectable a protection as your's.

Alscrip. I could furnish you with a better word than respectable. It sounds so distant, and my feelings have so little to do with cold respect. I never had such a desire to make myself agreeable.

Miss Alton. A very strange old man! (*Aside.*) Sir, you'll pardon me, I believe Miss Alscrip is waiting.

Alscrip. Don't be afraid, my dear. Enchanting diffidence! Zounds! what a flutter I am in! (*Aside.*)

Don't be afraid; my disposition, to be sure, is too susceptible; but then, it is, likewise, so dove-like, so tender, and so innocent! Come, play me that tune, and enchant my ear, as you have done my eye.

Miss Alton. Sir, I wish to be excused; indeed, it does not deserve your attention.

Alscrip. Not deserve it? I had rather hear you than all the signoritininies together. These are the strings to which my senses shall dance. (*Sets the harp.*)

Miss Alton. Sir, it is to avoid the affectation of refusing what is so little worth asking for. (*Takes the harp, and plays a few bars of a lively air.*)

Alscrip. Oh! the sweet little twiddle-diddles!

Miss Alton. For shame, sir; what do you mean? (*Alscrip gets hold of both her hands, and kisses her fingers.*) Help! (*Struggling.*)

Enter MISS ALSCRIP.

Miss Als. I wonder what my papa is doing all this time. (*Miss Alton confused. Alscrip puts his hand to his eye.*)

Alscrip. Oh! child, I have got something in my eye, that makes me almost mad. A little midge—believe. 'Gad! I caught hold of this young lady's hand in one of my twitches, and her nerves were as much in a flutter as if I had bit her.

Miss Als. Yes, my dear papa, I perceive you have something in your eye, and I'll do my best to take it out immediately. Miss Alton, will you do me the favour to walk into the drawing-room?

Miss Alton. I hope, madam, you will permit me, at a proper opportunity, to give my explanation of what has passed. [*Exit.*

Miss Als. There's no occasion. Let it rest among the catalogue of wonders, like the Glastonbury thorn, that blooms at Christmas. To be serious; papa, though I carried off your behaviour as well as I could, I am really shocked at it. A man of your years, and of a profession where the opinion of the world is of such consequence—

Alscrip. My dear Molly, have not I quitted the practice of attorney, and turned fine gentleman, to laugh at the world's opinion? or, had I not, do you suppose the kiss of a pretty wench would hurt a lawyer? My dear Molly, if the fraternity had no other reflections to be afraid of—

Miss Als. Oh, hideous! Molly, indeed! You ought to have forgot I had a christened name long ago: am not I going to be a countess? If you did not stint my fortune, by squandering your's away upon dirty trulls, I might be called your grace.

Alscrip. Spare your lectures, and you shall be called your highness, if you please.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, Lady Emily Gayville is in her carriage in the street, will your ladyship be at home?

Miss Als. Yes, shew her into the drawing-room. [*Exit Servant.*] I entreat, sir, you will keep a little more guard upon your passions; consider the dignity of your house; and, if you must be cooing, buy a French figurante. [*Exit.*

Alscrip. Well said, my lady countess! well said, quality morals! What am I the better for burying a jealous wife? To be chicken-pecked is a new persecution, more provoking than the old one. Oh! Molly, Molly! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Drawing-room.*

MISS ALTON *discovered.*

Miss Alton. What perplexing scenes I already meet with in this house? I ought, however, to be contented in the security it affords against the attempts of Heartly. I am contented: but, oh! Clifford, it was hard to be left alone to the choice of distresses.

Enter CHIGNON, *introducing* LADY EMILY.

Chig. My Lady Emily Gayville—Madame no here! Mademoiselle, announce, if you please, my lady.

Lady E. (*Aside.*) Did my ears deceive me? surely, I heard the name of Clifford; and it escaped in an accent.—Pray, sir, who is that? (*To Chignon.*)

Chig. Mademoiselle Alton, confidante of my lady, and next after me in her suite. (*Examines her head-dress impertinently. Miss Alton, with great modesty, rises and puts her work together.*)

Lady E. There seems to be considerable difference in the decorum of her attendants. You need not stay, sir.

Chig. (*As he goes out.*) Ma foi, sa tête est passable: her head may pass.

Lady E. (*Aside.*) How my heart beats with curiosity! (*Miss Alton having disposed her things in her work-bag, is retiring.*) Miss Alton, I am in no haste; on the contrary, I think the occasion fortunate that allows me to begin an acquaintance with a person of so amiable an appearance. I don't know whether that pert foreigner has led me into an error; but, without being too inquisitive, may I ask if you make any part of this family?

Miss Alton. Madam, I am under Miss Alscrip's protection: I imagine I am represented as her dependent: I am not ashamed of humble circumstances, that are not the consequences of indiscretion.

Lady E. That, with such claims to respect, you should be in any circumstances of humiliation, is a disgrace to the age we live in.

Miss Alton. Madam, my humiliation (if such it be) is just. Perhaps I have been too proud, and my heart required this self-correction. A life of retired industry might have been more pleasing to me; but, an orphan—a stranger—ignorant and diffident, I preferred my present situation, as one less exposed to misrepresentation. (*Bell rings.*) I can no longer detain Miss Alscrip from the honour of receiving your ladyship. [*Exit.*

Lady E. There is something strangely mysterious and affecting in all this. What delicacy of sentiment! what softness of manners! and how well do these qualities accord with that sigh for Clifford! She has been proud—proud of what? of Clifford's love. It is too plain. But, then, to account for her present condition? He has betrayed and abandoned her—too plain again, I fear. She talked, too, of a self-corrected heart; take example, Emily, and recall thine from an object, which it ought, more than ever, to renounce. But here comes the Alscrip and her friend: lud, lud, lud! how shall I recover my spirits? I must attempt it; and if I lose my present thoughts in a trial of extravagance, be it of theirs or my own, it will be a happy expedient.

Enter MISS ALSCRIP *and* MRS. BLANDISH.

Lady E. I ask your pardon, madam, for being so awkward; but, I confess, I did not expect so elevated a salute.

Miss Als. Dear Lady Emily, I had no notion of its not being universal. In France, the touch of the lips just between the eyebrows, has been adopted for years.

Lady E. I perfectly acknowledge the propriety of the custom. It is almost the only spot of the face where the touch would not risk a confusion of complexions.

Miss Als. He, he, he! what a pretty thought!

Mrs. B. How I have longed for this day! Come, let me put an end to ceremony, and join the hands of the sweetest pair that ever nature and fortune marked for connexion. (*Joins their hands.*)

Miss Als. Thank you, my good Blandish; though I was determined to break the ice, Lady Emily, in the first place I met you. But you were not at Lady Dovecourt's last night.

Lady E. No; I went home directly from the opera; projected the revival of a cap; read a page

in the Trials of Temper; went to bed, and dreamed I was Belinda in the Rape of the Lock.

Mrs. B. Elegant creature!

Miss Als. (*Aside.*) I must have that air, if I die for it. (*Imitating.*) I, too, came home early; supped with my old gentleman; made him explain my marriage articles, dower, and heirs entail; read a page in a trial of divorce, and dreamed of a rose-colour equipage, with emblems of Cupids issuing out of coronets.

Mrs. B. Oh! you sweet twins of perfection! what equality in everything! I have thought of a name for you—The Inseparable Inimitables.

Miss Als. I declare, I shall like it exceedingly; one sees so few uncopied originals. The thing I cannot bear—

Lady E. Is vulgar imitation. I must catch the words from your mouth, to shew you how we agree.

Miss Als. Exactly. Not that one wishes to be without affectation.

Lady E. Oh! mercy forbid!

Miss Als. But to catch a manner, and weave it, as I may say, into one's own originality.

Mrs. B. Pretty, pretty!

Lady E. That's the art. Lord! if one lived entirely upon one's own whims, who would not be run out in a twelvemonth? [folly?

Miss Als. Dear Lady Emily, don't you dote upon

Lady E. To ecstacy. I only despair of seeing it well kept up.

Miss Als. I flatter myself there is no great danger of that.

Lady E. You are mistaken. We have, 'tis true, some examples of the extravaganza in high life, that no other country can match; but, withal, many a false sister, that starts, as one would think, in the very heyday of the fantastic, yet comes to a stand-still in the midst of the course.

Mrs. B. Poor, spiritless creatures!

Lady E. Do you know there is more than one dutchess who has been seen in the same carriage with her husband; like two doves in a basket, in the print of Conjugal Felicity: and another has been detected—I almost blush to name it—

Mrs. B. Bless us! where? and how—and how?

Lady E. In nursing her own child!

Miss Als. Oh, barbarism! For heaven's sake! let us change the subject. You were mentioning a revived cap, Lady Emily; anything of the Henry Quatre?

Lady E. Quite different. An English mob under the chin, and artless ringlets, in natural colour, that shall restore an admiration for Prior's Nut-brown Maid.

Miss Als. Horrid! shocking!

Lady E. Absolutely necessary. To be different from the rest of the world, we must now revert to nature. Make haste, or you have so much to undo, you will be left behind.

Miss Als. I dare say so. But who can vulgarize at once? What will the French say?

Lady E. Oh! we shall have a new treaty for the interchange of fashions and follies; and then say they will complain, as they do of other treaties, that we out-manufactured them.

Miss Als. Fashions and follies! Oh! what a charming contention!

Lady E. Yes; and one, thank heaven! so perfectly well understood on both sides, that no counter-declaration will be wanted to explain it.

Miss Als. (*With an affected drop of her lip in her laugh.*) He, he, he, he, he, he!

Lady E. My dear Miss Alscrip, what are you doing? I must correct you, as I love you. Sure you must have observed the drop of the under lip is exploded since Lady Simpermode broke a tooth. (*Sets her mouth affectedly.*) I am preparing the cast of the lips for the ensuing winter—thus. It is to be called the Paphian mimp.

Miss Als. (*Imitating.*) I swear, I think it pretty. I must try to get it.

Lady E. Nothing so easy. It is done by one cabalistical word, like a metamorphosis in the fairy tales. You have only, when before your glass, to keep pronouncing to yourself nimini-pimini; the lips cannot fail taking their plie.

Miss Als. Nimini-pimini-imini, mimini—Oh! its delightfully infantine! and so innocent, to be kissing one's own lips.

Lady E. You have it to a charm. Does it not become her infinitely, Mrs. Blandish?

Mrs. B. Our friend's features must succeed in every grace; but never so much as in a quick change of extremes.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, Lord Gayville desires to know if you are at home?

Miss Als. A strange formality!

Lady E. (*Aside.*) No brother ever came more opportunely to a sister's relief; "I have fooled it to the top of my bent."

Miss Als. Desire Miss Alton to come to me. [*Exit Servant.*] Lady Emily, you must not blame me; I am supporting the cause of our sex, and must punish a lover for some late inattentions. I shall not see him.

Lady E. Oh, cruel! (*Sees Miss Alton.*)

Enter Miss Alton.

Miss Alscrip, you have, certainly, the most elegant companion in the world.

Miss Als. Dear, do you think so? An ungain, dull sort of a body, in my mind; but we'll try her in the present business. Miss Alton, you must do me a favour. I want to plague my husband that is to be; you must take my part; you must double me like a second actress at Paris, when the first has the vapours.

Miss Alton. Really, madam, the task you would impose upon me—

Miss Als. Will be a great improvement to you, and quite right for me. Don't be grave, Lady Emily; (*whose attention is fixed on Miss Alton*) your brother's penance shall be short, and I'll take the reconciliation scene upon myself.

Lady E. (*Endeavouring to recover herself.*) I cannot but pity him; especially, as I am sure, that do what you will, he will always regard you with the same eyes. And so, my sweet sister, I leave him to your mercy, and to that of your representative, whose disposition, if I have any judgment, is ill suited to a task of severity.

Mrs. B. Dear Lady Emily, carry me away with you. When a lover is coming, it shall never be said I am in the way.

Lady E. (*Aside.*) What a painful suspense am I to suffer! another instant, and I shall betray myself. Adieu, Miss Alscrip.

Miss Als. Call Lady Emily's servants.

Lady E. You sha'n't stir; remember nimini-pimini. I am at your orders. [*Exit.*

Mrs. B. I follow you, my sweet volatile! (*Coming back, and squeezing Miss Alscrip's hand, in a half whisper.*) She'd give her eyes to be like you. [*Exit.*

Miss Als. Now for it, Miss Alton. Only remember that you are doubling me, the woman he adores.

Miss Alton. Indeed, madam, I am quite incapable of executing your orders to your satisfaction. The utmost I can undertake is a short message.

Miss Als. Never fear. (*Knock at the door.*) There he comes: step aside, and I'll give you your very words. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lord Gayville, *conducted by a Servant.*

Lord G. So, now to get through this piece of drudgery. There's a meanness in my proceeding, and my compunction is just. Oh! the dear, lost possessor of my heart; lost, irrecoverably lost!

Enter MISS ALTON.

Miss Alton. (*Aside.*) A pretty employment I am sent upon!

Lord G. (*Aside.*) Could she but know the sacrifice I am ready to make!

Miss Alton. (*Aside.*) The very picture of a lover, if absence of mind marks one. It is unpleasant for me to interrupt a man I never saw, but I shall deliver my message very concisely. My lord—

Lord G. (*Turning.*) Madam—Astonishment! Miss Alton! my charming fugitive?

Miss Alton. How! Mr. Heartly, Lord Gayville?

Lord G. My joy and my surprise are alike unutterable. But I conjure you, madam, tell me by what strange circumstance do I meet you here?

Miss Alton. (*Aside.*) Now assist me, honest pride! assist me, resentment!

Lord G. You spoke to me: did you know me?

Miss Alton. No otherwise, my lord, than as Miss Alscrip's lover. I had a message from her to your lordship.

Lord G. For heaven's sake, madam, in what capacity?

Miss Alton. In one, my lord, not very much above the class of a servant.

Lord G. Impossible, sure! It is to place the brilliant below the foil; to make the inimitable work of nature secondary to art and defect.

Miss Alton. It is to take refuge in a situation that offers me security against suspicious obligation; against vile design; against the attempts of a seducer: it is to exercise the patience, that the will, and, perhaps, the favour of heaven meant to try.

Lord G. Cruel, cruel to yourself and me. Could I have had a happiness like that of assisting you against the injustice of fortune; and when to be thus degraded was the alternative?

Miss Alton. My lord, it is fit I should be explicit. Reflect upon the language you have held to me; view the character in which you present yourself to this family; and then pronounce in whose breast we must look for a sense of degradation.

Lord G. In mine, and mine alone. I confess it. Hear, nevertheless, my defence. My actions are all the result of love: and, culpable as I may seem, my conscience does not reproach me with—

Miss Alton. Oh! my lord, I readily believe you. You are above its reproaches: qualities that are infamous and fatal, in one class of life, create applause and conscientious satisfaction in another.

Lord G. Infamous and fatal qualities! What means my lovely accuser?

Miss Alton. That to steal or stab is death in common life: but when one of your lordship's degree sets his hard heart upon the destruction of a woman, how glorious is his success! How consummate his triumph, when he can follow the theft of her affections by the murder of her honour.

Enter MISS ALSCRIP, *softly, who stands apart.*

Miss Als. I wonder how it goes on! (*Aside.*)

Lord G. Exalted, adorable woman!

Miss Als. Adorable! ay, I thought how 'twould be. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. Hear me, I conjure you.

Miss Als. Not a word, if she knows her business. (*Aside.*)

Miss Alton. My lord, I have heard too much.

Miss Als. Bravo! I could not have played it better myself. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. Oh! still more charming than severe. (*Kneels.*)

Miss Als. Humph! I hope he means me, though. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. The character in which you see me here makes me appear more odious to myself, if possible, than I am to you.

Miss Als. (*Aside.*) By all that's treacherous! I doubt it.

Miss Alton. Desist, my lord. Miss Alscrip has a claim—

Miss Als. Ay, now for it. (*Aside.*)

Lord G. By heaven! she is my aversion. It is my family, on whom I am dependent, that has betrayed me into these cursed addresses. Accept my contrition; pity a wretch, struggling with the complicated torments of passion, shame, penitence, and despair.

Miss Als. (*Comes forward.*) I never saw a part better doubled in my life!

Lord G. Confusion! What a light do I appear in to them both! How shall I redeem myself, even in my own opinion? (*Aside.*)

Miss Als. (*Looking at Lord G.*) Expressive dignity! (*Looking at Miss Alton.*) Sweet simplicity! amiable diffidence! "She should execute my commands most awkwardly."

Lord G. (*Aside.*) There is but one way. (*To Miss Alscrip.*) Madam, your sudden entrance has effected a discovery which, with shame I confess, ought to have been made before. The lady, who stands there, is in possession of my heart. If it is a crime to adore her, I am the most guilty wretch on earth. Pardon me, if you can; my sincerity is painful to me; but, in this crisis, it is the only atonement I can offer. [*Exit.*

Miss Als. Admirable! perfect! The most finished declaration, I am convinced, that ever was made from beggarly nobility to the woman that was to make his fortune: "The lady who stands there"—the lady! Madam, I am in patient expectation for the sincerity of your ladyship's atonement.

Miss Alton. I am confounded at the strange occurrences that have happened; but, be assured, you see in me an innocent and most unwilling rival.

Miss Als. Rival! better and better. You—you give me uneasiness? You moppet! you coquette of the side-table, to catch the gawky heir of the family, when he comes home from school at Christmas. You—you vile seducer of my good, old, honoured father. (*Cries. In a passion again.*) What, is my lady dumb? Hussy! have you the insolence to hold your tongue?

Miss Alton. Madam, I just now offered to justify this scene; I thought it the part of duty to myself, and respect to you. But your behaviour has now left but one sentiment upon my mind.

Miss Als. And what is that, madam?

Miss Alton. Scorn. [*Exit.*

Miss Als. Was there ever anything like this before? and to a woman of my fortune? I to be robbed of a lover; and that a poor lord, too. I'll have the act revived against witchcraft; I'll have the minx tried; I'll—I'll—I'll— [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Alscrip's Room of business.*

ALSCRIP *and* RIGHTLY *discovered.*

Right. Upon all these matters, Mr. Alscrip, I am authorized by my client, Sir Clement Flint, to agree. There remains nothing but your favouring me with the inspection of the Charlton title-deeds, and your daughter's settlements may be engrossed.

Alscrip. I cannot conceive, my friend Rightly, any such inspection to be requisite. Have not I been in constant, quiet possession?

Right. Sir Clement insists upon it.

Alscrip. A client insist! and you, an old practitioner, suffer such a demur to your infallibility! Ah! in my practice I had the sure means of disappointing such dabblers and divers into their own cases.

Right. How, pray

Alscrip. I read his writings to him myself. I was the best reader in Chancery-lane for setting the understanding at defiance. Drew breath but once in a quarter of an hour, always in the wrong place, and made a single sentence of six skins of parchment. Shall I give you a specimen?

Right. I have no doubt of your talent.

Alscrip. Then return to Sir Clement, and follow my example.

Right. No, Mr. Alscrip; though I acknowledge your skill, I do not subscribe to your doctrine. The English law is the finest system of ethics, as well as government, that ever the world produced, and it cannot be too generally understood.

Alscrip. Law understood! Zounds! would you destroy the profession?

Right. No, I would raise it. Had every man of sense the knowledge of the theory, to which he is competent, the practice would revert to the purity of its institution; maintain the rights, and not promote the knavery of mankind.

Alscrip. (*Aside.*) Plaguy odd maxims! Sure, he means to try me. Brother Rightly, we know the world, and are alone. I have locked the door. (*In a half whisper.*)

Right. A very useless precaution. I have not a principle nor a proceeding that I would not proclaim at Charing-Cross.

Alscrip. (*Aside.*) No! then I'll pronounce you the most silly, or the most impudent fellow of the fraternity.

Right. But where are these writings? You can have no difficulty in laying your hand upon them, for I perceive you keep things in a distinguished regularity.

Alscrip. Yes; I have distinct repositories for all papers, and especially, title-deeds. Some in drawers, some in closets—(*aside*) and a few under ground.

Miss Als. (*Rattling at the door.*) What makes you lock the door, sir? I must speak to you this instant.

Alscrip. One moment, child, and I'll be ready for you. (*Turning again to Rightly, as to dissuade him.*)

Right. If the thoughts of the wedding-day make any part of the young lady's impatience, you take a bad way, Mr. Alscrip, to satisfy it; for I tell you plainly, our business cannot be completed till I see these writings.

Alscrip. (*Aside.*) Confound the old hound, how he sticks to his scent! (*Miss Als. still at the door.*) I am coming, I tell you. (*Opens a bureau in a confused hurry, shuffles papers about, and puts one into Rightly's hand.*) There, if this whim must be indulged, step into the next room. You, who know the material parts of a parchment lie in a nut-shell, will look it over in ten minutes. (*Puts Rightly into another room.*)

Miss Als. (*Without.*) I won't wait another instant, whatever you are about. Let me in.

Alscrip. (*Opening the door.*) Sex and vehemence! What is the matter now?

Enter Miss Alscrip, *in the most violent emotion.*

Miss Als. So, sir—yes, sir—you have done finely by me, indeed; you are a pattern for fathers: a precious match you had provided!

Alscrip. What the devil's the matter?

Miss Als. (*Running on.*) I, that with fifty thousand independent pounds, left myself in a father's hands—a thing unheard of—and waited for a husband with unparalleled patience till I was of age.

Alscrip. What the devil's the matter?

Miss Als. (*Following him about.*) I, that at fourteen, might have married a French marquis,—my governess told me he was, for all he was her brother.

Alscrip. Gad-a-mercy! governess!

Miss Als. And as for commoners, had not I the choice of the market? And the handsome Irish colonel at Bath, that had carried off six heiresses before, for himself and friends, and would have found his way to Gretna-green blindfolded?

Alscrip. (*Aside.*) 'Gad! I wish you were there now, with all my heart. What the devil is at the bottom of all this?

Miss Als. Why, Lord Gayville is at the bottom; and your hussy, that you was so sweet upon this morning, is at the bottom; a treacherous minx! I sent her, only for a little innocent diversion, as my double—

Alscrip. Your what?

Miss Als. Why, my double; to vex him.

Alscrip. Double! This is the most useless attendant you have had yet. 'Gad! I'll start you single-handed in the art of vexation against any ten women in England.

Miss Als. I caught them, just as I did you with your— [that.

Alscrip. Is that all? 'Gad! I don't see much in

Miss Als. Not much? What, a woman of my fortune and accomplishments turned off—rejected—renounced!

Alscrip. How, renounced? Has he broke the contract? Will you prove he has broken the contract?

Miss Als. Ay, now, my dear papa, you take a tone that becomes you; now the blood of the Alscrips rises; rises as it ought. You mean to fight him directly, don't you?

Alscrip. Oh! yes, I'm his man. I'll shew you a lawyer's challenge; sticks and staves, guns, swords, daggers, poniards, knives, scissors and bodkins. I'll put more weapons into a bit of paper, six inches square, than would stock the armoury of the Tower.

Miss Als. Pistols! Don't talk to me of anything but pistols. My dear papa, who shall be your second?

Alscrip. I'll have two; John Doe and Richard Roe: as pretty fellows as any in England to see fair play, and as used to the differences of good company. They shall greet him with their *fieri facias:* so don't be cast down, Molly; I'll answer for damages to indemnify our loss of temper and reputation. He shall have a *fi.-fa.* before to-morrow night.

Miss Als. Fiery faces and damages! What does your Westminster-hall gibberish mean? Are a woman's feelings to be satisfied with a fie-fa? You old insensible! you have no sense of family honour—no tender affections.

Alscrip. 'Gad! you have enough for us both, when you want your father to be shot through the head: but, stand out of the way, here's a species of family honour more necessary to be taken care of. If we were to go to law, this would be a precious set-off against us. (*Takes up the deed, as if to lock it up.*) This!—why, what the devil!—I hope I don't see clear. Curse and confusion! I have given the wrong one. Here's fine work! here's a blunder! here's the effect of a woman's impetuosity!

Miss Als. Lord! what a fuss you are in! what is in the old trumpery scroll?

Alscrip. Plague and parchment! old Rightly will find what's in it, if I don't interrupt him. Mr. Rightly, Mr. Rightly, Mr. Rightly! (*Going to the door Rightly went out at.*)

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Rightly is gone.

Alscrip. Gone! whither?

Serv. Home, I believe, sir. He came out at the door into the hall, and he bade me tell your honour you might depend upon his reading over the deed with particular care.

Alscrip. Fire and fury! my hat and cane. [*Exit Serv.*] Here, my hat and cane.

Miss Als. Sir, I expect, before you come home—

Alscrip. Death and devils! expect to be ruined. This comes of listening to you. The sex hold the power of mischief by prescription. Zounds! Mischief—mischief is the common law of womankind.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*Alscrip's Room.*

Chignon *discovered.*

Chig. Que diable veut dire tout ça? vat devil all

dis mean? Monsieur Alscrip enragé—Mademoiselle Alscrip fly about like de dancing fury at de Opera—my littel musicienne shut up; and, in de absence of madame, I keep de key of de littel bastille. By gad! I vou'd rader have de custody of my pretty prisoniere than the whole college of cardinals. But vat have we here?

Sir C. (*Without.*) Mr. Alscrip not at home; no matter, we'll wait his return.

Enter SIR CLEMENT FLINT *and* CLIFFORD. The French valet-de-chambre. (*To Clifford.*) It may he of use to make acquaintance with him. (*To Chig.*) Monsieur, how do you like this country?

Chig. Ver good contrée, sire, by and by, when you grow a little more poor.

Sir C. Is that a Parisian rule for improvement?

Chig. Yes, sir; and we help you to follow our example. In good times you hang and you drown; in bad times you will be like us—alway poor, alway gay, forget your politics, laugh at your grievances, take your snuff, vive la dissipation!—Ver good contrée.

Sir C. Thanks for your kind advice, monsieur; you Frenchmen are so obliging, and so communicative to strangers. I hear there is a young lady come into this family; we don't exactly know in what capacity; could not you contrive that she should pass through this room? or—

Chig. (*Aside.*) By gar! here be one more old rake after de littel musicienne.

Sir C. Only for curiosity; we never saw her, and have particular reasons. (*Gives money.*)

Chig. Ma foi, your reasons be ver expressive. (*Aside.*) But vat devil shall I do? open the cage of my little Rosignol—my pretty nightingale? no. Chignon, no—(*looking out*)—Ah, ah! La Tiffany! Now for de politique. By gar! I undertake your business, and make you de dupe of de performance. [*Exit, with a sign to Sir C.*

Sir C. So, Clifford: there goes as disinterested a fellow, now, as any in Europe. But, bark you! can you yet guess the purpose for which I brought you here?

Clif. I profess, sir, I am in the dark. If it concerns Lord Gayville's secret—

Sir C. Namely, that this dulcinea has started up in the shape of Miss Alscrip's musical companion: her name is Alton. I tell it you, because I am sure you are not acquainted with it.

Clif. Sir, you will not know me.

Sir C. Tut, tut! don't do me such injustice. Come, all delicacy being over, by my having made the discovery, will you talk to this girl?

Clif. For what end, sir?

Sir C. If you state yourself as Lord Gayville's friend, she will converse with you more readily, than she would with me. Try her; find out what she is really at. If she has no hold upon him but her person, I shall be easy.

Clif. Sir, let my compliance convince you how much I wish to oblige you. If I can get a sight of this wonder, I promise to give you my faithful opinion of my friend's danger.

Enter CHIGNON, *and makes a sign to Sir Clement, that the person he inquired after is coming.*

Sir C. Leave her with this gentleman. Come, monsieur, you shall shew me the new room. [*Exit.*

Chig. (*Aside.*) Vid dis gentleman? Vid all my heart. La Tiffany vill answer his purpose, and mine too. [*Exit.*

Enter TIFFANY.

Tif. What does the Frenchman mean by gentlemen wanting me, and his gibberish of making soft eyes. I hope I know the exercise of my eyes without his instruction. Ha! I vow, a clever-looking man. (*Aside.*)

Clif. 'Faith! a pretty, attracting countenance: but for that apprehensive and timid look; that awe-impressing modesty, my friend so forcibly described—(*Tiffany adjusts herself*)—Her silence marks diffidence. Deuce take me, if I know how to begin, for fear of offending her reserve. (*Aside.*)

Tif. (*Aside.*) I have been told pertness became me. I'll try, I'm resolved. (*To him.*) I hear, sir, you had something to say to a young person in this house, that—that—I could not but take the description to myself. I am ready to hear anything a gentleman has to say.

Clif. (*Aside.*) Thank my stars, my scruples are relieved.

Tif. Am I mistaken, sir? Pray, whom was you inquiring after?

Clif. Oh! certainly, you, my pretty stranger. A friend of mine has been robbed of his heart, and I see the felony in your looks. Will you confess, or must I arrest you?

Tif. Innocent, sir, in fact, but not quite so in inclination. I hope your own is safe?

Clif. And were it not, my smart unconscionable, would you run away with that also?

Tif. Oh! yes, and a hundred more; and melt them all down together, as the Jews do stolen goods, to prevent their being reclaimed.

Clif. (*Aside.*) Astonishing! have I hit upon the moment when her fancy outruns her art? But are you really the lady that's admitted into this family as companion to Miss Alscrip?

Tif. Sir, if you mean the young lady, who, however undeservingly, is flatteringly called the flower of this family; who, sometimes, extracts notice from these windows; and, to be sure, has been followed home by gentlemen against her inclinations—sir, you are not mistaken.

Clif. (*Aside.*) Sure, it has been Gayville's madness or amusement, then, to describe her by contraries.

Tif. I hope, sir, you are not offended? I would not be impertinent, though I am not so tasteless as to be shy.

Clif. Offended my dear! I am quite charmed, I assure you. And so, without further shyness on either part, let us be free upon the subject I had to talk over with you. You surely are not looking to lasting connexions?

Tif. Sir, I don't understant you. I am not what you suppose, I assure you. Connexions, indeed! I should never have thought of that. My character—my behaviour—Connexions! I don't know what the word signifies.

Sir C. (*Without.*) Clifford, are you ready?

Clif. I am at your orders, sir.

Tif. (*Aside.*) Deuce take this interruption!

Sir C. (*Without.*) I shall not wait for Mr. Alscrip any longer.

Tif. (*Aside.*) Lud, lud! he gives me no time to come round again. (*Runs up to him confusedly.*) It's very true, sir, I would not do such a thing for the world; but you are a man of honour, and, I am sure, would not give bad advice to a poor girl who is but a novice; and so, sir, (*hearing Sir C. entering*) put your proposal in writing, and you may depend on having an answer. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR CLEMENT FLINT.

Sir C. Well, Clifford, what do you think of her?

Clif. Make yourself perfectly easy, sir: this girl, when known, can make no impression on Lord Gayville's mind; and, I doubt not, but a silk gown and a lottery-ticket, had they been offered as an ultimatum, would have purchased her person.

Sir C. Don't you sometimes, Clifford, form erroneous opinions of people's pretensions? Interest and foolish passion inspire strange notions; as one or the other prevails, we are brought to look so low, or so high—

Clif. That we are compelled to call reason and honour to our aid.

Sir C. And then—

Clif. We lose the intemperance of our inclinations in the sense of what is right.

Sir C. (*Aside.*) Sententious impostor! But to the point.

Clif. Sir, I would please you if I could. I am thinking of a scheme to restore Lord Gayville to his senses, without violence or injury to any one of the parties.

Sir C. Let me hear it.

Clif. Why, the wench being cut short of marketing by word of mouth, desired me to write proposals. I am inclined to do so. We will shew the answer to Lord Gayville; and, depend upon it, there will be character enough displayed to cure him of the sentimental part of his attachment.

Sir C. I like your idea.—Sit down, and put it into execution immediately. (*To himself.*) He is quick at invention; has a pretty turn at profession. A proud and peremptory shew of honour would overpower prejudices. Thank heaven! my opinions of knavery are convictions.

Clif. (*Writing.*) I am sorry to detain you, sir.

Sir C. (*Looking at the furniture.*) Oh! I am amusing myself better than you think. Indulging an edifying contemplation among the tombs of departed estates. (*Looking in the closets, that shew old writings, tied up; shelves with boxes, labelled mortgages, lease and release, &c.*) What mouldered skins, that will never see day-light again; and that, with a good herald, would vie with Westminster Abbey in holyday entertainment. For instance, now, what have we here? Ah! the last remains of Fatland Priory; once of great monastic importance: a proverb of pride, sloth, and hypocrisy. After the Reformation, the seat of old English hospitality and benevolence; in the present century, altered, adorned, pulled down, and the materials sold by auction. [not lost.

Clif. Edifying, indeed, sir; your comments are

Sir C. Here lie, undisturbed, in dust, the relics of Count Baron Castle, granted, at the conquest, to the family of Loftimount. The last of this ancient race, having won twenty-seven king's plates, and represented the county in six parliaments, after many struggles, died of the pistol fever. A disconsolate annuitant inscribed this box to his memory. Well, Clifford, have you done?

Clif. Yes, sir. (*Reads as if to himself.*) "*You have captivated a young man of rank and fortune; but you are discovered, and his ruin and your's would be the consequence of pursuing any designs, that could impede his proposed marriage with Miss Alscrip. Throw yourself upon the generosity of his family, and your fortune's made. Send your answer (and let it be immediate) to me, at Sir Clement Flint's house. Your's, &c. &c.*

"Henry Clifford."

Sir C. Our French friend is the man to deliver it, and to bring the answer. I am going home; you'll overtake me. [*Exit.*

Enter Chignon.

Clif. (*Sealing the letter.*) You come apropos, monsieur. (*Gives the letter with an air of mystery.*) Have the goodness to put this letter into Miss Alton's own hands.

Chig. (*To himself.*) Mademoiselle Alton! Peste! My trick has not passed. [secret.

Clif. To Miss Alton by herself: I am in all the

Chig. (*Aside.*) Devil take Tiffany, for making you so wise.

Clif. And you serve your lady, when you serve me with Miss Alton. Monsieur, an answer as quick as possible. You will find me at Sir Clement Flint's; it is only in the next street; and—you understand me. (*Shaking his purse.*) Alerte, monsieur. [*Exit.*

Chig. Understand you!—Oui da! you talk de language universal. (*Imitating his shaking the purse.*) J'entre vois, I begin to see something. By gad, I vill give de letter, and try de inclination of Mademoiselle la Musicienne: if dis be de duette she vill play, it take her out of the vay of Alscrip, of Gayville, and of myself also. Voilà le malheur! there de misfortune! Eh bien! when love and interest come across, alway prefer de interest for today, and take de chance of de love to-morrow: dat is de humour of France. [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*Sir Clement Flint's House.*

Enter Lord Gayville *and* Sir Clement Flint.

Lord G. I am resolved to see Miss Alscrip no more.

Sir C. And I hope you are prepared with arguments to justify the cause of this breach to me and to the world.

Lord G. For my reconciliation with you, I hope your former partiality will return to my aid; and as for the world, I despise it. The multitude look at happiness through the false glare of wealth and pomp: I have discovered it, though yet at a distance, through the only true medium, that of mutual affection.

Sir C. No common-place book, formed from a whole library of plays and novels, could furnish a better sentence. Your folly would shame a schoolboy, even of the last age: in the present, he learns the world with his grammar, and gets a just notion of the worthlessness of the other sex, before he is of an age to be duped by their attractions.

Lord G. Sir, your prejudices—

Sir C. My prejudices? Will you appeal to Clifford? here he comes; your friend, your other self.

Enter Clifford.

Lord G. And will Clifford condemn the choice of the heart?

Clif. Never, my lord, when justly placed. In the case I perceive you are arguing, I am ready to blush for you: nay, don't look grave; I am acquainted with your enchantress.

Lord G. You acquainted with her?

Clif. Yes; and, if I don't deceive myself, shall make her break her own spell. I am in correspondence with her.

Lord G. You in correspondence with Miss Alton! When? where? What am I to think of this?

Clif. My dear lord, that she is the most arrant coquette, the most accomplished jilt, the most ready trafficker of her charms—

Lord G. Phrensy and profanation!

Sir C. Come, Gayville, I'll be plain with you; you have sillily let the girl raise her price upon you; but, if nothing else will satisfy you, even pay it, and have done with her.

Lord G. Sir, her price is an unadulterated heart: I am afraid we cannot pay it betwixt us.

Enter Chignon, *who delivers a letter to Clifford, apart.*

Chig. Alerte, monsieur, I repete your word: Mademoiselle Alton be all your own.

Sir C. Come, Clifford, the contents: his lordship braves the trial.

Lord G. What is this mighty scheme? and what is that paper to discover?

Clif. (*Opens the letter.*) Your lordship shall be informed word for word. Amazement! Do I dream? can it be? Who wrote this letter?

Sir C. Oh! speak out, monsieur, we are all friends.

Chig. De true Mademoiselle Alton, whom you charge me to give your letter. She open it, she turn pale, den red, den confuse, den kiss your name; den write, and bid me fly.

Lord G. Confusion on confusion! what does all this mean? Explain.

Clif. You must pardon me, I am disconcerted, confounded, thunderstruck. This letter is, indeed,

of a different nature from that I expected. I am more interested in Miss Alton's fate than your lordship. My perplexity is not to be endured. Friend, come with me instantly. [*Exeunt Clif. and Chig.*

Lord G. Mystery and torture! What am I to collect from this? He interested in the fate of Miss Alton? he her former acquaintance?

Sir C. Why not, and her dupe also?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Is Mr. Clifford gone, sir?

Lord G. Who wants him?

Serv. A chairman, with a letter he will not deliver to a servant.

Sir C. Call the fellow in. [*Exit Servant.*] Who knows but he may help us in our difficulties?

Enter Chairman, with a letter in his hand.

Lord G. Whom did you bring this letter from?

Chair. Please your honour, I don't know. Passing through the square, a sash flew up, and down came this letter, and half-a-crown upon my head. It could not have fallen better; there's not a fellow in town more handy than I am; nor, though I say it, more 'cute at private busines: so I resolved to deliver it safely. Is your honour's name, Clifford?

Lord G. No, indeed, friend, I am not so happy a man.

Sir C. (*Aside.*) That letter must not be lost, though. Here, my friend, I'll take charge of your letter. (*Takes the letter.*) Something for your pains.

Chair. God bless your honour! and if you want to send an answer, my number is forty-seven in Bond-street. Your honour, I am known by the name of secret Tom. [*Exit.*

Lord G. What is the use of this deceit? strong as my suspicion is, a seal must be sacred.

Sir C. Our circumstances make an exception to your rule: when there is treason in the state, wax gives way. (*Takes the letter, opens, and reads it.*) Faith! this is beyond my expectation: though the mystery is unfathomable, the aptness of it to my purpose is admirable. Gayville, I wish you joy.

Lord G. Of what?

Sir C. Of conviction. If this is not plain—only hear. (*Reads.*) "*Since my confused lines, of a few minutes past, my perplexities redouble upon my spirits. I am in momentary apprehension of farther insult from the Alscrip family; I am still more anxious to avoid Lord Gayville.* (*Looks at Lord G.*) *Do not suspect my sincerity; I have not a thought of him that ought to disturb you.*" Here she is, Gayville; look at her through the medium of mutual affection. "*I have not a thought of him that ought to disturb you. Fly to me, secure me, my dearest Henry.*"

Lord G. Dearest Henry!

Sir C. (*Reads.*) "*Dearest Henry! In this call, the danger of your Harriet unites with the impatience of her affection.*"

Lord G. Hell and fury! this must be some trick, some forgery. (*Snatches the letter.*) No; by all that's perfidious! it is that exquisite hand that baffles imitation.

Sir C. All regular, strict, undeviating modern morals. Common property is the first principle of friendship; your horse, your house, your purse, your mistress; nay, your wife, would be a better example still of this generous age. Bless fortune, Gayville, that has brought the fidelity of your friend and your girl to the test at the same time.

Lord G. Sir, I am not in a humour for any spleen but my own. What can this mean? It must have been a secret attachment for years; but, then, the avowal of a correspondence, and the confusion at receiving it; his coldness in traducing her; the passionate interest he expressed in her fate; the conviction of his second letter—It is all delirium. I'll search the matter to the bottom, though I go to Clifford's heart for it. [*Exit.*

Sir C. I'll after the precious fellow, too; he is a rogue above my hopes, and the intricacy of his snares excite my curiosity. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Lady Emily's Apartment.*

LADY EMILY *discovered, reading.*

Lady E. It will not do. My eyes may run over a thousand subjects, but my thoughts centre in one. Ah! that sigh, that sigh from the fair sufferer this morning! I have found it echo in my own heart ever since.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, Mr. Blandish.

Lady E. Pooh! did you say I was at home?

Serv. Your ladyship gave no orders to the contrary.

Lady E. Shew him in. [*Exit Serv.*] I must take up my air of levity again; it is the only humour for a fellow who I sometimes allow to entertain me, but who can never get my esteem. I have more calls upon my affectation this unlucky day, than my real disposition would execute in a long life.

Enter BLANDISH.

Blandish, I am horridly peevish; have you anything new to divert me?

Mr. B. If you ask me for news, the latest is that Clifford has been detected in a clandestine intercourse with the object of Lord Gayville's secret passion; that he has betrayed the confidence of his friend and patron, and actually carried her off. (*Aside.*) Which Gayville knows, by this time, with all its aggravations, or Prompt has not been as active as he used to be.

Lady E. Blandish, this is a poor project. Clifford treacherous to his friend! You might as soon make me believe Gayville dispassionate, my uncle charitable, or you ingenuous.

Mr. B. His conduct does not rest upon opinion, but proof; and, when you know it, you must think of him with aversion.

Lady E. Must I? Then don't let me hear a word more. I have aversions enough already.

Mr. B. It is impossible you can apply that word to one whose only offence is to adore you. (*Kisses her.*)

Enter CLIFFORD.

Clif. (*Aside.*) Blandish so favoured!

Lady E. (*Aside.*) Perverse accident! what mistakes now will he make?

Mr. B. (*Aside.*) The enemy has surprised me; but the only remedy in such emergencies, is to shew a good countenance.

Clif. I fear I have been guilty of an unpardonable intrusion.

Mr. B. Mr. Clifford never can intrude; but though you had not come so apropos yourself, Lady Emily will bear testimony I have not spared my pains to remove any prejudices she might have entertained.

Lady E. Had you not better repeat in your own words, Mr. Blandish, all the obliging things you have said of this gentleman?

Clif. It is not necessary, madam. If, without robbing you of moments that I perceive are precious—

Lady E. Sir?

Clif. I might obtain a short audience. (*Looking at Mr. B.*)

Mr. B. (*Aside.*) He's devilish impudent; but he cannot so soon get over facts, and I'll take care the conference shall not be long. (*To Lady E.*) Lady Emily, hear Mr. Clifford, and judge if I have misrepresented him. (*To Clifford.*) When you want a friend, you know where to find him. [*Exit.*

Lady E. This is an interview, Mr. Clifford, that I desire not to be understood to have authorized. It is not to me you are accountable for your actions; I have no personal interest in them.

Clif. I know it well.

Lady E. Do not run away with the notion, neither, that I am, therefore, interested in any other person's. You have among you vexed and disconcerted me; but there is not a grain of partiality in all my embarrassment; if you have any eyes, you may see there is not.

Clif. Happy Blandish! your triumph is evident.

Lady E. Blandish, the odious creature! He is my abhorrence! You are hardly worse yourself in my bad opinion, though you have not done so much more to deserve it.

Clif. How cruel are the circumstances that compel me to leave you under these impressions! Nay, more; at such a time, to urge a request that, during your most favourable thoughts of me, would have appeared strange, if not presumptuous. This is the key of my apartment: it contains a secret that the exigency of the hour obliged me, against inclination or propriety, to lodge there. Should Sir Clement return before me, I implore you to prevent his discovery, and give to what you find within, your confidence and protection. Lord Gayville—But I shall go too far. The most anxious event of my life presses on me. I conjure you to comply, by all the compassion and tenderness nature has treasured in your heart, not for me, but for occasions worthy their display. Pray, take it. (*Gives the key, which she receives with some reluctance.* [*Exit.*

Lady E. Heigho! It's well he's gone without insisting on my answer: I was in a sad flutter of indecision. What mysterious means he takes to engage me in a confidence which I could not directly accept! I am to find a letter, I suppose; the story of his heart; its errors and defence. My brother's name, also, to furnish me with a new interest in the secret, and one I might avow. One may dislike this art, but must be sensible of his delicacy. Ah! when these two qualities unite in a man, I am afraid he is an overmatch for the wisest of us. Hark! sure, that is the sound of my uncle's coach. (*Looks out of the window.*) 'Tis he! and now for the secret. Curiosity! innate, irresistible principle in womankind! be my excuse, before I dare question my mind upon other motives. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter Lady Emily.

Lady E. Oh, lud! I could hardly tremble more at opening this man's apartment, were there a possibility of finding him within side. How do people find courage to do a wrong thing, when an innocent discovery cannot be prosecuted without such timidity? (*Approaches the door, and unlocks it.*)

Enter Miss Alton.

Amazement! Miss Alton, what is all this?

Miss Alton. Madam, I was brought here for an hour's concealment; who I really am, I would not, if possible to avoid it, divulge in this house. When you saw me last, you honoured me with a favourable opinion: my story, not explained at full, might subject me to doubts, that would shake your candour.

Lady E. (*Aside.*) What shall I do? She is pale, and ready to faint. I cannot let her be exposed in such a situation. Retire; you may rely upon me for present security. You know best your pretensions to my future opinion. (*Hearing Sir Clement.*) Begone, or you are discovered. (*Shuts her in, and locks Clifford's door.*)

Enter Sir Clement Flint.

Sir C. Oh! the triumph of honour! Oh! the sincerity of friendship! How my opinions are ratified; how my system is proved!

Lady E. Oh! spirits, spirits, forsake me not! Oh! for a moment's dissimulation.

Sir C. There are some, now, who would feed moroseness and misanthropy with such events: to me they give delight, as convictions and warnings to mankind.

Lady E. Of how superior a quality, my good uncle, must be the benevolence you possess! It rises with the progress of mischief; and is gratified (upon principles of general good) by finding confidence abused, and esteem misplaced. Am I not right in attributing your joy, at present, to that sort of refinement?

Sir C. Ah! and to what sensations, my good niece, shall be attributed the present state of your spirits? to the disgust you took to Clifford, almost at first sight? It will not be with indifference, but pleasure, you will hear of his turning out the veriest rascal, the most complete impostor, the most abandoned—But hold, hold! I must not wrong him by superlatives: he is matched, too.

Lady E. Really! I congratulate you upon such a check of charity.

Sir C. And I wish you joy, my pretty pert one, upon the credit your sex has acquired, in producing this other *chef-d'œuvre;* such a composition of the highest vices and the lowest. But your good-nature will, I dare say, easily find palliatives for both parties.

Lady E. Come, sir; no more of your sarcasms. I can treat wrong actions with levity, and yet consider them with detestation. Prudes and pretenders condemn with austerity. To the collection of suspicions you are master of, let me add one: in a young lady, of the delicacy and age you have described, always suspect the virtue that does not wear a smile.

Sir C. And the sincerity that wears one awkwardly.

Enter Prompt, *hastily.*

Prompt. Joy to your honour; I see you have caught her.

Sir C Her! Whom?

Prompt. (*Lady E. turning.*) I ask your ladyship's pardon. Having only the glimpse of a petticoat, and knowing the object of my chase was in this house, I confess I mistook you.

Sir C. In this house?

Prompt. As sure as we are. She came in through the garden, under Mr. Clifford's arm; up the other stairs, I suppose. If my lady had been hereabouts, she must have seen her.

Lady E. (*Confused.*) Yes; but, unluckily, I was quite out of the way.

Sir C. Such audaciousness passes credibility. Emily, what do you think of him?

Lady E. That he is a monster. (*Aside.*) How my dilemmas multiply!

Sir C. What, to my house? to his apartment here? I wonder he did not ask for protection in your's: what should you have said?

Lady E. I don't know; but, had I been so imposed upon as to receive her, I should scorn to betray even the criminal I had engaged to protect.

Sir C. (*Tries at the door, and finds it locked.*) Emily, my dear, do ring the bell, to know if the housekeeper has a second key to this lock.

Lady E. What shall I do?

Prompt. She is certainly there, sir, and cannot escape. Where can she better remain, till you can assemble all parties, confront them, face to face, and bring everything that has passed to a full explanation?

Sir C. With all my heart; send and collect everybody concerned, as fast as possible. How I long for so complicated an exhibition of the purity of the human heart. Come with me, Emily, and help to digest my plan. Friends and lovers, what a scene shall we shew you! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*An Apartment.*

Enter Clifford *and* Rightly.

Clif. Your knowledge in the profession, Mr. Rightly, is as unquestionable as your integrity;

but there is something so surprising in the recovery of the Charlton estate: if you knew, too, how the value of the acquisition is enhanced, by the opportune moment in which it presents itself—I am in too much emotion to thank you as I ought.

Right. Sir, I want neither compliment nor acknowledgment for revealing what I should be a party to dishonesty to conceal.

Clif. You have a right to all my thoughts: but I have an appointment to obey, that admits no time for explanation. Favour me, for a moment, with your pencil, and a blank page in that memorandum-book. (*Clifford writes.*)

Right. My life on't, his head is turned upon some girl not worth a shilling. There is an amiable defect, but a very observable one, in the nature of some men. A good head and heart operate as effectually as vice or folly could do, to make them improvident.

Clif. Mr. Rightly, I confide to your hands a new secret relative to the Charlton estate; do not read it till you return home. (*Gives the book.*) There, Gayville, is one reply to your challenge; and now for another. (*Aside, and going.*)

Right. One moment, sir: I engage for no secrecy that my own judgment shall not warrant.

Clif. And the benevolence of your heart approve. Those are my conditions. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Hyde Park.*

Enter LORD GAYVILLE.

Lord G. (*Looks at his watch.*) Not here! I am sure I marked the hour as well as the place precisely in my note. (*Walks about.*) Had I been told three days ago, that I should have been the appellant in a premeditated duel, I should have thought it an insult upon my principles. That Clifford should be the cause of my transgressing the legal and sacred duties, we have ever both maintained, oh! it would have seemed a visionary impossibility. But he comes, to cut reflections short.

Enter CLIFFORD.

I waited for you, sir. (*Clifford bows.*) That ceremonial would grace an encounter of punctilio, but applies ill to the terms upon which I have called you here.

Clif. What terms are those, my lord?

Lord G. Vengeance! Ample, final vengeance! Draw, sir.

Clif. No, my lord; my sword is reserved for more becoming purposes: it is not the instrument of passion; and has yet been untried in a dispute with my friend.

Lord G. But why is it not ready for a different trial,—the vindication of perfidy, the blackest species of perfidy that ever the malignant enemy of mankind infused into the human breast—perfidy to the friend who loved and trusted you, and in the nearest interests of his heart?

Clif. Take care, my lord; should my blood boil like your's, and it is rising fast, you know not the punishment that awaits you. I came temperate; your gross provocation and thirst of blood make temperance appear disgrace; I am tempted to take a revenge—

Lord G. (*Draws.*) The means are ready. Come, sir, you are to give an example of qualities generally held incompatible, bravery and dishonour.

Clif. Another such a word, and by heaven!—How have I deserved this opinion?

Lord G. Ask your conscience. Under the mask of friendship, you have held a secret intercourse with the woman I adore; you have supplanted me in her affections, you have robbed me of the very charm of my life: can you deny it?

Clif. I avow it all.

Lord G. Unparalleled insolence of guilt!

Clif. Are you sure there is nothing within the scope of possibility that would excuse or atone—

Lord G. Death, death only! No abject submission; no compromise for infamy. Choose instantly, and save yourself from the only stretch of baseness left, the invention of falsehood to palliate—

Clif. (*In the utmost agitation, and drawing his sword.*) Falsehood! You shall have no other explanation. (*After a struggle within himself, Clifford drops the point, and exposes his breast.*)

Lord G. Stand upon your defence, sir. What do you mean?

Clif. You said nothing but my life would satisfy you; take it, and remember me.

Lord G. I say so still; but upon an equal pledge. I am no assassin.

Clif. (*With great emotion.*) If to strike at the heart of your friend, (more deeply than that poor instrument in your hand could do,) makes an assassin, you have been one already.

Lord G. That look, that tone, how like to innocence! Had he not avowed such abominable practices—

Clif. I avow them again: I have rivalled you in the love of the woman you adore; her affections are rivetted to me. I have removed her from your sight; secured her from your recovery—

Lord G. D——n!

Clif. I have done it to save unguarded beauty; to save unprotected innocence; to save—a sister.

Lord G. A sister!

Clif. (*With exultation.*) "Vengeance! Ample, final vengeance!" (*A pause.*) It is accomplished; over him, and over myself; my victory is complete.

Lord G. Where shall I hide my shame!

Clif. We'll share it, and forget it here. (*Embraces.*)

Lord G. Why did you keep the secret from me?

Clif. I knew it not myself, till the strange concurrence of circumstances, to which you were in part witness, a few hours since, brought it to light. I meant to impart to you the discovery, when my temper took fire. Let us bury our mutual errors in the thought, that we now, for life, are friends.

Lord G. Brothers, Clifford. Let us interchange that title, and doubly, doubly ratify it. Unite me to your charming sister; accept the hand of Lady Emily in return; her heart I have discovered to be your's. We'll leave the world to the sordid and the tasteless: let an Alscrip, or a Sir Clement Flint, wander after the phantom of happiness; we shall find her real retreat, and hold her by the bonds she covets,—virtue, love, and friendship.

Clif. Not a word more, my lord; the bars against your proposal are insuperable.

Lord G. What bars?

Clif. Honour, propriety, and pride.

Lord G. Pride, Clifford!

Clif. Yes, my lord: Harriet Clifford shall not steal the hand of a prince; nor will I, though doating on Lady Emily with a passion like your own, bear the idea of a clandestine union in a family, to whom I am bound by obligation and trust. Indeed, my lord, without Sir Clement's consent, you must think no more of my sister.

Lord G. Stern stoic, but I will, and not clandestinely; I'll instantly to Sir Clement.

Clif. Do not be rash; Fortune, or some better agent, is working in wonders. Meet me, presently, at your uncle's; in the meanwhile, promise not to stir in this business.

Lord G. What hope from delay?

Clif. Promise.

Lord G. I am in a state to catch at shadows. I'll try to obey you.

Clif. Farewell! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*Sir Clement Flint's House.*

Enter Miss Alscrip, *followed by* Mrs. Blandish.

Miss Als. I am delighted at this summons from Sir Clement, Blandish; poor old clear-sight, I hope he has projected a reconciliation.

Mrs. B. How I rejoice to see those smiles returned to the face that was made for them!

Miss Als. Returned, Blandish? I desire you will not insinuate it ever was without them. Why sure, you would not have the world imagine the temper of an heiress of my class, was to be ruffled by the loss of a paltry earl: I have been highly diverted with what has passed from beginning to end.

Mrs. B. Well, if good humour can be a fault, sure the excess you carry it to must be the example.

Miss Als. I desire it may be made known in all companies, that I have done nothing but laugh: nay, it is true too.

Mrs. B. My dear creature, of what consequence is the truth, when you are charging me with the execution of your desires?

Miss Als. But did you remember the airs of the moppet? Could anything be more ridiculous?

Mrs. B. The rivalship you mean. Rival Miss Alscrip! He, he, he!

Miss Als. Yes; but when you take this tone in public, laugh a little louder.

Mrs. B. Rival Miss Alscrip! Ha, ha, ha!

Both. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. B. For mirth's sake, what is become of the rival? Whom will you choose she shall have run away with?

Miss Als. Leave it in doubt as it is: fixing circumstances confines the curiosity to one story which may be disproved; uncertainty leaves it open to a hundred, and makes them all probable. But I hear some of the company upon the stairs: now, Blandish, you shall be witness to the temper and dignity with which a woman of my consequence can discard a quality courtship that offends her.

Mrs. B. Sweet tempered soul!

Enter Sir Clement Flint.

Sir C. Miss Alscrip, your—

Enter Blandish *out of breath.*

Mr. B. The duel's over.

Sir C. And the parties unhurt. You are too late in your intelligence by some minutes. But I know you must rejoice (*ironically*) from your attachment to all parties. Miss Alscrip, your very—

Miss Als. Duel! Pray let us hear the particulars. As there is no mischief, I shall not faint (*Ironically.*)

Sir C. I guess it has been of the common-place kind. Hats over the the hrows, glum silence, thrust, parry, and *risposte:* explain and shake hands. Your man of honour never sets his friend right, till he has exchanged a shot or a thrust. Oh! a little steel recipe is a morning whet to the temper: it carries off all qualms, and leaves the digestion free for anything that is presented to it.

Miss Als. Dear, how fortunate! considering the pills some folks have to swallow.

Sir C. Blandish, see if the door of Clifford's room is yet unlocked; there is a person withio you little expect to find, and whom it may be proper for this lady and me to interrogate together.—(*The door opens and discovers* Lady Emily.)

Mr. B. Lady Emily!

Sir C. Inexplicable, with a vengeance.

Miss Als. (*Aside.*) Lady Emily shut up in Clifford's apartment! Beyond my expectation, indeed.

Sir C. Lady Emily, I know you were always cautious whom you visited, and never gave a better proof of your discernment.

Lady E. Never. Oh! my poor dear uncle, you little think what is going to befall you.

Sir C. Not a disappointment in love, I hope.

Lady E. No; but in something much nearer your heart. Your system is threatened with a blow, that I think, and from my soul I hope, it never will recover: would you guess that the sagacious observations of your whole life are upon the point of being confounded by the production—

Sir C. Of what?

Lady E. A woman of ingenuous discretion, and a man of unaffected integrity.

Sir C. Ah!

Mrs. B. What can she mean?

Miss Als. Nothing good, she looks so pleasant.

Lady E. Come forth, my injured friend. Our personal acquaintance has been short, but our hearts were intimate from the first sight. (*Presenting her.*) Your prisoner, sir, is Miss Harriet Clifford.

Sir C. Clifford's sister!

Miss Als. What, the run-away Alton turned into a sprig of quality!

Lady E. (*To Miss Alscrip.*) The humble dependent of Alscrip-house; the wanton, the paragon of fraud; the only female that can equal Clifford. (*To Sir Clement.*) She is indeed!

Mr. B. (*Aside.*) Oh! rot the source of the family fondness: I see I have no card left in my favour, but the heiress. (*During this conversation, aside, Lady Emily seems encouraging Miss Clifford.*)

Sir C. (*To himself.*) "Ingennous discretion!"

Enter Clifford, *and runs to his sister.*

Clif. My dearest Harriet! the joy I purposed in presenting you here, is anticipated: but, my blameless fugitive! when your story is known, my pride in you will not be a wonder. Miss Clifford, behold your persecutor and your convert.

Enter Lord Gayville.

Lord G. Her persecutor and her convert! Her virtues, which no humility could conceal, and every trial made more resplendent, discovered, disgraced, and reclaimed a libertine.

Miss Clif. How am I distressed! What ought I to answer? (*Aside.*)

Lord G. Impressed sentiment upon desire, gave honour to passion, and drew from my soul a vow, which heaven chastise me when I violate, to obtain her by a legal, sacred claim; or renounce fortune, family, and friends, and become a self-devoted outcast of the world.

Miss Clif. Oh! brother, interpose.

Sir C. My lord, your fortune, family, and friends, are much obliged to you. Your part is perfect. Mr. Clifford, you are called upon. Miss, in strict propriety, throws the business upon her relations. Come, finish the comedy, join one of her hands to the gallant's, while, with the other, she covers her blushes; and he in rapture delivers the moral—All for Love, or the World well lost.

Clif. Be patient, my Harriet, this is the school for prejudice, and the lesson of its shame is near.

Miss Als. I vow these singular circumstances give me quite a confusion of pleasure. The astonishing good fortune of my late *protegée*, in finding so impassioned a friendship in her brother's bed chamber; the captivating eloquence of Lord Gayville, in winding up an *éclaircissement* which I admire, (not for the first time to-day,) and the superlative joy Sir Clement must feel at an union, founded upon the purity of the passions, are subjects of such different congratulation, that I hardly know where to begin.

Lady E. (*Aside.*) Charming! her insolence will justify what so seldom occurs to one; a severe retort, without a possible sense of compunction.

Miss Als. But in point of fortune, don't imagine, Sir Clement, I would insinuate that the lady is destitute. Oh Lord, far from it! Her musical talents are a portion.

Alscrip. (*Without.*) Why, stop a moment.

Sir C. What have we here—the lawyers in dispute?

Enter ALSCRIP.

Alscrip. You have not heard my last word yet.

Enter RIGHTLY.

Right. You have heard mine, sir.

Alscrip. I'll make the five thousand I offered, ten. (*To Rightly.*)

Right. Millions would not bribe me. (*Coming forward.*) When I detect wrong, and vindicate the sufferer, I feel the spirit of the law of England, and the pride of a practitioner.

Alscrip. Lucifer confound such practices! (*Sir Clement, Lord Gayville, Lady Emily, Clifford, and Miss Clifford, form one group. Rightly opens a deed, and points out a part of it to Sir Clement. Mr. and Miss Alscrip talk apart. Mr. and Mrs. Blandish are farther back, observing.*) That cursed! cursed flaw.

Miss Als. Flaw! who has dared to talk of one? not in my reputation, sir?

Alscrip. No, but in my estate; which is a d—d deal worse.

Miss Als. How? what? when? where? The estate that was to be settled upon me?

Alscrip. Yes: but that me turned topsy-turvy, when me broke into my room this morning, and the devil followed, to fly away with all my faculties at once. I am ruined. Let us see what you will settle upon your poor father.

Miss Als. I settle upon you?

Mrs. B. This is an embarrassing accident.

Miss Als. Yes; and a pretty help you are, with a drop chin, like a frontispiece to the Lamentations.

Right. (*Coming forward with Sir Clement.*) I stated this with some doubt this morning, but now my credit as a lawyer upon the issue. The heiress falls short of the terms in your treaty by two thousand pounds a-year; which this deed, lately and providentially discovered, entails upon the heirs of Sir William Charlton, and consequently, in right of his mother, upon this gentleman.

Lady E. How!

Lord G. Happy disappointment.

Sir C. (*Aside.*) Two thousand a-year to Clifford! It's a pity, for the parade of disinterestedness, that he opened his designs upon Emily, before he knew his pretentions.

Lady E. (*Aside.*) Now, if there were twenty ceilings, and as many floors, could not I find a spot to settle my silly looks upon.

Sir C. (*Turning towards Alscrip.*) Palm a false title upon me? I should have thought the attempt beyond the collective assurance of Westminster-hall; and he takes the loss as much at heart as if he bought the estate with his own money.

Alscrip. (*With hesitation.*) Sir Clement, what think you of an amicable adjustment of all these businesses?

Sir C. (*Ironically.*) Nothing can be more reasonable. The value of Miss Alscrip's amiable disposition, placed against the abatement of her fortune, is a matter of the most easy computation; and to decide the portion Mr. Clifford ought to relinquish of his acquisition, Lady Emily, will you be a referee?

Lady E. (*Aside.*) Yes, the lynx has me. I thought I should not escape. (*To him.*) No, sir; my poor abilities only extend to an amicable endeavour here. (*To Miss Alscrip.*) And really, Miss Alscrip, I see no reason for your being dispirited; there may be many ready-made titles at market, within the reach of your purse. Or why should not a woman of your consequence originate her own splendour? there's an old admirer of mine, he would make a very pretty lord, and, indeed, would contribute something on his own part, to ease the purchase. The Blandish family is well with all administrations, and a new coronet is always as big again as an old one. I don't see how you could lay out part of your independency to more advantage.

Mr. B. (*Aside.*) Yes; but since flaws are in fashion, I shall look a little into things before I agree to the bargain.

Miss Als. (*Aside.*) I'll die before I discover my vexation; and yet no title, no place—

Lady E. Depend upon it, Miss Alscrip, your place will be found exactly where it ought to be. The public eye, in this country, is never long deceived. Believe me, and cherish obscurity. Title may bring forward merits, but it also places our defects in horrid relief.

Alscrip. Molly, the sooner we get out of court the better; we have d—ly the worst of this cause; so come along, Molly, (*taking her by the arm*) and farewell to Berkeley Square. Whoever wants Alscrip House, will find it in the neighbourhood of Furnival's Inn, with the noble title of Scrivener, in capitals; blank bonds at the windows, and a brass knocker at the door. (*Pulling her.*) Come along, Molly.

Miss Als. (*Aside.*) Oh! the barbarous metamorphosis! But his flusterums for a week, will serve my temper as a regimen; I will then take the management of my affairs into my own hands, and break from my cloud anew: and you shall find (*to the company*) there are those without a coronet, that can be as saucy, and as loud, and stop the way in all public places, as well as the best of you. (*Lady Emily laughs.*) Yes, madam, and without borrowing your ladyship's airs.

Alscrip. (*Pulling her.*) Come along, Molly.

Miss Als. Oh! you have been a jewel of a father.

[*Exeunt Mr. and Miss Alscrip.*

Lady E. Mrs. Blandish, sure you do not leave your friend, Miss Alscrip, in distress?

Mrs. B. We'll not disturb the ashes of the dead, my sweet Lady Emily,

Mr. B. Oh! my sweet sister, none of your flourishes. In the present mood of the company, even mine would not do. Truth and sentiment have the ascendency. But let them alone; and they'll come round again. (*Addressing the company.*) Flattery is the diet of good humour, and not one of you can live without it; and when you quarrel with the family of Blandish, you only leave refined cookery to be fed upon scraps, by a poor cousin or a led captain. (*Taking his sister by the arm.*)

Mrs. B. (*With a look of courtship to the company.*) Oh! the two charming pairs!

Mr. B. (*Pulling her away.*) Oh! thou walking dedication! [*Exeunt.*

Lord G. Precious group, fare ye well. (*To Sir Clement.*) And now, sir, whatever may be your determinations towards me, here are pretensions you may patronize without breach of discretion. The estate which devolves to my friend—

Right. To prevent errors, is not his to bestow.

Sir C. What now, more flaws?

Right. The estate was his beyond the reach of controversy: but before he was truly sure of it, on his way to Hyde-Park, did this spendthrift, by a stroke of his pen, divest himself of every shilling. Here is the covenant by which he binds himself to execute proper conveyances as soon as the necessary forms can be gone through.

Lord G. And in favour of whom is this desperate act?

Right. Of a most dangerous seducer; a little mercenary, that, when she gets hold of the heart, does not leave an atom of it our own.

All. How!

Right. And there she stands, (*pointing to Miss Clifford*) with a look and an emotion that would condemn her before any court in the universe.

Lady E. Glorious, matchless Clifford!

Miss Clif. Brother, this must not be.

Clif. Your pardon, my dear Harriet, it is done. Sir Clement, my sister's fortune is still far short of what you expected with Miss Alscrip; for that deficiency, I have only to offer the virtues Lord Gayville has proved, and the affection she found it easier to control than to conceal. If you will receive her, thus circumstanced, into your family, mine has been an acquisition, indeed.

Lady E. (*Coming up to Sir Clement.*) Now, sir, where's the suspicion? Where is, now, the ruling principle that governs mankind? Through what perspective, by what trial, will you find self-interest here? What, not one pithy word to mock my credulity! Alas! poor Yorick; quite chop-fallen. Forgive me, sir, I own I am agitated to extravagance. You found me disconcerted at the first discovery; I am delighted at the last; there's a problem of my disposition worthy your solving.

Sir C. (*Who has been very thoughtful.*) Mr. Rightly, favour me with that paper in your hand.

Right. Mr. Clifford's engagement, sir? (*Gives the paper; Sir Clement looks it over, and tears it.*) What do you mean, sir?

Sir C. To cancel the obligation, and pay the equivalent to Gayville; or if Clifford will have his own way, and become a beggar by renewing it, to make an heiress of my own for his reparation; and there she stands, (*pointing to Lady Emily*) with sensibility and vivacity so uncommonly blended, that they extract benevolence wherever it exists, and create it where it never was before. Your point is carried; you may both fall upon your knees, for the consent of the ladies.

Lord G. (*To Miss Clifford.*) In this happy moment, let my errors be forgot, and my love alone remembered.

Miss Clif. With these sanctions for my avowal, I will not deny that I saw and felt the sincerity of your attachment, from the time it was capable of being restrained by respect.

Clif. Words are wanting, Lady Emily—

Lady E. I wish they may, with all my heart; but it is generally remarked, that wanting words is the beginning of a florid set speech. To be serious, Clifford, we want but little explanation on either side; Clement will tell you how long we have conversed by our actions. (*Gives her hand.*) My dear uncle, how a smile becomes you in its natural meaning.

Sir C. If you think me a convert, you are mistaken: I have ever believed self to be the predominant principle of the human mind; my heart, at this instant, confirms the doctrine. There's my problem for your's, my dear Emily, and may all who hear me, agree in this solution: To reward the deserving, and make those we love happy, is self-interest in the extreme. [*Exeunt.*

HE'S MUCH TO BLAME;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

LORD VIBRATE	THOMPSON	LADY VIBRATE
SIR GEORGE VERSATILE	WILLIAMS	LADY JANE
DR. GOSTERMAN	HARRY	MARIA
DELAVAL	SERVANTS	LUCY

ACT I,

SCENE I.—*The Hall of an hotel, with a spacious staircase.*

Enter the Master and JENKINS *meeting.*

Master. Why, where are all the fellows, Jenkins? Don't you hear the bell No. 9?

Jenk. Tom is gone up to answer it, sir.

Master. Who occupies that apartment?

Jenk. The handsome youth and girl, that arrived late last night.

Master. Just as I was going to bed?

Jenk. Yes, sir.

Master. He is quite a boy.

Jenk. Razor has never robbed him of a hair.

Master. Some stripling, perhaps, that has run away with his mother's maid.

Jenk. They ordered separate beds.

Master. Well, see what they want.

Jenk. Yes, sir.

Master. And, harkye! be attentive the moment you hear Lord and Lady Vibrate, or their daughter, stirring. People of quality must never be neglected.

Jenk. Oh! no, sir. Here is Doctor Gosterman. [*Exit.*

Enter DOCTOR GOSTERMAN.

Master. Good morrow, Doctor.

Doctor. Coot morgen, my tear friend. Is de Fiprate family fisible to see?

Master. Not yet.

Doctor. My lordtship und my latyship vas sharge me to mit dem betime.

Master. You are a great favourite there, Doctor.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat I am eferyvhere.

Master. You act in a double capacity: physician, and privy-counsellor.

Doctor. Und I am as better in de von as in de oder.

Master. Why, ay, Doctor, you have a smooth pleasant manner.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay. I mix de syrup mit all my prescriptiou.

Master. Ay, ay, you are a useful person.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay. I leave Yarmany, und I com at Englandt mit little money, und great cunning in de art und de science. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, and all dat vas subject under my command. So I make de nation benefit, und myself rish. Dat is my vay.

Master. Yes; you can tickle the guineas into your pocket.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay.

Master. You have had many patients.

Doctor. Ya, sair. I af cure tousand und tousand. Dat is my vay.

Master. And how many have you killed, Doctor?

Doctor. Der teufel, sair! Kill! Ven my patient

vas die, dat vas nature dat vas kill. Ven dey vas cure, dat vas Doctor Von Gostermans. Dat is my vay. No sair; Doctor Von Gostermans vas kill himself, dat oder people may live.

Master. How do you mean kill yourself, Doctor?

Doctor. Der teufel, sair! Vas I not be call here? Vas I not be call dere? Vas I not be call eferyvhere? I af hundert and tousand patient dat die efery day till I vas com. So I vas drive to de city; und dere I vas meet my besten friend, de gout, de apoplexy, und de asthmatica: und den I vas drive to de inn of court, und de lawyer; und dere I vas find more of my besten friend; de hydropica, de rheumatica, und de paralytica.

Master. What, Doctor, the lawyers and inns of court paralytic?

Doctor. Ya, sair.

Master. I wish they were, with all my soul!

Doctor. Und den I vas drive and make my reverence mit de lordt, und mit de duke, und mit de grandee; und dere I vas meet mosh oder of my besten friend; de hypochondrica, de spasmodica, de hysterica, de marasmia, de morbid affection, de tremor, und de mist before de eye.

Master. Morbid affections, tremors, and mists before the eyes, the diseases of the great?

Doctor. Ya, sair. Und dey vas grow vorse und vorse efery day.

Master. Well, well, they have chosen a skilful doctor.

Doctor. Ya, sair. I shall do all deir business, efery von. Dat is my vay. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. Dat is my vay. Bote dat is as noting at all. Ah! sair, my liebste; you vas my besten friend. You make me acquaint myself mit all de patient dat vas come to your house; and so I vas your besten friend, und I vas gif de physic for yourself, und de physic for your shile, und de physic for your vife.

Master. For which my wife will never more thank you, Doctor.

Doctor. No; your vife vas die, und you vas tank me yourself. So now you tell me: af you any new customer dat vas com?

Master. Yes; a youth, and a girl that looks like a waiting-maid, arrived late last night.

Doctor. Vhich it vas a person of grandeur?

Master. Oh! no; wholly unattended.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Vhich it vas a lofing couple, den?

Master. It seems not.

Doctor. A poy and a vaiting-vomans! Dere shall be someting mystery in dat.

Master. So I think. Here comes the girl.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Let me do. I shall talk to her. I shall begin by make acquaintance mit her.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Pray, sir, desire the waiter to make haste with breakfast.

Master. Here, Jenkins! Breakfast to No. 9. Be quick.

Jenk. (*Without.*) Yes, sir.

Master. Tea or coffee, madam?

Lucy. Tea.

Doctor. How do you do, my tear? You vas pretty young frau; fery pretty girl, my tear. Perhaps you vas stranger, my tear?

Lucy. Perhaps I am.

Doctor. Ah! Vat is your name, my tear?

Lucy. That which my godmother gave me.

Doctor. Your maistair af made de long yourney, my tear.

Lucy. Has he?

Doctor. From vat country you com, my tear?

Lucy. Hem!

Doctor. I ask, from vat country you com, my tear.

Lucy. Ask again.

Doctor. From de town of—eh!

Lucy. Ay. How do you call it?

Doctor. Dat is vat I vant you shall tell.

Lucy. I see you do.

Doctor. Your mastair is fery young, my tear.

Lucy. Thank you, sir.

Doctor. For vat you tank me?

Lucy. For your news.

Doctor. Ah, ha! You are fery vitty und pretty, my tear.

Lucy. More news. Thank you again.

Doctor. Vat vas you call de young yentleman's name?

Lucy. I will ask, and send you word.

Doctor. How long shall he be stay in town?

Lucy. Till he goes into the country.

Doctor. Vat is your capacity, my tear?

Lucy. Like your's, little enough.

Doctor. You not understandt me, my tear. Vat is your post, your office?

Lucy. To answer rude questions.

Doctor. Your mastair is a man of family?

Lucy. Yes. He had a father and mother, and uncles and aunts.

Doctor. Und tey vas tead?

Lucy. I am not a tombstone.

Doctor. Com, com, my tear, let you make me answer.

Lucy. Anan!

Enter Waiter.

Waiter. Here is the breakfast, madam.

Lucy. Take it up stairs. [*Exit with Waiter.*

Doctor. Der teufel! A cunning yipsey! She has make me raise my curiosity. My tear! My tear! Com pack, my tear!—[Lucy *returns.*]—Do my compliment to your mastair, und I shall make me mosh happy if I shall af de honneur to make me acquaintance mit him. My name is call Docteur Von Gostermans. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. I shall af de best recommendation for de honest docteur dat vas possible. My Lordt und my Laty Fiprate vas my besten friend. I vas practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Docteur Von Gostermans vas know eferypody; und eferypody vas know Docteur Von Gostermans. You tell him dat, my tear.

Lucy. Tell him that! I cannot remember half of it. Are you, sir, acquainted with Lord Vibrate's family?

Doctor. Ya, my tear. I vas make friendship mit dem more as many year.

Lucy. And do you know where they are?

Master. To be sure he does. They are in this—

Doctor. Hush! Silence your tongue! Dere is something mystery. (*Aside to Master.*) If you shall make me introduce to your mastair, my tear, I shall tell him eferyting und more as dat, my tear. Vill you, my tear?

Lucy. I will go and enquire.

Doctor. Tank you, my tear. You are fery pretty girl, my tear; fery vitty, pretty—Ah! you are so sly, cunning, little yipsey, my tear. Ah, ha!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Chamber.*

Maria *discovered, in man's clothes, with a letter in her hand, and walking with anxiety. The Waiter enters and leaves breakfast.*

Maria. (*Reading the letter.*) "*Dear sister,—The letter I now write is almost needless, for I shall leave*

Italy and follow it immediately; having at last obtained intelligence of your faithless lover. I am sorry to inform you that, in addition to your unpardonable wrongs, I have my own to vindicate. But I have threatened too long. You have heard of the Earl of Vibrate. He and his family are by this arrived in England; your betrayer accompanies them, and I am in close pursuit. PAUL DELAVAL." In what will this end? Must they meet? Must they fight? Must one or both of them fall? Oh, horror! Shall I be the cause of murder? And whose blood is to be spilled? That of the most generous of brothers, or of the man on whom my first and last affections have been fixed. Is there no safety; no means?

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Why, look here now, madam, you are letting the breakfast grow cold. You have been reading that letter again. I do believe I shall never get you to eat any more. Come now, pray, do take some of this French roll; and I'll pour out the tea. Do, pray, do; pray, do.

Maria. I cannot eat, Lucy; I am eaten. Terror and despair are devouring me.

Lucy. Dear, dear! What will all this come to? Did not you promise me that as soon as you had got safe to London in your disguise, you would be better?

Maria. Can it be? My kind, my gentle, my true-hearted George!

Lucy. True-hearted! No, no, madam, he was never true-hearted; or he could not so soon have changed, because his ill fortune changed to good. Everybody knows true love never changes.

Maria. What have I done? How have I offended? His caresses, his protestations, his tender endearments! Is, then, the man in whom my soul was wrapt, a vil—Oh!

Lucy. I declare, madam, if you take on this way, you will break my heart as well as your own. Beside, you forget all the while what you put on this dress and came up to London for.

Maria. Oh! no. It was, if possible to prevent mischief—murder! They have never met; they do not know each other. But how shall I discover Sir George? Of whom shall I inquire?

Lucy. If you would but eat your breakfast, I do think I could put you in the way.

Maria. You?

Lucy. Yes.

Maria. By what means?

Lucy. Will you eat your breakfast, then?

Maria. I cannot eat. Speak.

Lucy. Why, I have just been talking to an outlandish comical Doctor, that says he is acquainted with Lord Vibrate.

Maria. Indeed! Where is this Doctor?

Lucy. He is waiting without; for I knew you would wish to speak to him.

Maria. Shew him in immediately.

Lucy. I'll tell him you are not well; which is but too true; though you must remember, madam, you are a man. So, dry your eyes, forget your misfortunes, and, there, cock your hat o' that fashion, and try to swagger a little, or you will be found out. You stand so like a statue, and look so pitiful! Lord! that's not the way. If you are timorsome, and silent, and bashful, nobody on earth will take you for a youth of fortune and fashion. [*Exit.*

Maria. If they should meet—Heavens! They must not.

Re-enter LUCY *with* DOCTOR GOSTERMAN.

Lucy. My master is not very well: he eats neither breakfast, dinner, nor supper; and gets no sleep.

Doctor. He noder eat, noder drink, noder sleep! Dat is pad; fery pad. But dat is as noting at all, my tear. Let me do. You shall see presently, py and py, vat is my vay.

Maria. Your servant, sir.

Doctor. Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. My name is call Docteur Von Gostermans. I shall af de best recommendation for de honest Docteur dat vas possible. I vas practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Docteur Von Gostermans is know eferypody; und eferypody is know Docteur Von Gostermans. De pretty coquine young frau tell me dat you not fery fell. You not eat, you not drink, you not sleep. Dat is pad; fery pad. Bote dat is as noting at all. You tell me de diagnostic und de prognostic of all vat you vill ail; und I shall make you prescripe for de anodyne, oder de epipastic, oder de balsamic, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de restoratif, oder de emulsif, oder de incisif; vhich is eferyting so shveet und so delectable as all vat is possible.

Maria. Your pardon, sir, but I wish to see you on business of another nature.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Someting of de prifate affair? Dat is coot. I shall be as better for dat as for de oder. I vas know de vorl. I vas know eferypody, und eferypody vas know me. Dat is my vay.

Maria. Perhaps, then, you happen to know Sir George Versatile?

Doctor. Oh! der teufel, sair! Ya, ya. Sair Shorge is my besten friend. Vhich it vas six month dat he vas succeed to his title und estate; und den I vas make acquaintance mit him. Dat is my vay.

Maria. But he has been abroad since.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Ven he vas poor, he vas fall in lofe mit fery pretty young frau. Bote so soon as he vas pecome rish paronet, dat vas anoder ting. So, his relation und his friend vas sent him to make de gran tour.

Maria. And he was easily persuaded.

Doctor. Ya, sair. He vas vat you call fery coot nature; he vas alvay comply.

Mar. Compliance with him is more than a weakness; I fear it is a vice.

Doctor. So, he vas make acquaintance mit Lordt and mit Laty Fiprate; und den he vas tink no more of de pretty young frau, pecause he vas fall in lofe mit anoder.

Maria. Sir! Another! What other?

Doctor. Vat you shall ail, sair? You shange coleur.

Maria. With whom has he fallen in love?

Doctor. Mit te taughter of Lordt Fiprate.

Maria. With Lady Jane?

Doctor. Ya, sair; mit Laty Shane. My Cot! sair, vat you shall ail? You not make fall in lofe yourself mit Laty Shane?

Maria. No, no. They are, no doubt, to be married.

Doctor. My Cot! sair, you so pale as deaths My Cot! you shall faint.

Lucy. Faint, indeed! Bear up, madam. (*Aside.*) My master is too much of a man to faint. I'll run for a glass of water. [*Exit.*

Maria. The charming Lady Jane! Where is she?

Doctor. My Lordt und my Laty Fiprate und my Laty Shane vas all in de house here.

Maria. In this house?

Doctor. Ya, sair.

Maria. And is Sir George here, too?

Doctor. He is com und go alvay sometime efery tay.

Maria. Are they to be married?

Doctor. My Cot! sair, you af de ague fit.

Maria. Are they to be married?

Doctor. My Laty Fiprate vas mosh incline to Sair Shorge; und my lordt vas sometime mosh incline too; und den he vas sometime not mosh in-

cline; und den he vas doubt; und den he vas do me de honneur to consult mit me.

Maria. And what is your advice?

Doctor. My Lordt Fiprate vas my besten friends, und I vas adfice dat he shall do all as vat he please; und Sair Shorge vas my besten friends, too, und I vas adfice dat he shall do all as vat he please; und my Laty Fiprate vas petter as my besten friends, und den I vas more adfice dat she shall do all as vat she please.

Maria. But Lady Jane had another lover.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Mr. Delafal vas make lofe mit her. He vas com from de East Indie, und he vas lofe her fery mosh; und she vas go mit de family to Italy, und my Laty Fiprate vas make acquaintance mit Sair Shorge, pecause he vas so mosh pleasant und coot humeur, und he say all as vat she say: vhich vas de vay to alvay make agréable.

Maria. Could you do me the favour to introduce me to Lady Jane?

Doctor. Ya, sair, I shall do all as vat shall make agréable. Dat is my vay.

Re-enter Lucy *hastily.*

Lucy. (*Aside to her mistress.*) Oh! madam, don't be terrified, but I declare I have spilled almost all the water.

Maria. What is the matter?

Lucy. He is come.

Maria. Who? Sir George?

Lucy. No; don't be frightened: Mr. Delaval, from abroad.

Maria. My brother! Heavens! Did he see you?

Lucy. No. I had a glimpse of him, and whisked away just as he stepped out of the post-chaise.

Maria. Should he meet me in this disguise, what will he say?

Lucy. Send away the Doctor, and let us lock ourselves up.

Maria. (*To the Doctor.*) I must beg you will excuse me, sir; but it is necessary, at present, I should be alone. With your permission I will see you again in the afternoon; and, in the meantime—(*Gives him money.*)

Doctor. Oh! sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. I shall make you mosh more fisit; und den you shall tell me de diagnostic und de prognostic of all vat you vill ail.

Lucy. Yes, yes; another time.

Doctor. Und I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command.

Lucy. You have told us all that before.

Doctor. Und I shall make you prescripe for de anodyne, oder de epipastic, oder de balsamic, oder de soporific, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de restoratif, oder de emulsif, oder de incisif, vhich is eferyting so shveet und delectable as all vat is possible.

Lucy. Was ever anything so provoking? (*Aside.*) Pray, sir, make haste.

Doctor. You shall make remembrance of Docteur Von Gostermans. I am practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*The Hall of the hotel.*

Enter Delaval, Williams, *Master, and* Jenkins.

Del. Is the portmanteau safe?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Del. And the trunks?

Wil. All right.

Del. Have you paid the postillions?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Master. (*To Del.*) This way, if you please, sir. Jenkins!

Jenk. Coming, sir.

Master. Shew the damask room. What will you please to have for breakfast, sir?

Del. Nothing.

Master. Sir?

Del. Anything.

Master. Bring tea, coffee, and new laid eggs.

Jenk. In a minute, sir.

Del. (*To Wil.*) Observe the directions I gave you. Inquire immediately, and find if the Vibrate family be in town.

Wil. I will be careful, sir. Eh! Sir, sir!

Del. Well?

Wil. Look! Here comes Lord Vibrate's secretary.

Enter Thompson.

Del. Mr. Thompson!

Thom. Ah! Mr. Delaval, I am heartily glad to see you in England.

Del. Thank you, my good friend. But how is this? Where is the family? Where is Lady Jane?

Thom. I thought that would be your question. They are all in this house.

Del. Indeed!

Thom. I knew, when Lady Jane left Italy, your stay there would be short.

Del. Ay, ay; the follies and frenzies of the madman are visible to all eyes except his own.

Thom. I see you are dissatisfied.

Del. Tortured, till my thoughts and temper are so changed that I am almost as odious to myself as the world is become hateful to me.

Thom. I own you have some cause.

Del. Would my injuries were all! But there are other and still deeper stabs. It is not yet ten months since I returned from India; my heart how light, my eye how cheerful, and my hand prompt at any commendable act. I could then be moved to joy, and sorrow, and every sympathising passion. Smiles and mock courtesy passed current on me; the word of man and woman was taken on trust, and I lived in the sunshine of an open, unsuspecting soul. But I am now otherwise taught. I am changed. My better part is brutalized; and the wrongs that lie rankling here have stripped me of human affections, and made me almost savage.

Thom. What can be said? Patience is the—

Del. Talk not of patience: I must act. I may then, perhaps, inquire whether I have acted rightly. But I must first see Lady Jane, and Lord Vibrate.

Thom. Shall I inform his lordship of your arrival?

Del. By no means. Having injured, he may wish not to see me; and I would not afford him time to invent excuses, and avoid giving me a hearing. Though my wrongs must be endured, they shall be told.

Thom. I own they are great.

Del. Those that you know are heavy; yet, severe as the struggle would be, 'tis possible they might be hushed to rest; but there are others which blood only can obliterate; which can only sleep in death. Such is the road I must travel. Not long since nature was jocund, the azure heavens were bright, and pleasure was in every path; but now darkness, fathomless gulphs, guilty terrors, and all the dreadful phantoms of meditated desolation, lie before me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.

Lord Vibrate *discovered at a table, reading a book.*

Lord V. The ancient sceptics doubted of everything, affirmed nothing, and kept the judgment always in suspense. All things, said they, are equally indifferent, uncertain, and indeterminate. The mind is never to assent to anything; that it

may never be astonished, or disturbed, but enjoy a perfect calm. (*Rises, with important wisdom in his looks.*) Such were the maxims of Pyrrho, and his disciples; those renowned sages of antiquity! Well! And such, too, have been my maxims, practically. All my life have I been wavering, uncertain, and indeterminate. A sagacious sceptic without knowing it; and, as it were, by instinct. It was but lately I discovered what a wise man I am. And yet, it seems to me as if I were scarcely half wise enough, for I am told that I am to doubt of everything which I find rather difficult. For example: that my wife Lady Vibrate is an extravagant, racketty, rantipole woman of fashion; can I doubt that? No. That she squanders my money, disturbs my peace, and contradicts for contradiction's sake; can I doubt that? No. Then, have I not a daughter to marry, a law-suit to begin, and a thousand perplexing affairs, so that I do not know which way to turn? Why, all this appears true to me; but the sceptics teach that appearances deceive, and that nothing is certain. I may be Lord Vibrate, or I may be the Grand Turk. These doctrines are prodigiously deep. (*Considers.*) But I must think of something else just now. I have a thousand things to do, and know as little where to begin as where they will end. Ay; all is uncertainty. (*Rings.*) Harry, Edward!

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. Did your lordship call?

Lord V. Where are my servants? I want some of my plagues.

Jenk. They are ready at hand, my lord. Here is your lordship's secretary. [*Exit.*

Enter MR. THOMPSON.

Lord V. What is the reason, Mr. Thompson, that nobody waits? Here am I, fretting myself to a mummy for the good of my family, while everybody about me is as drowsy as the court of common-council after dinner. Have they taken laudanum? Are they in a lethargy? Are they all dead?

Thom. If they were, your lordship would have the goodness to raise them.

Lord V. Don't you know how many people I have to see, and places I have to go to?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Why, did not I tell you?

Thom. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Then how can you say you don't know?

Thom. Because I venture to presume, my lord, you do not know yourself.

Lord V. I am distracted with doubts. Harry!

Enter HARRY.

Harry. Did your lordship call?

Lord V. Where are you all? What are you about? I think you have lived long enough with me to know my way.

Harry. Yes, my lord; we know it very well.

Lord V. If you are not more attentive, I'll discharge you every one.

Harry. Oh! no; you will not do that. (*Aside.*)

Lord V. What are you muttering, sirrah?

Harry. Only, my lord, that we know your way.

Lord V. Order the coachman at eleven.

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. No. Order it at one.

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Come back. Order it in ten minutes, and remember I am not at home. Come back. Don't order it at all.

Harry. Must visitors be admitted?

Lord V. Yes—No—I cannot tell. I will consider. Be within call. Thompson! [*Exit Harry.*

Thom. My lord?

Lord V. Step to that picture-dealer. I will have the Guido. Yet, 'tis a great sum. No—It is a master-piece. I must have it. Why don't you go?

Thom. The picture is sold, my lord.

Lord V. Sold! Gone! Have I lost it? This is always the way. I am for ever disappointed. Harry!

Re-enter HARRY.

Harry. My lord.

Lord V. Did you go with the message to the stable-keeper, last night?

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Let me know when he comes.

Harry. He will come no more, my lord.

Lord V. Come no more?

Harry. No, my lord.

Lord V. Why so?

Harry. He says you never know your own mind, my lord.

Lord V. Insolent fellow!

Harry. Doctor Gosterman is below.

Lord V. Admit him.—Stay.—I cannot see him yet. In half-an-hour. In ten minutes. By-and-by. [*Exit Harry.*] I must not waste my time in these trifles. I must attend to this law business. I wish I could determine. What am I to do, Thompson?

Thom. In what, my lord?

Lord V. The affair of the ejectment. If I once embroil myself in law, there will be no end; and if I do not, the consequences are still worse.

Thom. Then they are bad, indeed, my lord.

Lord V. 'Tis strange that I can come to no resolution on this subject.

Thom. (*Aside.*) Nor on any other.

Lord V. I must decide this very day, or the time will be elapsed.

Thom. A lawyer, I should suppose, my lord, would give you the best advice.

Lord V. How? Are you mad, Thompson? A lawyer give good advice!

Thom. The present possessor has held the estate twenty years.

Lord V. Not till to-morrow. I have time still to make my claim. How shall I act? Shall I never leave this hotel? Has the builder been here?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. I can get nothing done. My whole life long I have been distracted with the multiplicity of my affairs.

Thom. And so, I am afraid, my lord, you always will be.

Lord V. Why so, sir?

Thom. Because your lordship undertakes so much, and does so little.

Lord V. So, he has not been here?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor the lawyers?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor my steward?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor Sir George?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Where is Lady Vibrate? Where is Lady Jane? Are they all in their graves? Have none of them shewn signs of life yet?

Thom. Not one. Your lordship is the only person in the family who begin your miseries so soon in a morning.

Lord V. The crosses and cares that prey upon me are enough to make any man on earth miserable.

Thom. Pardon me, my lord, but if you would care less, both yourself and your servants would sleep the more. My lady cares for nothing; and she can sleep when she is in bed; and sing, and dance, and laugh at your lordship's cares and fears when she is up.

Lord V. She will drive me mad.

Thom. Ah! here she is, as it were, for the purpose.

Lord V. Tell Harry to admit the Doctor—No; not just yet. Yes. In five minutes. I don't know when. [*Exit Thompson.*

Enter Lady Vibrate.

Lady V. Upon my honour, my lord, you are the most insupportable person imaginable. You vociferate worse than the man who calls when my carriage stops the way. Is anybody dying? Is the house on fire? Is the world at an end?

Lord V. By the life your ladyship leads, I should suppose it is pretty near.

Lady V. You always give me such shocking head-aches of a morning.

Lord V. You always give me such shocking heart-aches of an evening.

Lady V. Did not I send to you last night, to request your lordship would not disturb me?

Lord V. It has been your ladyship's amusement to disturb me all your life.

Lady V. Your lordship knows I love amusement.

Lord V. I have not slept a wink since.

Lady V. You had slept quite enough before. Pray, how long are we to remain in this hotel? Your lordship should remember, it is degrading for a man of rank to doze away life in the style of a colonel reduced to half-pay.

Lord V. Your ladyship should remember, it is degrading for a woman of rank to riot away life, and reduce her creditors to live without pay.

Lady V. Psha! That is the old story.

Lord V. But it is a very true story. It is a great misfortune that persons so opposite should pair.

Lady V. A terrible one, indeed. I am all gaiety and good humour; you are all turmoil and lamentation. I sing, laugh, and welcome pleasure wherever I find it; you take your lantern to look for misery, which the sun itself cannot discover.

Lord V. I am overwhelmed by crosses and vexations; and you participate in none of them.

Lady V. No. Heaven be praised!

Lord V. Will you attend to me, my lady, for half-an-hour?

Lady V. Mercy! Attend to you for half-an-hour! You, my lord, may think proper to be as miserable as Job; but I am not Job's wife.

Lord V. I insist, Lady Vibrate, on a serious answer. How ought I to act? What should I do, in this law affair?

Lady V. I cannot tell what you ought to do; but I know what you will do.

Lord V. Do you? What?

Lady V. Nothing.

Lord V. The recovery of this property would enable me to give my daughter a portion suitable to her rank. If it be lost, she will be almost destitute of fortune.

Lady V. You should have thought of that before, my lord.

Lord V. Before! Why, I have thought of nothing else for years. I have asked everybody's advice.

Lady V. And followed nobody's.

Lord V. It shall be so. The ejectment shall be served: proceedings shall commence.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord V. I say they shall. I am determined.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I know you, my lord.

Lord V. You know! I say they shall, if it be only to prove that you know nothing of the matter.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! A pleasant motive! But even that will not be strong enough.

Lord V. But it will, my lady.

Lady V. But it won't, my lord.

Enter Doctor Gosterman,

Lord V. I say it will, my lady.

Lady V. I say it won't, my lord.

Doctor. Coot morgen, to my coot lordt und my coot laty.

Lord V. For heaven's sake, Doctor, stop my lady's tongue.

Lady V. For heaven's sake, Doctor, give my lord a quieting draught.

Doctor. I shall do eferyting as vat you desire, my coot lordt und my coot laty.

Lord V. Can nothing silence you, Lady Vibrate? Shall I never have a quiet hearing? I wanted to talk with you and the Doctor on a thousand things.

Lady V. Yes; you wish to have all the talk to yourself.

Lord V. On the marriage of our daughter.

Lady V. Oh! with all my heart. A marriage, at least, begins with music, feasting, and dancing. So say on.

Lord V. I am not yet determined in favour of Sir George.

Lady V. But I am. (*While they speak, the Doctor gesticulates in favour of each.*)

Lord V. Mr. Delaval is an unobjectionable gentleman; and he was the first suitor.

Lady V. Sir George can sing; Sir George can dance; Sir George has air, grace, fashion, and fortune.

Lord V. Psha! His best qualities are prudence, and attention to his own concerns. Ask the Doctor.

Doctor. He has fery mosh prudence, my coot lordt.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I vow, Sir George is the most airy, thoughtless, pleasant person living, except myself.

Doctor. Ya, Sir Shorge is fery mosh pleasant; und my latyship is fery mosh more pleasant.

Lord V. Absurd. His humour is calm, cold, and serious.

Doctor. Fery serious, inteed.

Lady V. Whimsical, animated, delightful.

Doctor. Fery animate, fery telightful, upon my vordt.

Lord V. I never met a more discreet, sensible man in my life.

Lady V. True: for he thinks of nothing but his pleasures.

Lord V. His affairs, you mean.

Lady V. I tell you, my lord, he is exactly what I wish: the very soul of levity, whim, and laughter.

Lord V. I tell you, my lady, he is exactly like myself; prudent, and full of sage hesitation. He considers before he acts. Does he not, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot lordt.

Lady V. He never considers at all. Does he, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lord V. How so? We cannot both be right.

Doctor. You shall please to make me parton, my coot lordt. Sair Shorge vas all as vat you say; und all as vat my coot laty say. Mit my laty, he vas merry; mit my lordt he was sad. Mit my laty he vas laugh, und vas sing, und vas tance; und he vas make melancholy, und misery, und vas do all dat shall make agréable mit my lordt.

Lord V. Is he so variable?

Doctor. Ya, he vas fery mosh comply; fery mosh coot humeur. He vas alvay make agréable. Bote vas my lordtship und my latyship know dat Mr. Delafal vas com from Italy?

Lady V. Come where? To England?

Doctor. He vas in de house below. I vas see und speak mit his falet.

Lord V. In this hotel?

Doctor. He vas yust arrife, und vas demandt dat he shall see my lordtship; oder my latyship.

Lady V. I am very sorry he is here. He is a dun of the most disagreeable kind, and shall not see me; and, I hope, my lord, you will no longer permit his addresses to Lady Jane. My word is given to Sir George. Come with me, Doctor.

[*Exit with the Doctor.*

Enter Mr. Delaval.

Del. Pardon me, my lord, if I intrude with too little ceremony. Something, I hope, will be allowed to a mind much disturbed, and a heart deeply wounded and impatient to ease its pangs.

Lord V. Which way deeply wounded, Mr. Delaval?

Del. Can your lordship ask? Was it not with your permission I paid my addresses to Lady Jane? And was the ardour of my affection or the extent of my hopes unknown?

Lord V. Why, I did permit, and I did not. I had my doubts.

Del. My visits were daily, their purpose was declared, and I should imagine I spoke more respectfully to say, that you permitted, than that you connived at them.

Lord V. True: but still I had my doubts.

Del. Those doubts have stung me to the soul; and I could wish you had expressed them more decidedly.

Lord V. Impossible! Doubts here, doubts there, doubts everywhere. No rational man can be decided on any point whatever. My doubts are my continual plagues; my whole life is consumed by them.

Del. It appears, my lord, you have conquered them on one subject.

Lord V. Ay, indeed. I wish to heaven I had! What subject is that?

Del. You have affianced your daughter to Sir George Versatile.

Lord V. Humph! Yes, and no. I have and I have not. I cannot determine. Sir George is a prudent man, his estate is large, and the Versatiles are an ancient race. But your family is ancient, you are prudent, and the wealth left by your uncle is at least equal. What can I say? What can I do? I don't know which to take nor which to refuse. I am everlastingly in these difficulties. I am harassed night and day by them; they are the nightmare, they sit upon my bosom, oppress me, suffocate me. I cannot act. I cannot move.

Del. This, my lord, may be an apology to yourself, but the consequence to me is misery. Your daughter lived in my heart; with her I had promised myself ages of happiness; and had cherished a passion, impatient, perhaps, but ardent and pure as her own thoughts. This passion your conduct authorized. My fortune, my life, my soul, were devoted to her. Mine was no light or wanton dalliance; nor did I expect a light and wanton conduct from the noble family of which your lordship is the head.

Lord V. What do you mean, Mr. Delaval? I told you I was undecided; and so I am still. My lady, you know, was never much your friend. Sir George is her favourite.

Del. And is Lady Jane equally changeable?

Lord V. I don't know. She is my daughter; and, judging by myself, I should suppose she is perplexed and doubtful. She never, I believe, declared in your favour.

Del. Not expressly, my lord. She referred me to time and you. 'Tis true, I flattered myself her affections were wholly mine. Should she prefer Sir George, or any other man, be my feelings what they will, I am then silenced. My heart could not be satisfied with cold compliance; oh! no; 'tis of a different stamp. I am told she is not at home. I hope, however, she will not have the cruelty to deny me a last interview: till when I take my leave. Only suffer me to remark that, had you discovered in me any secret vice, any defects dangerous to the happiness of the woman I adore, you then were justified in your present conduct. But, if you have no such accusation to prefer, I must do my feelings the violence to declare I cannot but think it highly unworthy of a man of honour. [*Exit.*

Lord V. Mr. Delaval! Insolent! Highly unworthy of a man of honour! I will challenge him. He shall find whether I am a man of honour, or no. I will challenge him. Harry!

Enter Harry.

Harry. My lord.

Lord V. Run, tell that Mr. Delaval—Hold—Yes, fly; tell him—Stay; get me pen, ink, and paper: I will teach him to insult—No; I will not do him the honour to write. Order him back.

Harry. Order who, my lord?

Lord V. He shall give me satisfaction. In that, at least, I am determined. He shall give—And yet, what is satisfaction? Is it to be run through the body? shot through the head? A man may then, indeed, be said to be satisfied. I had forgotten my doubts on duelling. Tell my lady I wish to speak to her. No—

Harry. She is here, my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Vibrate *and* Doctor Gosterman.

Lady V. What is the matter, my lord? You seem to be even in a worse humour than usual.

Lord V. Mr. Delaval has treated me disrespectfully.

Lady V. Have not I a thousand times told you he is a disagreeable impertinent person?

Lord V. Why, God forgive me, but I really find myself of your ladyship's opinion. 'Tis a thing, I believe, that never happened before.

Lady V. And a thing, I believe, that will never happen again. I hope, my lord, you are now determined in favour of Sir George.

Lord V. Positively. Finally. I pledge my honour.

Lady V. You hear, Doctor?

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty; I vas hear.

Lord V. I say, I pledge my honour. I authorise you, my lady, to deliver that message to the baronet; and, that I may not have time to begin to doubt, I will instantly begone. [*Exit.*

Lady V. This is fortunate.

Doctor. Oh! fery mosh fortunate; fery mosh.

Lady V. Had Mr. Delaval married my daughter, we should have had a continual sermon on reason, common sense, and good order. And these and such like antediluvian notions must have been introduced to our family.

Doctor. Ah! dat shall be pad; fery pad, inteet, my coot laty.

Lady V. Now that Sir George is the man, the danger is over.

Doctor. Dat is creat plessing.

Lady V. But what, think you, are my daughter's thoughts? I fear she has a kind of esteem for Delaval. He was her first lover.

Doctor. Ya; she vas fery mosh esteem Mr. Delafal, my coot laty.

Lady V. But I observe she listens with great pleasure to the gay prattle of Sir George.

Doctor. Oh! fery creat, inteet, my coot laty.

Lady V. We must second the rising passion; for we must get rid of that solemn sir.

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lady V. Go to her, Doctor; convince her how

intolerable it will be to have a husband whom she cannot quarrel with nor reproach. Paint, in the most lively colours, the stupid life she must lead with so reasonable a man.

Doctor. I shall do eferyting as vat shall make agréable, my coot laty. Dat is my vay. My laty, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, my laty. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*The Hall of the hotel.*

Lucy *discovered, speaking to the Master of the hotel.*

Enter Williams *and* Harry.

Wil. All you say is very true, Mr. Harry. Our masters suppose we have neither sense nor feeling; yet exact everything that requires the five senses in perfection. They expect we should know their meaning before they open their lips, yet won't allow we have common understanding.

Harry. More shame for them. I warrant, for all that, we can game, run in debt, get in drink, and be as proud and domineering as they are for their lives.

Wil. Yes, yes: let them but change places, and they would soon find out we could rise to their vices, and they could sink to ours, with all the ease imaginable.

Harry. They have no such notion though, Mr. Williams.

Wil. That is their vanity, Mr. Harry. I have lived with Mr. Delaval ever since he returned from India; and, though he is a good—(*sees Lucy*)—Eh! surely, it must be her. Do you know that young woman, Mr. Harry?

Harry. No; but I have heard a strange story about her.

Wil. Ay, it is.—What—I am sure it is Lucy.—What strange story have you heard?

Harry. Why, that she came here late last night with a young gentleman, now above, pretending to be his waiting-maid.

Wil. With a gentleman! (*Aside.*) Oh! the jilt! Waiting-maid to a man? I never heard of such a thing.

Harry. Nor anybody else.

Wil. (*Aside.*) The deceitful hussey!

Harry. (*Bell rings.*) That's my lord's bell: I told you he is never easy. I must go.

Wil. (*Aside.*) I am glad of it. By all means, Mr. Harry. Good day! [*Exit Harry.*] Run away with a gentleman! Oh!

Lucy. (*Coming forward.*) I declare, there is Mr. Williams.

Wil. (*Aside.*) What a fool was I to believe she loved me!

Lucy. (*Aside.*) How my heart beats! Dear, dear! I could wish to speak to him; but then, if any harm should come of it!

Wil. (*Aside.*) She shall not escape me.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) I should like to ask him how he does. But I must not betray my dear lady. (*Going.*)

Wil. (*Placing himself in her way.*) I beg pardon, madam.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) Does not he know me?

Wil. I thought I had seen you before; but I find I am mistaken.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) What does he mean?

Wil. You are very like a young woman I once knew.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) How angry he looks!

Wil. But she was a modest, pretty behaved person; and not an arrant jilt.

Lucy. Who is a jilt, Mr. Williams?

Wil. One Lucy Langford, that I courted and promised to marry; but I know better now.

Lucy. You do, Mr. Williams?

Wil. I do, madam.

Lucy. It is very well, Mr. Williams; it is very well. Pray, let me go about my business.

Wil. Oh! to be sure. I have no right to stop you.

Lucy. You have no right to speak to me as you do, Mr. Williams.

Wil. No, no. Ha, ha, ha! I dare say, I have not.

Lucy. No, you have not; and so I beg you will let me pass. My mistress—I mean—

Wil. Ay, ay; you mean your master.

Lucy. Do I, sir? Well, since you please to think so, so be it.

Wil. All the servants know it is a man. Would you deny it?

Lucy. I deny nothing, Mr. Williams; and, if you are minded to make this an excuse for being as treacherous as the rest of your sex, you are very welcome, Mr. Williams. I shall neither die nor cry at parting.

Wil. I dare say not. The young gentleman above stairs will comfort you.

Lucy. (*Bursts into tears.*) It is a base, false story. I have no young gentleman above stairs, nor below stairs neither, to comfort me; and you ought to know me better.

Wil. Did you or did you not come here last night?

Lucy. What of that?

Wil. With a young gentleman?

Lucy. No—Yes. Don't ask me such questions.

Wil. No. You are ashamed to answer them.

Maria *appears above.*

Maria. Lucy!

Lucy. Ma'am—Sir? Coming, sir.

Wil. There, there! I will see what sort of a spark it is, however.

Lucy. (*Struggling.*) Be quiet, then. Keep away. You sha'n't.

Maria. (*Descending.*) What is the matter? Who is molesting you?

Lucy. (*To Maria.*) Go back, sir; go back.

Wil. I will see, I am determined.

Delaval *appears at a room-door.*

Del. Williams!

Wil. I tell you, I will. (*Looking at Maria.*) Eh! Bless me!

Maria. Why, Lucy—Mr. Williams!

Wil. My young lady, as I live!

Del. Why do not you answer, Williams?

Wil. Coming, sir.

Maria. Mercy! It is my brother's voice: what shall I do?

Lucy. Hide your face with your handkerchief, madam. Pull down your hat.

Maria. Pray, do not betray me, Mr. Williams.

Lucy. If you do, I will never speak to you as long as I have breath to draw.

Wil. How betray?

Lucy. Don't say you know us. Mind! Not for the world. [*Exit with Maria.*

Del. What is it you are about, Williams?

Wil. Nothing, sir.

Del. What do you mean by nothing? Whom were you wrangling with?

Wil. Me, sir? Wrangling, sir?

Del. Why are you so confused?

Wil. Why, sir, I—I committed a small mistake. I was asking—asking after a gentleman that—that proved not to be a gentleman—that is, not—not the gentleman that I supposed.

Del. Why did you not come back with your message? Have you learnt the address of Sir George?

Wil. Yes, sir; he lives in Upper Grosvenor-street; his name on the door.

Del. Well, be in the way. The day shall not pass before I see him. My own wrongs I could forgive. He, it seems, is preferred; and, perhaps, I have no right to complain: but for his injuries to my sister he shall render me a dear account. [*Exit.*

Wil. What can be the reason of Miss Delaval's disguise?

Lucy. (*Above.*) Hist, hist! Mr. Williams!

Wil. Is it you? Oh! now I shall know.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

LADY VIBRATE *and* LADY JANE *discovered.*

Lady V. Really, daughter, I cannot understand you.

Lady J. No wonder, madam; for I do not half understand myself.

Lady V. Is it possible you can hesitate? The good-humour and complaisance of Sir George might captivate any woman.

Lady J. They are very engaging, but they are dangerous.

Lady V. Which way?

Lady J. His character is too pliant. If others are merry, so is he: if they are sad, he is the same. Their joys and sorrows play upon his countenance; but, though they may slightly graze, they do not penetrate his heart. Even while he relieves, he scarcely feels them.

Lady V. Psha! He is a delightful man.

Lady J. I grant he does his utmost. But it is a folly to be the slave even of an endeavour to please.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, you are a whimsical young lady. Afraid of marrying a man because of his assiduous endeavours to please! As if that were a husband's failing! You can prefer no such accusation against Mr. Delaval.

Lady J. I own he is of a very different character. Firm and inflexible, he imagines he makes virtue his rule and reason his guide.

Lady V. Firm, indeed! No, no: ferocious, obstinate, perverse. Sir George tries to be agreeable, and is successful; Mr. Delaval has no fear of offending, and does not miss his aim.

Lady J. Heaven help us! We all have faults and follies enough.

Lady V. Mr. Delaval never was approved by me; and this morning he has insulted your father.

Lady J. Insulted! How do you mean, madam? Mr. Delaval is abroad. Has he written?

Lady V. No. He is here.

Lady J. Here! And has he not thought proper to let me know of his arrival?

Lady V. No, no. The haughty gentleman has only thought proper to reproach Lord Vibrate for admitting the pretensions of Sir George. He is too proud to endure a competitor.

Lady J. Indeed! Such pride is the very way to insure his competitor success. Insulted my father!

Lady V. I will leave you to judge how deeply, when I tell you that, fluctuating and undecided as Lord Vibrate always is, he was so offended that he pledged his honour in favour of Sir George.

Lady V. Insult my father, and not deign to let me know of his arrival.

Lady V. I hope, when Sir George comes, you will admit him.

Lady J. Certainly, madam; certainly.

Lady V. And that Mr. Delaval will be denied.

Lady J. It seems I need give myself no concern about that; the gentleman will not even take the trouble to send up his name.

Lady V. I am glad you feel it properly.

Lady J. Pardon me, madam, I will not condescend to feel it in the least. It shall not affect me; no, not for a moment. I had, indeed, conceived a very different opinion of Mr. Delaval. I am glad I have discovered my error before it is too late. I could not have believed it possible. But it shall not disturb me. It shall give me no uneasiness. I will keep myself perfectly cool and unconcerned, and—ungenerous, unfeeling man! [*Exit.*

Lady V. She is delightfully piqued, and Sir George will succeed.

Sir G. (*Without.*) Are the ladies above?

Foot. (*Without.*) Yes, sir.

Lady V. I hear him. The very sound of his voice inspires mirth.

Enter SIR GEORGE VERSATILE.

Sir G. Ah! my dear lady.

Lady V. I am infinitely glad to see you, Sir George; you are come at a lucky moment.

Sir G. Is, then, my fate decided?

Lady V. It is, it is.

Sir G. Happy tidings!

Lady V. But first tell me—

Sir G. Anything—everything. Speak.

Lady V. Are you not of my opinion?

Sir G. To be sure I am. What is it?

Lady V. That pleasure is the business of life.

Sir G. Oh! beyond all doubt.

Lady V. That inspecting accounts—

Sir G. Is vulgar drudgery.

Lady V. And looking after our affairs—

Sir G. A vile loss of time.

Lady V. That care in the face denotes—

Sir G. The owner a fool.

Lady V. And that sorrow is a very ridiculous thing.

Sir G. Fit only to excite laughter.

Lady V. Why, then, Sir George, I am your friend.

Sir G. Ten thousand thousand thanks! But, what says my lord?

Lady V. Would you believe it? He consents, has pledged his honour, and sent the message by me.

Sir G. Rapture, enchantment!

Lady V. Yes. The reign of pleasure is about to begin.

Sir G. Light, free, and fantastic; dancing an eternal round.

Lady V. No domestic troubles—

Sir G. No grave looks.

Lady V. No serious thoughts—

Sir G. We will never think at all.

Lady V. No cares, no frowns.

Sir G. None, none, by heavens, none! It shall be spring and sunshine all the year.

Lady V. Then our appearance in public!

Sir G. Splendid, dazzling! Driving to the opera!

Lady V. Dressing for Ranelagh.

Sir G. A phaëton to-day.

Lady V. A curricle to-morrow.

Sir G. Dash over the downs of Piccadilly, descend the heights of St. James's, make the tour of Pall-Mall, coast Whitehall—

Lady V. Back again to Bond-street—

Sir G. Scour the squares, thunder at the doors.

Lady V. How do you do? How do you do? How do you do?

Sir G. And away we rattle, till stone walls are but gliding shadows, and the whole world a galanty shew.

Lady V. You are a charming man, Sir George; and Lady Jane is your's.

Sir G. My dear lady, your words inspire me: I am all air, spirit, soul! I tread the milky way, and step upon the stars.

Lady V. But you must not, before the marriage, talk thus to Lord Vibrate. Silly man! He and you will never agree.

Sir G. Oh! yes, but we shall. I—I—I like his humour.

Lady V. Do you?

Sir G. Prodigiously. Whenever I am in his company, I am as grave as Good Friday.

Lady V. Indeed!

Sir G. He is full of sage reflection: so am I. Doubtful of everything: so am I. Anxious for the present, provident for the future: so am I. Overflowing with prudential maxims; sententious, sentimental, and solemn: so am I.

Lady V. You sentimental!

Sir G. As grace before meat in the mouth of an alderman.

Lady V. You solemn!

Sir G. As the black patch on a judge's wig.

Lady V. I must tell you, Sir George, I hate sentiment.

Sir G. Oh! so do I.

Lady V. Solemnity is all a farce.

Sir G. And those that act it buffoons. I know it.

Lady V. I love mirth, pleasantry—

Sir G. Humour, whim, wit, feasting, revelry, shout, song, dance, and joke. So do I, so do I, so do I!

Lady V. The very mention of duties and cares makes me splenetic.

Sir G. Curse catch duties! I hate them. Give me life, the wide world, the fair sun, and the free air.

Lady V. I say, give me midnight, the rattling of chariot-wheels, and the lighted flambeau.

Sir G. Ay, a rout! A crash of coaches—a lane of footmen—a blazing stair-case—a squeeze through the antichamber—card-tables—wax-lights—patent lamps—Bath stoves and suffocation! Oh, lord! oh, lord!

Lady V. Exquisite! You are a delightful man.

Sir G. Am I?

Lady V. You enter perfectly into all my ideas.

Sir G. Do I?

Lady V. And describe them even better than I myself can.

Sir G. Oh! my dear lady.

Lady V. Yes, you do.

Sir G. No, no.

Lady V. But, then—Ha, ha, ha!—That you should be able to fall in with my lord's absurdities so readily!

Sir G. Nothing more easy: I have one infallible rule to please all tempers. I learnt it of our friend the Doctor.

Lady V. Sure! What is that?

Sir G. I prove that everybody is always in the right.

Lady V. Prove my husband to be in the right. Do, if you can.

Sir G. My lord loves to be restless, and doubtful, and distressed; he delights in teasing and tormenting himself; and why should I interrupt his pleasures?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Very true.

Sir G. I fall in with his humour. I shew him how rational it is; afford him new arguments of discontent, and encourage him to be miserable.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! you malicious devil!

Sir G. My dear lady, you mistake: I do it from pure compassion. It makes him happy. Every child delights in the squeaking of its own trumpet; and shall I have the cruelty to break the toy? A well-bred person is cautious never to contradict. It is become a very essential requisite to say ay and no in the most complying manner possible.

Lady V. Ah! Sir George, you are one of the dear inimitable few.

Sir G. Only a copy of your charming self.

Lady V. You and I must totally reform our stupid family. Amusement shall be our perpetual occupation.

Sir G. Day and night.

Lady V. We will commence with your marriage. It shall be a splendid one.

Sir G. A fête, a concert, a ball! The whole town shall ring with it.

Lady V. I hate a private wedding. A small select party is my aversion.

Sir G. Oh! nothing is so insipid! Pleasure cannot be calm.

Lady V. I wish to be seen, and heard—

Sir G. And talked of, and paragraphed, and praised, and blamed, and admired, and envied, and laughed at, and imitated!

Lady V. I live but in a crowd.

Sir G. Give me hurry, noise, embarrassment—

Lady V. Confusion, disorder—

Sir G. Tumult, tempest, uproar, elbowing, squeezing, pressing, pushing, squeaking, squalling, fainting!

Lady V. Exquisite! transporting!

Sir G. You remember I receive masks this evening.

Lady V. Can I forget?

Sir G. You will be there?

Lady V. There! Ay; though I should come in my coffin.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! An excellent idea! I never yet saw a mask in the character of a *memento mori*.

Lady V. Ah! Turn about, and you will see a *memento mori* without a mask!

Sir G. What, my lord?

Lord V. (*Without.*) I cannot tell. I will consider, and send an answer.

Lady V. Here he comes, to interrupt our delightful dreams: a very antidote to mirth and pleasure. He will give you a full dose of the dismals. But you must stay and speak to him. Remember, his honour is pledged: insist upon that. I pity, but cannot relieve you. [*Exit.*

Enter Lord Vibrate.

Lord V. I have been too sudden. I ought not to have pledged my honour. This is the consequence of hasty determination; of not doubting before we decide. Shall I never correct myself of that fault? (*Sees Sir George. They look full at each other, till Sir George catches the same dismal kind of countenance.*) Ah! Sir George, here am I, brimful of anxiety and turmoil!

Sir G. Alas! man was born to trouble.

Lord V. Perplexed on every side; thwarted in every plan: no domestic comfort, no friend to grieve with me, no creature to share my miseries.

Sir G. Melancholy case!

Lord V. One crossing me, another blaming me, and my wife driving me mad!

Sir G. Distressing situation!

Lord V. My cares laughed at, my vigilance mocked, my sufferings insulted! And why? Because I am cautious! because I doubt! because I am provident! What is man without money?

Sir G. A fountain without water.

Lord V. A clock without a dial.

Sir G. What is it that buys respect, and honour, and power, and privilege, and houses, and lands, and wit, and beauty, and learning, and lords, and commons, and—

Lord V. Why money!—Then the manners of this dissipated age—

Sir G. They are truly shocking! They—they—they are absurd, ridiculous, odious, abominable.

Lord V. And to what do they lead?

Sir G. To everything that is horrid! To loss of peace, loss of property, loss of principle, loss of respect; bankruptcy, ruin, contempt, disease, and death!

Lord V. (*Aside.*) Yes, yes: he's the man! I do not think I repent. Heaven be praised! Sir George, you are a man of understanding; an economist. You will regulate your family and affairs to my heart's content.

Sir G. Oh! it shall be my study; my daily practice, my duty, my delight!

Lord V. You make me happy. And yet I cannot but wonder, being so rational a man, how you and my lady should agree so well.

Sir G. Dear, my lord, why so? Women are the most manageable good creatures upon earth.

Lord V. Women good?

Sir G. Indubitably; when they are pleased.

Lord V. So they say is the devil.

Sir G. The sweet angels deserve to be humoured. Their smiles are so enchanting! And, should they frown, who can be angry when we know the dear wayward sirens will only look the more bewitching, as soon as they are out of their pouts? It is so delightful to see the sun breaking from behind a cloud.

Lord V. Psha! When a woman begins to grow old—

Sir G. Hush! The sun—the sun never grows old. I grant you that, formerly, there used to be old women; but there are none now!

Lord V. Then you think me a fool for being wretched at my wife's thoughtlessness, caprice, and impertinence?

Sir G. No, I don't. Every body tells us that wives were born to be the plague of their husbands.

Lord V. And mine is the greatest of plagues!

Sir G. What is a wife's duty? To obey her lord and master. 'Tis her marriage promise, and the law binds her to it. She is the minister of his pleasures, the handmaid of his wants, his goods, his chattels, his vendible property.

Lord V. Ay; we find the husband may take the wife to market in a halter.

Sir G. In which I should hope he would afterward hang himself!

Lord V. My lady thinks of nothing but revelling, and racketing, and turning the world upside down!

Sir G. 'Tis a great pity.

Lord V. Her tongue is my torment.

Sir G. The perpetual motion! It never ceases.

Lord V. Then how can you like her company?

Sir G. She is not *my* wife.

Lord V. No, or you would not be such good friends. Did she say anything concerning the marriage?

Sir G. Oh! yes. She delivered your lordship's kind message.

Lord V. What, that I had pledged my honour?

Sir G. Irrevocably.

Lord V. I was very rash. Hasty resolutions bring long repentance. She insists that the nuptials shall be public.

Sir G. Does she, indeed!

Lord V. For my part, I hate any display of vanity.

Sir G. It is extremely ridiculous! What would our ostentation, pomp, and magnificence be, but advertising ourselves to the world as fools and coxcombs?

Lord V. Is that a rational use of money?

Sir G. Should it not be applied to relieve the aged, comfort the poor, succour the distressed—

Lord V. What?

Sir G. Reward merit, encourage industry, and promote the public good?

Lord V. Promote a farce!

Sir G. Very true; the public good is a farce!

Lord V. The true use of money is to defend our rights—

Sir G. Revenge our wrongs, purchase for the present, provide for the future, secure power, buy friends, bid defiance to enemies, and lead the world in a string!

Lord V. Ay; now you talk sense. So, if I should consent, the wedding shall be private.

Sir G. Calm; tranquil!

Lord V. No feasting.

Sir G. No dancing, no music, no pantomime pleasures; but all silent, serene, pure, and undisturbed.

Lord V. We will just invite a select party.

Sir G. A chosen few.

Lord V. None but our real and sincere friends.

Sir G. And then we shall be sure the house will hold them.

Enter HARRY.

Harry. My lord, the builder desires to know if you will see him?

Lord V. I am coming. I will be with him in five minutes.

Harry. He says he can stay no longer.

Lord V. Then let him go. I will be with him presently.

Harry. The lawyers have sent word they are waiting for your lordship, at Counsellor Demur's chambers.

Lord V. Very well. There let them wait. The law is slow, and every man ought to be slow who is going to law. Come with me, Sir George; I have some papers to consult you upon.

Harry. The tradespeople, too, are below.

Lord V. Thus it is: I am eternally besieged; I never have a moment to myself.

Harry. This is the tenth time they have been here, by your lordship's own appointment.

Lord V. What of that?

Harry. They are become quite surly. They all abuse me: and some of them don't spare your lordship.

Lord V. Do you hear, Sir George?

Sir G. Oh, shocking! Your tradespeople are a sad, unreasonable set. You cannot convince them that, if we were to keep our own appointments, be punctual in our payments, and know what we do want, and what we do not, we should no longer be persons of fashion.

Enter THOMPSON.

Thom. I am just come from the lawyers, my lord. The courts are sitting, their clients waiting; and if your lordship do not go immediately, they will be gone.

Lord V. Very true; and this last opportunity of serving an ejectment will be lost. I have a thousand things to attend to. Would you be kind enough, Sir George, to go and—Hold! no; I don't know what to do! The estate is valuable: but law is damnable. I may lose the cause: it may cost even more than it is worth. Writs of error!—Brought into Chancery!—Carried up to the Lords!

Sir G. Then the stupidity of juries; the fictions of law; the chicanery of lawyers, their tricking, twisting, turning, lying, wrangling, browbeating, cajoling!

Lord V. Their frauds, collusions, perjuries, robberies—

Sir G. Ay! Detinue, replevin, plea, imparlance, replication, rejoinder, rebutter, surrejoinder, surrebutter, demurrer—

Lord V. Take breath! We ought both to demur: for it is the devil's dance, and both plaintiff and defendant are obliged to pay the piper. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Apartments of Lord Vibrate.*

LADY JANE, *her Woman,* DOCTOR GOSTERMAN, *and a Footman, discovered.*

Lady J. (*To Footman.*) Tell the young gentleman I wait his pleasure. [*Exit Footman.*] It is very singular! men, I believe, do not often travel attended by waiting-maids!

Doctor. Dat is de mystery, my Laty Shane.

Lady J. What can he want to say to me?

Doctor. Dat is de more mystery, my Laty Shane. He vas fery mosh young, und fery mosh handsome, und he has fery mosh make fall in lofe mit you, my Laty Shane.

Lady J. Nonsense!

Doctor. My Laty Shane was so full of de beauty, dat you vas make sharm efery pody, my Laty Shane! Und as your name vas make mention, my Laty Shane, his vas all so pale as deaths!

Lady J. (*Aside to her Woman.*) You are sure, you say, Mr. Delaval made inquiries, and sent up his name?

Woman. (*Apart to Lady J.*) La! my lady, could you think he would not? I saw him before ten o'clock; just as you sent me where I was kept so long. And, goodness! had you beheld what a taking he was in! I warrant you, my lady, he asked a hundred and a hundred questions in a breath, and all about you!

Lady J. Well, go now where I desired you.

Woman. Yes, my lady. [*Exit.*

Enter a Footman, who introduces MARIA, *and exit.*

Maria. (*Aside.*) Why do I tremble thus?

Lady J. (*To Doctor.*) What a charming countenance!

Doctor. Oh! fery mosh sharming!

Lady J. How prepossessing his appearance!

Doctor. Ya; he vas fery mosh possess.

Re-enter Footman.

Foot. Sir George has sent this domino and mask to know if they meet your ladyship's approbation.

Lady J. Ha, ha, ha! Italian refinement, copied after some Venetian cicisbeo. Put them down.

Maria. (*Aside. Regarding the domino and mask.*) Here his presents, and here his affections are now directed! How shall I support the scene?

Lady J. You wish, sir, to speak to me.

Maria. (*Faltering.*) Embarrassed by the liberty I have taken—

Lady J. Let me request you to waive all apology, and tell me which way I can oblige or serve you.

Maria. You are acquainted with Sir George—I—you—Pray pardon me. I am overcome. My spirits are so agitated—

Lady J. (*Reaching a chair.*) Sit down, sir. You are unwell. Bless me! Doctor—

Doctor. (*To Lady J.*) I vas tell my Laty Shane vat it vas.—Here, sair, you shmell mit dat elixir; und I shall make your neck-bandt tie loose und—(*Going to loosen her neckcloth.*)

Maria. (*Alarmed.*) Pray, forbear!

Doctor. (*Aside. Imitates a woman.*) Ah, ha! Der tenfel! he vas a vomans!

Lady J. Are you better?

Maria. A moment's air. (*Goes to the window.*)

Doctor. (*Aside.*) Dat vas de someting mystery!

Maria. (*To Lady J.*) If you would indulge me a few minutes in private—

Lady J. By all means. Doctor—(*Whispers.*)

Doctor. Ya, ya; my Laty Shane, I vas unterstandt: und I vas do efery ting as vat shall make agréable. Dat is my vay.—Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. I vas unterstandt. My Laty Shane, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, my Laty Shane.—(*Aside.*) Ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Lady J. Take courage, sir.

Maria. I am unequal to the task. This disguise sits ill upon me.

Lady J. What disguise?

Maria. I am not what I seem. I—

Lady J. Speak!

Maria. I am a woman.

Lady J. Heavens!

Maria. Distressed—

Lady J. By poverty?

MSria. Oh! no; I come to claim your counsel.

Lady J. In what way?

Maria. To prevent mischief—the shedding of blood.

Lady J. The shedding of blood?

Sir G. (*Without.*) I will be with you again presently, my lady.

Maria. Mercy! it is Sir George! What shall I do? He must not see me! This way—(*Puts on the domino and mask.*) Aid me, dear lady, to conceal myself; and excuse couduct which I cannot now explain. (*Retires.*)

Lady J. Depend upon me, madam.—(*Aside.*) This is as unaccountable as it is alarming!

Enter SIR GEORGE VERSATILE.

Sir G. I come, my charming Lady Jane, flying, and full of business, to consult you on a thousand important affairs!

Lady J. Surely! What are they?

Sir G. Upon my soul, I don't know!

Lady J. Heyday!

Sir G. They have every one slipped my memory.

Lady J. Miraculous!

Sir G. Whenever I have the inexpressible pleasure of enjoying your smiles, I can think of nothing else.

Maria. (*Aside.*) Perjured man!

Lady J. My smiles! Ha, ha, ha! What if I should happen to frown?

Sir G. Impossible! No lowering clouds of discontent dare ever shade the heavenly brightness of your brow.

Maria. (*Aside.*) Oh!

Lady J. Very prettily said, upon my word. Where did you learn it?

Sir G. From you: 'tis pure inspiration, and you are my muse.

Lady J. No; 'tis a flight beyond me. I love plain prose.

Sir G. So do I. A mere common-place, matter-of-fact man, I! The weather; the time of the day; the history of where I dined last; the names and titles of the company; the dishes brought to table; the health, sickness, death, birth, and marriage, of my acquaintance; and such like toothpick topics for me! I am as literal in my narratives as any town-crier, and repeat them as often.

Lady J. Yet I should wish to talk a little common sense.

Sir G. Oh! so should I, I assure you: I am for pros and cons, and whys and wherefores. Your Aristotles, and Platos, and Senecas, and Catos, are my delight; I honour their precepts, venerate their cogitations, and adore the length of their beards!—which luckily reminds me of the masquerade. Is my domino to your taste?

Lady J. Ha, ha, ha! Antient sages, dominos, and taste!

Sir G. Did you not notice the colour?

Lady J. Oh! the taste of a domino is in its colour?

Sir G. Why, no; but there may be meaning.

Lady J. Explain.

Sir G. Mine is saffron.

Lady J. What of that?

Sir G. Cruel question!—Hymen and his robe.

Lady J. Oh! oh!

Maria. (*Aside.*) She is pleased with his perfidy.

Lady J. A very significant riddle, truly!

Maria. (*Advances.*) Are you so soon to be married, sir?

Sir G. Bless me! Lady Jane, what frolicsome gentleman is this? In masquerade so early, and my domino!

Maria. Permit me once more to ask, if you are soon to be married?

Sir G. Your question, sir, is improperly addressed. Put it, if you please, to that lady.

Maria. (*Aside to Sir G.*) Is that the lady to whom the question ought to be put?

Sir G. (*Aside.*) What does he mean? Will you indulge me, sir, by taking off that mask?

Maria. No, sir.

Sir G. 'Tis mine; and I am induced to claim it, from the great curiosity I have to see your face.

Maria. Do you not adore this lady?

Sir G. (*Aside.*) An odd question!—More than language can express.

Maria. (*Aside.*) Oh, falsehood!—Then I put myself under her protection.

Sir G. You know guardian angels when you see them. Pray, however, let us become acquainted.

Maria. For what reason?

Sir G. 'Twould gratify me. I should like you.

Maria. Oh! no.

Sir G. I certainly should. There is something of pathos and music in your voice, which—which—I never heard but one to equal it.

Maria. And whose voice was that?

Sir G. Oh! that—that was a voice so ingenuous, so affectionate, so fascinating—

Maria. But whose voice was it?

Lady J. (*Aside.*) What does this mean?

Maria. Tell me, and you shall see my face.

Lady J. (*Aside.*) Astonishing!

Sir G. I must not, I dare not—I shall never hear it more!

Maria. (*Aside.*) My feelings so overpower me, I shall betray myself.—(*To Lady J.*) Permit me to retire.

Lady J. You have alarmed and strangely moved me! I hope you will return?

Maria. Oh! yes; and most happy to have your permission.

Sir G. Why do they whisper?—(*To Maria, going.*) Will you not let me know who you are?

Maria. No.

Sir G. Why?

Maria. Because—I am one you do not love.

Sir G. One I do not love!

Lady J. (*Aside.*) This is incomprehensible!

Re-enter MARIA, *hastily.*

Maria. (*Apart to Lady J.*) Oh, madam!

Lady J. What more is the matter?

Maria. For your life, do not mention the names of either of these gentlemen to the other!

Lady J. What gentlemen?

Maria. He is coming! They do not personally know each other: if they should, there would be murder! I dare not stay. For the love of God, beware! [*Exit.*

Enter DELAVAL.

Sir G. (*Calling.*) Harkye! sir, come back! My domino! I shall want it in an hour or so.—Who have we here?

Del. (*Agitated.*) Your ladyship's very humble servant.

Lady J. Oh! How do you do? How do you do? (*Aside.*) Who can that lady be? She knows them both, it seems; and knows their rivalship! Her terror is contagious! Is their hatred so deadly? I shall certainly betray them to each other.

Del. (*Aside.*) What a strange behaviour she puts on! Does she affect to overlook me? (*Seeing Sir George.*) Who is this?

Lady J. Are you just arrived?

Del. This very morning: sooner, I fear, than—than was desired.

Lady J. Do you think so? (*To Sir G.*) Why don't you go to Lady Vibrate? She is waiting.

Sir G. 'Tis the fate of forty.

Lady J. What?

Sir G. To wait.—(*Looking at Delaval.—Aside.*) Who can this spark be, that she wants me gone?—Pray, what is the name of the youth that has made so free with my domino and mask?

Lady J. I really don't know.

Sir G. Don't know!

Lady J. I can't answer questions at present. I am flurried; out of humour—

Del. I fear, at my intrusion.

Lady J. I wish you had come at another time.

Del. I expected my visit would be unwelcome: let me request, however, to say a few words.

Lady J. Well, well; another time, I tell you: when I am alone.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) Oh! ho!

Del. They were meant for your private ear.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) Were they so?

Del. (*Aside.*) By her confusion and his manner, I suspect this to be the base betrayer of my sister's peace: the man, whose bare image makes my heart sicken, and my blood recoil.

Lady J. (*Aside.*) Will neither of them go?—Why do you loiter here, Sir Ge—(*Coughs.*)

Sir G. I must stay till the gentleman brings back my domino and mask, you know.—(*Aside.*) I'll not leave them.

Del. (*Aside.*) I am persuaded it is he.—Excuse me, sir; would you indulge me with the favour of your name?

Sir G. My name, sir! My name is—

Lady J. (*Aside to Sir G.*) Hush! don't tell it.

Sir G. (*To Lady J.*) Why not?

Lady J. I insist upon it!

Sir G. Nay, then—My name, sir, is a very pretty name. Pray, what is yours?

Del. (*Aside.*) Yes, yes; it must be he.—Have you any reason to be ashamed of it?

Sir G. Sir! Did you please to speak? Upon my honour, you are a very polite, pleasant person.

Del. (*Aside.*) If I should be mistaken.—I acknowledge, sir, there is but one man, whose name I do, but whose person I do not know, to whom that question would not have been rude in the extreme. Should you not be the man, I ask your pardon.

Sir G. Should I not! Sir, that I may be sure I am not, allow me to ask his name.

Del. His name is—

Lady J. (*Screams.*) Oh!

Del. Good heavens!

Sir G. What has happened?

Del. Are you ill?

Sir G. Is it cramp, or spasm?

Del. Surely, you have broken a blood-vessel?

Sir G. Shall I run for a physician?

Lady J. Instantly.

Sir G. I fly! Yet I must not leave you.

Lady J. No delay, if you value my life.

Del. Your life! I will go.

Lady J. (*Detaining him.*) No, no.

Sir G. I fly! I fly! [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Jane's Woman.

Woman. Dear, my lady, what is the matter?

Lady J. Lead me directly to my own room.

Del. Shall I carry you?

Lady J. No; only give me your arm, and come with me. I want to talk to you. I wish to hear what you have to say.—(*Aside to her Woman.*) When Sir George comes back, tell him I am partly recovered, but must not be disturbed. It is my positive order.

Del. (*Aside.*) What does she whisper?

Lady J. Stay! The doctor may come in; but not Sir George. Mind, on your life! not Sir George.—Come, sir.

Del. (*Aside.*) This sudden change is mysterious.

Lady J. Come, come. [*Exit with Delaval.*

Woman. I purtest, it has put me in such a fluster, that I am quite all of a twitter!

Enter Sir George Versatile, *followed by* Doctor Gosterman,

Sir G. Come along, Doctor! Make haste!—Where is Lady Jane?

Woman. In her own room.

Sir G. Is she worse?

Woman. No, sir; much better. But she must not be disturbed.

Sir G. Nay, nay; I must see her.

Woman. Indeed, sir, I can let nobody in but the Doctor.

Sir G. Why so? Is not the gentleman I left here now with her?

Woman. I suppose so, sir.

Sir G. And I not admitted?

Woman. On no account whatever.

Sir G. He allowed, and I excluded! Indeed, I shall attend the Doctor.

Woman. Upon my honour, sir, you must not.

Sir G. Upon my honour, I will! My rival shall not escape me!

Doctor. Ha, ha! De rifal! Ha, ha, ha! Dat is cont! De young fer dat vas mit Laty Shane vas make you shealousy? Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! Bote dat is as noting at all. I shall tell you de someting mystery. He vas no yentlemans. Ha, ha! He vas a vomans!

Sir G. A woman!

Doctor. Ya, sair. He vas make acquaintance mit me, und I vas make acquaintance mit him; und he vas make faint, und I vas tie loose de neckbandt, und den, ha, ha! I was discober de mans vas a vomans!

Sir G. You astonish me!

Doctor. Ya, sair; I vas make astonish myself.

Woman. Won't you go to my lady, Doctor?

Doctor. Ya, my tear. Let me do. Laty Shane is fery pad; und I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all, &c. [*Exit, talking.*

Sir G. I should never have suspected a woman! A stout, tall, robust figure! And for what purpose disguise herself? That may be worth inquiry. I will wait; and, if possible, have another look at the lady.

Enter Lord Vibrate *and* Mr. Thompson.

Lord V. Two hundred and forty pounds! 'Tis a very large sum, Mr. Thompson.

Thom. So large, my lord, that I have no means of paying it. I must languish out my life in a prison.

Lord V. No, Mr. Thompson, no; you shall not do that. I will—And yet, two hundred—A prison—I don't know what to say. If I pay this money for you, I shall but encourage all around me to run in debt.

Thom. It is a favour too great for me to hope.

Lord V. You are a worthy man, and a prison is a bad place. I—you—Pray, what is your opinion, Sir George? Is it not dangerous for a man to have the character of being charitable?

Sir G. No doubt, my lord. It is the very certain way for his house to be besieged by beggars.

Lord V. The master who pays the debts of one domestic, makes himself the debtor of all the rest.

Sir G. He changes a set of servants into a set of duns. He first encourages them to be extravagant, and then makes it incumbent upon himself to pay for their follies and vices: he not only bribes them to be idle and insolent, but to waste his property as well as their own.

Lord V. It is, as you say, a very serious case.—I—I am sorry for your misfortune, Mr. Thompson, very sorry; but really—

Sir G. Misfortune! What misfortune?

Lord V. He has foolishly been bound for his sister's husband, and must go to prison for the debt.

Sir G. To prison!

Lord V. You have shewn me how dangerous it would be for me to interfere.

Sir G. Very true, very true. He has lived with your lordship several years?

Lord V. He has; and I esteem him highly.

Sir G. A worthy man, whom it would be no disgrace to call your friend?

Lord V. None. Still, however, consequences must be weighed. I must take time to consider: 'tis folly to act in a hurry.

Sir G. Very true. Caution, caution. Is it a large sum?

Lord V. No less than two hundred and forty pounds!

Sir G. Caution is a very excellent thing—Two hundred and forty—A fine virtue—Two—I would advise your lordship to it by all means—hundred and forty—(*Looks round.*) Will you permit me just to write a short memorandum; a bit of a note? (*Goes to a table.*) I must send to a certain place. (*Writes.*) Excuse me a moment.

Lord V. What can be done in this affair, Mr. Thompson?

Thom. Nothing, my lord. I am resigned. When I assisted my brother, I did no more than my duty. Those who lock me up in a prison, may, for aught I know, do theirs; yet, though they are at liberty, and I shall be confined, I would neither change duties nor hearts with them. (*Going.*)

Sir G. Harkye! harkye! Mr. Thompson, will you just desire this to be taken as it is directed? (*Apart.*) Don't say a word; 'tis a draft on my banker. Discharge your debt, and be silent.—You are very right, my lord; we cannot be too considerate, lest, by mistaken benevolence, we should encourage vice.

Thom. Sir George—My lord—

Sir G. Why now will you not oblige me, Mr. Thompson? Pray, let that be delivered as it is directed. You, surely, will not deny me such a favour.—For you know, my lord, if we give—

Thom. Indeed, I—

Sir G. Will you begone? Will you begone? (*Pushes him kindly off.*)—If we give without—without—

Lord V. Poor fellow! I suppose he is afraid of being taken.

Sir G. Oh! Is that it?—If we give, I say, with too—Psha! I have lost the thread of my argument.

Lord V. I must own, this is a dubious case. Perhaps I ought to pay the money. (*Calls.*) Mr. Thompson!—I don't think I ought to let him go to prison. What shall I do, Sir George?

Sir G. Whatever your lordship thinks best.

Lord V. But there is the difficulty.—Mr. Thomp-

son! He is gone! How foolish this is now! (*As he is going off.*) Harry! Run after Mr. Thompson, and call him back. One would think a man going to prison, would, like me, be wise enough to doubt, and take time to consider of it. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Vibrate.

Lady V. I assure you, Sir George, I am very angry. I have been waiting an age, expecting you would come and give your opinion on my masquerade dress.

Sir G. Why did not your ladyship put it on?

Lady V. On, indeed! It has been on and off twenty times. I have sent it to have some alteration. Besides, it is growing late; masks will be calling in on you, in their way to the Opera-house, and you not at home to receive them!

Sir G. I ask ten thousand pounds; but you know I am the most thoughtless creature on earth.

Lady V. So I would have you. Were you like the sober, punctual Mr. Delaval, I should hate you: but then—

Re-enter Delaval.

Lady V. (*Aside.*) Here the wretch comes!

Sir G. (*Aside.*) So, so! Now I shall interrogate the lady. She has a very masculine air! (*Delaval bows to Lady V.*) A tolerable bow that for a woman!

Lady V. (*Aside.*) He wishes, I suppose, to sermonize me; but I shall not give him an opportunity.—Are you coming, Sir George?

Del. (*Aside.*) Ha!

Sir G. I will follow your ladyship in a minute.

Del. (*Aside.*) I was right! it is he!

Sir G. (*Aside.*) She eyes me very ferociously!

Lady V. I shall just call in upon you; or, if not, we shall meet afterwards. I expect you to be very whimsical and satiric upon all my friends; so, pray, put on your best humour. Grave airs, you know, are my aversion. [*Exit.*

Del. (*Aside.*) That was intended for me. Now for my gentleman.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) She really has a very fierce look! a kind of threatening physiognomy, and would make no bad grenadier!

Del. I understand your name is Sir George Versatile?

Sir G. (*Aside.*) A bass voice, too!—At your service, sir, or madam; I really cannot tell which.

Del. Cannot!

Sir G. No, I cannot, upon my soul!—(*Aside.*) A devilish black chin!

Del. I have an account to settle with you, sir.

Sir G. Have you?—(*Aside.*) What the plague can she mean?

Del. When can I find you at leisure, and alone?

Sir G. Alone?

Del. Yes, sir; alone.

Sir G. Must this account, then, be privately settled, madam?

Del. Madam!

Sir G. I beg your pardon; sir, since you prefer it.

Del. If you know me, sir, your insolence is but a confirmation of the baseness of your character!

Sir G. I beg a million of pardons; I really do not know you.

Del. Then, sir, when you do, you will find cause to be a little more serious.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) What a Joan of Arc it is! There is danger she should knock me down.

Del. Be pleased to name your time.

Sir G. (*Aside.*) Zounds! She insists upon a *tête-à-tête!*—I hope you will be kind enough to excuse me; but I am just now so pressed for time, that I have not a moment to spare. Company is waiting. I must begone to the masquerade. You, I presume, are for the same place, and are ready dressed. I am your most obedient—

Del. (*Seizing him.*) Sir, I insist upon your naming an hour, to-morrow; and an early one.

Sir G. Why, what the plague! Here must be some mistake! Permit me to ask, do you know Dr. Gosterman?

Del. Yes, sir.

Sir G. Was you not just now in danger of fainting?

Del. Faint! I faint!

Sir G. It would, I think, be a very extraordinary thing! But, so he told me; with other particulars.

Del. Absurd! Doctor Gosterman has not seen me for several months.

Sir G. He said, sir, you were a woman; and, perhaps, from that error, I may have, unconsciously, provoked you to behaviour, which would else have been rather strange. Have I given you any other offence?

Del. Yes, sir; a mortal one.

Sir G. Mortal!

Del. And mortal must be the atonement.

Sir G. If so, the sooner the better. Let it be immediately.

Del. No: I have serious concerns to settle, so have you. 'Tis time you should think of things very different from masquerading. Name your hour to-morrow morning; then, take an enemy's advice, retire to your closet, and make your will.

Sir G. To whom am I indebted for this high menace, and this haughty warning? Your name, sir?

Del. That you shall know when next we meet; not before.

Sir G. What age are you, sir?

Del. Age!

Sir G. Such peremptory heroes are not usually long-lived.

Del. You are right, sir; my life is probably doomed to be short. But this is trifling: name your hour.

Sir G. At ten to-morrow morning.

Del. The very time I could wish. I will be with you at your own house; inform you who I am; and, then—

Sir G. So be it. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*The House of Sir George Versatile.—A suite of Apartments richly decorated.*

Sir George Versatile, Lady Vibrate, *and numerous Masks, discovered.*

Lady V. What is the matter with you, Sir George? You are suddenly become as dull, and almost as intolerable, as my lord himself.

Sir G. I own, I had something on my spirits; but it is gone. Your ladyship's vivacity is an antidote to splenetic fits.

Lady V. Oh! if you are subject to fits of the spleen, I renounce you.

Sir G. No, no! Heigho! Ha, ha, ha! Let me go merrily down the dance of life!

Lady V. Ay; or I will not be your partner.

Sir G. As for recollections, retrospective anxieties, and painful thoughts, I—I—I hate them. They shall not trouble me. For, if a man, you know, were to be sprung on a mine to-morrow,—ha, ha, ha!—it were folly to let that trouble him to-day.

Lady V. Sprung on a mine! You talk wildly.

Sir G. True. I am a wild, unaccountable nondescript. I am anything, everything, and soon may be—

Lady V. What?

Sir G. Nothing. Strange events are possible; and possible events are strange.

Lady V. Come, come; cast off this disagreeable humour, and join the masks.

Sir G. With all my heart. A mask is an excellent utensil, and may be worn with a naked face.

Lady V. (*Retiring.*) Why don't you come? you used to be all compliance.

Sir G. So I fear I shall always be. 'Tis my worst virtue. Call it a vice, if you please; and perhaps it is even then my worst.

Lady V. I really do not comprehend you.

Sir G. No wonder. Man is an incomprehensible animal! But no matter for that; we will be merry still, say I—at least, till to-morrow.

Lady V. (*Joins the masks.*) Yonder is Lady Jane.

Sir G. Nay, then, I am on the wing!

Maria. (*Advancing.*) Whither?

Sir G. Ah! Have I found you again! So much the better. I have been thinking of you this half hour.

Maria. Ay? That must have been a prodigious effort!

Sir G. What?

Maria. To think of one person for so great a length of time.

Sir G. True. Were you my bitterest enemy, you could not have uttered a more galling truth. I am glad I have met with you, however.

Maria. So am I. 'Tis my errand here.

Sir G. You now, I hope, will let me see your face?

Maria. I might, perhaps, were it but possible to see your heart.

Sir G. No, no; that cannot be: I have no heart.

Maria. I am sorry for it.

Sir G. So am I. But come, I wish to be better acquainted with you.

Maria. And I wish you to be better acquainted with yourself: you know not half your own good qualities.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! My good qualities! Heigho!

Maria. Your fame is gone abroad. Your gallantry, your free humour, your frolics in England and Italy, your—Apropos: I am told, Lady Jane is captivated by the ardour and delicacy of your passion! Is it true?

Sir G. Are you an inquisitor?

Maria. Are you afraid of inquisitors?

Sir G. Yes.

Maria. I believe you.

Sir G. You may. Keep me no longer in this suspense. Let me know who you are?

Maria. An old acquaintance.

Sir G. Of mine?

Maria. Of one who was formerly your friend.

Sir G. Whom do you mean?

Maria. You must have been a man of uncommon worth; for I have heard him bestow such praises upon you, that my heart has palpitated if your name was but mentioned.

Sir G. Of whom are you talking?

Maria. Lord! that you should be so forgetful! That can only have happened since you became a person of fashion; for no man once remembered his friends better. It is true, they were then useful to you.

Sir G. Sir, I—Be warned! Pursue this no farther.

Maria. You little suspected, at that time, you were on the eve of being a wealthy baronet. Oh, no! And to see how kind and grateful you were to those who loved you! No one would have believed you could so soon have become a perfect man of the mode; and, with so polite and easy an indifference, so entirely have forgotten all your old acquaintance! I dare say you scarcely remember the late Colonel Delaval.

Sir G. Sir!

Maria. His daughter, too, has utterly slipped your memory?

Sir G. I insist on knowing who you are!

Maria. How different it was when, your merit neglected, your spirits depressed, and your poverty despised, you groaned under the oppression of an unjust and selfish world! How did your drooping spirits revive by the fostering smiles of the man who first noticed you, took you to his house and heart, and adopted you as his son!—Poor Maria! Silly girl, to love as she did! Where is she?

Sir G. This is not to be endured!

Maria. What was her offence? You became a baronet! Ay; true, that was her crime. Yet, when your fortunes were low, it was not imputed to you as guilt.—

Sir G. (*Aside.*) D—n!

Maria. Are your new friends more affectionate than your old? Fortune smiles, and so do they. Poor Maria! Has Lady Jane ever heard her name? Will you invite her to your wedding? (*Her voice continually faltering.*) Do. She should have been your bride; then let her be your bride-maid. She is greatly altered—she will be less beautiful, now, than her fair rival. Her birth is not quite so high; but if a heart—a heart—a heart—(*Struggling with her feelings, sinks into Sir George's arms, and her mask falls off.*)

Sir G. Heaven and earth!—'Tis she!—Help!—'Tis Maria!—Who waits?

Enter Lady Jane.

Lady J. What is the matter?

Sir G. Help, help!—Salts, hartshorn, water!—Help!

Lady J. Bless me! this lady again.

Sir G. Is she, then, known to you?

Lady J. No. Who is she?

Sir G. Quick, quick!

Lady J. Nay, but tell me?

Sir G. I cannot, must not!

Lady G. Must not!

Sir G. Dare not!—She revives; and, to my confusion, will soon tell you herself. Maria! Are you better, Maria?

Maria. I am very faint.

Lady J. My carriage is at the door. Will you trust yourself to me?

Maria. Oh! yes. I am weak; very weak, and very foolish! But I shall not long disturb your happiness; I hope soon to be past that.

Sir G. Past! Oh! Maria, I have no utterance. Lady Jane, you will presently know of me what to know of myself is—Oh!—No matter. Not, then, for my sake, but for pity, for the love of suffering virtue, be careful of this lady; whom, when you know, as soon you must, you will despise and abhor the lunatic, the wretch, that could—Maria—I—I— [*Exit.*

Enter Delaval.

Del. What is the matter? Any accident? Was not that Sir George?—Good God! my sister!

Lady J. Your sister!

Del. How comes this? Why this dress? And with that apostate! that wretch! Speak, Maria!

Maria. I cannot.

Lady J. Mr. Delaval, be more temperate. Your sister's spirits and health ought not to be trifled with by your violence. I do not know, though I think I guess, her story. I hope you have a brother's tenderness for her?

Del. That shall be shortly seen. A few hours will shew how dear she is to my heart.

Lady J. I fear you cherish bad passions; such as I never can love, and never will share.

Del. Well, well, Lady Jane, that is not to be

argued now. I am a man, and subject to the mistakes of man. There are feelings which can, and feelings which cannot be subdued. I must run my course, and take all consequences.

Maria. Oh, God! in what will they end?

Lady J. No more of this, Mr. Delaval. Come with me: lead your sister to my carriage. She shall be under my care. She can inspire those sympathies, which your too stubborn temper seems to despise.

Del. Indeed, indeed, you wrong me! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—Maria *in her own dress*, Lady Jane, *and* Lucy, *discovered at breakfast. Footmen waiting.*

Lady J. Remove those things. We have done. [*Exeunt Footmen.*

Maria. What is it o'clock?

Lucy. Just struck ten, ma'am.

Lady J. Lady Vibrate is a sad rake! She did not leave the masquerade till five this morning.

Maria. And Sir George not there!

Lady J. After the discovery of last night, could you suppose he would be seen revelling at such a place?

Maria. I dread another and more horrible cause! My brother!

Lady J. Mr. Delaval, you know, slept in this house.

Maria. But he has been out these two hours.

Lucy. What then, ma'am? Is not Mr. Williams on the watch? You know, ma'am, you may trust Mr. Williams with your life.

Maria. If all were safe, he would be back.

Lady J. Pray, calm your spirits.

Mar. Nay, nay—But Mr. Williams must have been here before this, if something fatal had not happened.

Lucy. I am sure, ma'am, you frighten me to death!

Lady J. (*Aside.*) Her terrors are but too well founded!

Maria. (*Footsteps without.*) What noise is that?

Lucy. Bless me!

Lady J. See who it is.

Lucy. (*After opening the door.*) La! ma'am, I declare it is Mr. Williams.

Enter Williams.

Lucy. Well, Mr. Williams; everything is right; is not it? All is as it should be?

Wil. That is more than I know.

Maria. Why, then, the worst is past.

Wil. No, ma'am; I can't say that, either.

Lady J. Nay—But what news do you bring? Speak.

Wil Why, you know, my master, last night, made inquiries how to find the chambers of Counsellor Demur; so, when he went out this morning, I observed your directions, and followed him. He went to the counsellor's in Lincoln's Inn, and there I left him, and hurried away to Sir George's, to inquire and hear all I could; though it was rather unlucky that I was not acquainted in the family.

Lady J. Did not you make use of my name?

Wil. Oh! yes, my lady. Besides, servants, your ladyship knows, are not so suspicious as their masters; they soon become friendly together; so, in five minutes, Sir George's valet and I were on as intimate a footing as we could wish.

Maria. And what did he say? Tell me.

Wil. Why, ma'am, he said, that Sir George did not leave his own house last night, after the fainting of the young gentleman.

Lucy. That was you, you know, ma'am.

Wil. And, what is more, that he did not go to bed; but walked up and down the room till daylight in the morning; and then called, I don't know how often, to warn the servants that he should not be at home to anybody whatever, except to a strange gentleman.

Maria. My brother!

Wil. Why, yes, ma'am; according to the description, it could be nobody else.

Lady J. And at what hour was Mr. Delaval to be there?

Wil. (*Aside.*) Zooks! I forgot to ask.—That—that, my lady, I did not learn. So, this being all the servants told me, I ran post haste to make my report to you.

Maria. The worst I foreboded will happen!

Lady J. What can be done?

Wil. Perhaps it will be best for me to go back to Sir George's; wait for the arrival of my master; and, if he should come, hasten away as fast as I can to inform you of it.

Lucy. That is a good thought, Mr. Williams. Is not it, madam? A very good thought, indeed! Don't you think it is, my lady?

Lady J. I know not what we can do better.

Maria. Nay, but while Williams is bringing us the intelligence, everything we most dread may happen.

Lucy. Dear! so it may.

Wil. Suppose, then, madam, I should stay at my post, and despatch Sir George's valet to you with the news?

Lucy. Well, that is the best thought of all! I am sure you will own it is, madam.

Maria. I know not what to think.

Lady J. We must resolve; or, while we are deliberating—

Maria. Merciful God! Run, Williams! Fly! Save my brother! Save Sir George!

Lady J. Succeed but in this, and command all we have to give.

Wil. I will do my best.

Lucy. That I am sure he will. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*An Apartment in the house of Sir George Versatile.*

Sir George Versatile *discovered walking, and greatly agitated.*

Sir G. (*Looking at his watch.*) He will soon be here. Five minutes, but five minutes, and then—(*Walks again; throws himself on a sofa; takes up a book, throws it away, and then rises.*) What is man's first duty? To be happy. Short-sighted fool! The happiness of this hour is the misery of the next! (*Walks again, and looks at his watch.*) What is life? A tissue of follies! inconsistencies! Joys that make reason weep, and sorrows at which wisdom smiles. Psha! There is not between ape and oyster so ridiculous or so wretched a creature as man! (*Walks.*) Oh, Maria!—(*Looking at his watch.*) I want but a few seconds: my watch, perhaps, is too fast. (*Rings.*)

Enter a Footman.

Sir G. Has nobody yet been here?

Foot. No, sir.

Sir G. 'Tis the time to a minute. (*Loud knocking.*) Fly! If it be the person I have described, admit him. [*Exit Footman.*

Sir G. Now let the thunder strike!

Enter Delaval.

Sir G. Good morning, sir!

Del. You recollect me?

Sir G. Perfectly.

Del. 'Tis well.

Sir G. I have been anxious for your coming. Your menace lives in my memory; and I shall be glad to know the name of him who has threatened such mortal enmity.

Del. A little patience will be necessary. I must preface my proceedings with a short story.

Sir G. I shall be all attention. Please to be seated. Waive ceremony, and to the subject.—(*They sit.*) Now, sir.

Del. About six years ago, a certain youth came up from college, poor, and unprotected. He was a scholar, pleasing in manners, warm and generous of temper, of a respectable family, and seemed to possess the germ of every virtue.

Sir G. Well, sir?

Del. Hear me on. My praises will not be tedious. Chance made him known to a man who desired to cherish his good qualities; and the purse, the experience, and the power of his benefactor, such as they were, he profited by to the utmost. Received as a son, he soon became dear to the family; but most dear to the daughter of his friend, whose tender age, and glowing affections, made her apt to admire the virtues she heard her father so ardently praise and encourage. You are uneasy?

Sir G. Be pleased to continue.

Del. The assiduities of the youth to gain her heart were unabating; and his pretensions, poor and unknown as he then was, were not rejected. The noble nature of his friend scorned to make his poverty his crime. Why do you bite your lip? Was it not generous?

Sir G. Sir!

Del. Was it not?

Sir G. Certainly! Nothing could—equal the—generosity.

Del. The health of his benefactor was declining fast; and the only thing required of the youth was that he should qualify himself for the cares of life, by some profession; he, therefore, entered a student in the Temple; and the means were furnished by his protector, till the end was obtained, Was not this friendship?

Sir G. It was.

Del. The lady, almost a child when first he knew her, increased in grace and beauty faster than in years. Sweetness and smiles played upon her countenance. She was the delight of her friends, the admiration of the world, and the coveted of every eye. Lovers of fortune and fashion contended for her hand; but she had bestowed her heart; had bestowed it on a—Sit still, sir; I shall soon have done. I am coming to the point. Five years elapsed, during which the youth received every kindness friendship could afford, and every proof chaste affection had to give. These he returned with promises and protestations that seemed too vast for his heart, I would say for his tongue—Are you unwell, sir?

Sir G. Go on with your tale.

Del. His benefactor, feeling the hand of death steal on, was anxious to see the two persons dearest to his heart, happy before he expired; and the marriage was determined upon, the day fixed, and the friends of the family invited. The intended bridegroom appeared half frantic with his approaching bliss. Now, sir, mark his proceeding. In this short interval, by sudden and unexpected deaths, he becomes the heir to a title and large estate. Well! Does he not fly to the arms of his languishing friend? Does he not pour his new treasures and his transports into the lap of love? Coward and monster!—

Sir G. (*Both starting up.*) Sir!

Del. Viler than words can paint! Having robbed a family of honour, a friend of peace, and an angel of every human solace, he fled, like a thief, and concealed himself from immediate contempt and vengeance in a foreign country. But contempt and vengeance have at length overtaken him: they beset him: they face him at this instant. The friend he wronged is dead: but the son of that friend lives, and I am he.

Sir G. 'Tis as I thought! (*Aside.*)

Del. You are—I will not defile my lips by telling you what you are.

Sir G. I own that what I have done—

Del. Forbear to interrupt me, sir. You have nothing to plead, and much to hear. First say, did my sister, by any improper conduct, levity of behaviour, or fault or vice whatever, give you just just cause to abandon her?

Sir G. None! none! Her purity is only exceeded by her love.

Del. Then how, barbarian, how had you the heart to disgrace the family and endanger the life of a woman, whose sanctified affection would have embraced you in poverty, pestilence, or death; and who, had she possessed empires, would have bestowed them with an imperial affection?

Sir G. Sir, if you ask, have I committed errors? call them crimes if you will—yes. If you demand, will you justify them?—no. If you require me to atone for them, here is my heart: you have wrongs to revenge, strike: and, if you can, inflict a pang greater than any it yet has known.

Del. Justice is not to be disarmed by being braved. To the question. It can be no part of your intention, and certainly not of mine, that you should marry my sister. Something very different must be done.

Sir G. What? Name it.

Del. You must give me an acknowledgment, written and signed by yourself, that you have basely and most dishonourably injured, insulted, and betrayed Maria Delaval: and this paper, immediately as I leave your house, I shall publish in every possible way, till my sister shall be so appeased, and horror so satiated, that vengeance itself shall cry, hold!

Sir G. Written by me! Published! No. I will sign no such paper.

Del. So I supposed; and the alternative follows. Here I am: nor will I quit you, go where you will, till you consent to retire with me to some place from which one of us shall never return. Should I be the victor, flight, banishment from my native country, and the bitterest recollections of the villanies of man, must be the fate of me and my sister. If I fall, you then may triumph, and she languish and die unrevenged. This, or the written acknowledgment. Consider, and choose.

Sir G. What can I answer? The paper you shall not have. My life you are welcome to: take it.

Del. Have you not brought disgrace enough on my family? Would you make me an assassin? My sister and my father loved you. Let me, if possible, feel some little return of respect for you.

Sir G. Having wronged your sister, would you have me murder the brother? Already the most guilty of men, would you make me worst of fiends? Though an enemy, be a generous one.

Del. Plausible sophist! The paper, sir: or man to man, and arm to arm, close the scene of my dishonour, or your own. The written acknowledgment. Determine. (*Walks away and views the pictures.*)

Sir G. (*Apart.*) Why, ay! 'Tis come home! I have sought it, deserved it, 'tis fallen, and the rock must crush the reptile! Then welcome ruin. The sword must decide. (*Goes to take his sword, but stops.*) The sword? What! Betray the sister and assassinate the brother? Oh, God! And such a brother! Stern, but noble-minded: indignant

of injury, peerless in affection, and proud of a sister whom the world might worship; but whom I, worthless wretch, in levity and pride of heart, have abandoned. (*Aloud.*) Mr. Delaval!

Del. Have you resolved to sign?

Sir G. Hear me.

Del. The written acknowledgment!

Sir G. My behaviour to your sister is—what I cannot endure to name—'Tis hateful! 'Tis—infamous! My obligations to your most excellent father, the respect you have inspired me with, and my love for Maria—

Del. Insolent! Insufferable meanness! The paper, sir!

Sir G. Angry though you are, Mr. Delaval, you must hear me. I say, my love, my adoration of Maria has but increased my guilt. It has made me dread her contempt. I durst not face the angel whom I had so deeply injured.

Del. Artifice! Evasion! Cowardice!—Your signature!

Sir G. (*Snatching up his sword from the table.*) You shall have it. Follow me.

Del. Fear me not.

Sir G. (*Stopping short.*) Hold, Mr. Delaval. Justice is on your side. If your firmness be not a savage spirit of revenge, if you do not thirst for blood, you will feel my only resource will be to fall on your sword. I cannot lift my arm against you.

Del. Then sign the acknowledgment.

Sir G. Can you, in the spirit even of an enemy, ask it? Do you not already despise me enough? Think for a moment: am I the only man that ever erred? Is it so wonderful, that a giddy youth, whose habitual failing was compliance, by sudden accident elevated to the pinnacle of fortune, surrounded by proud and selfish relations, of whose approbation I was vain; is it so strange, that I should be overpowered by their dictates, and yield to their entreaties? Your friendship or my death is now the only alternative. Suppose the latter: will it honour you among men? At the man of blood the heart of man revolts! Will it endear you to Maria? Kind, forgiving angel, and hateful to myself as her affection makes me, I last night found that affection still as strong, still as pure, as in the first hour of our infant loves. Lady Jane—

Del. Forbear to name her! 'Tis profanation from your lips! No more casuistry! No subterfuge! The paper!

Sir G. Can no motives—

Del. None!

Sir G. My future life—my soul, shall be devoted to Maria.

Del. The paper!

Sir G. Obdurate man! (*Reflects a moment.*) You shall have it. (*Goes to the table to write, during which Delaval remains in deep thought, and much agitated.*) Here, sir! since *you* will not be generous, let *me* be just. 'Tis proper I remove every taint of suspicion from the deeply wronged Maria. (*Gives the paper.*)

Del. (*Reads with a faultering voice.*) "*I, George Versatile, once poor and dependent, since vain, fickle, and faithless, do, under my hand, acknowledge I have perfidiously—broken my pledged promise—to the most deserving, lovely, and—*"(*Begins in much agitation to tear the paper.*)

Sir G. Mr. Delaval!

Del. Damn it—I can't—I can't speak. Here! Here! (*Striking his bosom.*)

Sir G. Mr. Delaval?

Del. My brother! [friend!

Sir G. (*Falls on his neck.*) Can it be? My

Del. This stubborn temper—always in extremes! The tiger or the child.

Sir G. Oh, no! 'Twas not to be forgiven! Best of men!

Del. Well, well; we are friends.

Sir G. Everlastingly! brothers!

Del. Yes; brothers.

Enter WILLIAMS, *hastily.*

Wil. Sir!—

Del. How now?

Wil. I beg your pardon, but Lady Jane and your sister are below. They insist on coming up, and the servants are afraid to—

Sir G. Maria! Let us fly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Apartments of Lord Vibrate.*

LADY VIBRATE *and* DOCTOR GOSTERMAN *discovered.*

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty; dat vas fery vordt so true as vat I say. I vas discober it vas a vomans; und Sair Shorge, und my Laty Shane, und de vaiting-vomans vas discober to me all as vat I say more.

Lady V. Ay, ay; that was the reason Sir George was not at the masquerade.

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty.

Lady V. I observed he was in a strange moody humour.

Doctor. My Lordt Fiprate vas fery mosh amazement, ven I vas make him discober all as vat I vas make discober mit my coot laty.

Lady V. Sir George has behaved very improperly.

Enter LORD VIBRATE.

Lord V. So, so, so! All I foreboded has come to pass: the day has slipped away, a new one is here, and every possibility of recovering the estate is gone.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord V. Do you laugh?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I do, indeeed.

Lord V. Is your daughter's loss the subject of your mirth?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! No, no; not her loss, but your positive determination to prove I did not know you. Ha, ha, ha! When I told you that even that motive would not be strong enough, how you stormed! "But it will, my lady. But it won't, my lord. I say it will, my lady. I say it won't, my lord." Ha, ha, ha! Will you believe that I know you now?

Lord V. What shall I do? Advise me, Doctor.

Doctor. I vas adfice, my cootlordt, dat you shall do eferyting as vat you please.

Lady V. Ay, think; ask advice. Ha, ha, ha! Now that you can do nothing, the inquiry will be very amusing.

Enter THOMPSON.

Lord V. Well, Thompson, what says Counsellor Demur? Has the time absolutely elapsed?

Thom. Absolutely, my lord.

Lady V. How wisely your lordship doubts before you decide! Eh! Doctor?

Thom. I have good news, nevertheless.

Lord V. Good news! Speak: of what kind?

Thom. The honesty of the opposite party.

Lord V. What, the holder of the land?

Thom. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Which way? Explain.

Thom. He has engaged to Mr. Demur, I being present, that, if your lordship will only shew the legality of your late title, he will resign the estate.

Lord V. Is it possible?

Lady V. It cannot be: the last purchaser is in India.

Thom. The last purchaser is dead; and it has descended to one whom you, my lord and lady, little suspect to be its possessor.

Lord V. Who?

Lady V. Who?

Thom. Mr. Delaval.

Lady V. Mr. Delaval!

Lord V. Mr. Delaval resign it on exhibiting the legality of my title?

Thom. He will, my lord.

Lord V. Did he make no conditions?

Thom. None.

Lord V. What, did he not mention Lady Jane?

Thom. Her name did escape his lips; but rising passion, and, if I rightly read his heart, emotions of the most delicate sensibility, immediately closed them; as if he would not endure the love he bore her to be profaned by any the slightest semblance of barter and sale.

Lord V. What do you say to that, Lady Vibrate? What do you say to that?

Lady V. The proceeding is honourable, I own.

Lord V. Did I not always tell you, Mr. Delaval was a man of honour?

Lady V. You tell me, my lord? Why, you were going to challenge him yesterday morning.

Lord V. He is no such weathercock as your favourite, Sir George.

Lady V. You mistake: Sir George is no favourite of mine. Is he, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lord V. What, he did not come to make a buffoon of himself, for your diversion, at the masquerade last night? Eh! Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot lordt.

Lady V. His perfidious treatment of Miss Delaval is unpardonable.

Doctor. Dat vas pad; fery pad, inteet.

Lord V. Ay, ay; he has plenty of words, but he has no heart.

Doctor. Dat is pad; fery pad, inteet.

Thom. Pardon me, my lord; Sir George may have committed mistakes, but to the goodness of his heart I am a witness.

Lady V. You?

Lord V. How so?

Thom. By his benevolence I was yesterday relieved from the disgrace and the horrors of a prison.

Lord V. Indeed!

Lady V. Which way?

Thom. He paid a debt, which, had I been confined, I never could have discharged; and, for this unexpected act of humanity, he would not suffer so much as my thanks.

Lord V. Did Sir George pay the two hundred and forty pounds, Mr. Thompson?

Thom. The note, which he pretended to write and send by me, was a draft on his banker for three hundred.

Lord V. Why, he confirmed all my arguments against it; and added twice as many of his own.

Doctor. Sair Shorge vas alvay make agréable. Dat vas his vay.

Lady V. I own, however, I am still more surprised at the unexampled generosity of Mr. Delaval.

Enter Williams.

Lady V. Where is your master, Mr. Williams?

Wil. They are all coming, my lady.

Lady V. Who is coming?

Wil. Mr. Delaval, Lady Jane, Miss Delaval, and Sir George. There has been sad work; but it is all over, and they are now so happy! Here they are.

Enter Mr. Delaval *leading* Lady Jane, *and* Sir George Versatile *with* Maria, *followed by* Lucy.

Lord V. Mr. Delaval, I have great obligations to you. Thompson has been telling me of your disinterested equity.

Del. The obligation, my lord, was mine. Your lordship well knows that the first of obligations is to be just.

Lord V. Well, well; but the estate you are so willing to resign will still, I hope, be your's.

Del. Nay, my lord.

Lord V. Dubious as all things are, that is a subject on which I protest I do not believe I shall ever have any doubts. What say you, Lady Jane? But now I have my doubts again.

Lady J. What doubts, my lord?

Lord V. I doubt whether you understand me?

Lady J. Would your lordship teach me to dissemble?

Lord V. Hum! I doubt whether that would be much for your good.

Del. I hope Lady Vibrate will not oppose our union?

Lady V. No, Mr. Delaval. Your last generous action has charmed me; and Sir George—

Sir G. Has declined in your good opinion. But you cannot think so ill of me as I do of myself; and if ever again I should recover my own self-respect, I shall be indebted for it to this best of men, and to this most incomparable and affectionate of women.

Maria. My present joys are inexpressible—

Del. Which my impetuous indignation threatened for ever to destroy. How dangerous are extremes! Sometimes we doubt, and indecision is our bane; at others, hurried away by the sudden impulse of passion, our course is marked with misery. One man is too compliant; another too intractable. Yet happiness is the aim of all. Since, then, all are so liable to be misled, let gentle forbearance, indulgent thoughts, and a mild forgiving spirit, be ever held as the sacred duties of man to man. [*Exeunt.*

HE WOULD BE A SOLDIER;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY FREDERICK PILON.



Act IV.—Scene 1.

CHARACTERS.

COUNT PIERPOINT	WILKINS	LADY OLDSTOCK
SIR OLIVER OLDSTOCK	CALEB	MRS. WILKINS
COLONEL TALBOT	AMBER	CHARLOTTE
CAPTAIN CREVELT	JOHNSON	HARRIET
MANDEVILLE	SERVANTS	BETTY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter MRS. WILKINS, *followed by* JOHNSON.

Mrs. W. There's no such thing as stirring out of doors for the fellows, now-a-days. I beg, sir, you would not follow me any further.

Johns. I cannot leave you, my sweet, divine, charming girl!

Mrs. W. To how many, now, have you repeated the same lesson before you met me this morning?

Johns. To how many! Were a dozen such fine women as yourself to appear every day in public, there would be no such thing as walking the streets for you: a man should have a piece of flint in his breast.

Mrs. W. He's a good, handsome fellow, and doesn't talk badly. (*Aside.*)—Then you will persist in following me?

Johns. How can I help it? I follow a fine woman by instinct. Do, my dear, kind, cruel angel, tell me where you live. (*Takes hold of her hand.*)

Mrs. W. But to what purpose? I can never see you.

Johns. Why not, my love?

Mrs. W. Lard! I am an old married woman! (*Faintly struggling to disengage her hand.*) You wicked devil! leave me. The neighbours will take notice, and I shall get a bad name by you. Do go; I'm just at home.

Johns. But which is the house you live at?

Mrs. W. I can't tell you; besides, I think I see my husband talking to the orange-woman at the door; in the straw hat and scarlet cloak, with a little curly-pole boy in her hand, eating gingerbread.

Johns. Why, that's the George-inn. 'Sdeath! do you live there?

Mrs. W. Oh, the devil! I shall be ruined if ever you come after me.

Johns. Zounds! it's the very house I was going to. Isn't it kept by one Jacob Wilkins?

Mrs. W. Yes, it is.

Johns. We're quite at home now. I suppose you're old Jacob's daughter.

Mrs. W. I happen to be old Jacob's wife, though.

Johns. Pray, my dear, how long are you married?

Mrs. W. A long time, sir.

Johns. Not a long time, I am sure, from your looks.

Mrs. W. Looks are very deceitful, especially those of married folks. I was married Candlemas-day, five long months.

Johns. Poor creature! you have had a tedious time of it.

Mrs. W. But what's your business with Jacob Wilkins? Can't I do it?

Johns. Then you do Jacob's business, sometimes?

Mrs. W. To be sure I do, when he's out of the way. Poor man! it's a great relief to him.

Johns. But this is a matter on which I must see himself. Colonel Talbot, (a gentleman of whom I think you must have heard, if you be Wilkins's wife,) has wrote to him, and desired I would see him in consequence of that letter. Were you at home when he received it?

Mrs. W. No, I was not, sir: but I have often heard of Colonel Talbot; he's an Oxfordshire gentleman: his family, I hear, was the making of Wilkins. Lard! he has been a long time in the Indies; and, I'm told, has made a power of money. But is he come home, sir?

Johns. He is; and since his return has been down in Oxfordshire, in search of Wilkins, where he thought he still lived; and would have come here himself, now, only he's very much indisposed.

Mrs. W. Bless your heart! Jacob Wilkins has been in town, and kept the George-inn these ten years.

Johns. He has made a very ungrateful return to his benefactor, Colonel Talbot. My master thought him dead, not having heard from him so many years: a conduct that was unpardonable; considering his obligations to the Colonel, and the great trust reposed in him.

Mrs. W. Great trust! Lard! sir, what was it?

Johns. Why, Colonel Talbot left a son in his care—But come along, and I'll tell you the whole story by the way.

Mrs. W. We must not be seen together for the world; my husband is as jealous as the vengeance. Take a turn down this next street, and let me go home alone. Follow me in about ten minutes; but take care you don't speak to me as if you had seen me before.

Johns. My dear Mrs. Wilkins, what do you take me for? Do you suppose I never paid a visit to a married woman in my life? [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*The Bar of the George Inn.*

Enter Caleb, *followed by* Wilkins, *who appears greatly agitated.*

Cal. What do you knock me about for at this rate? Don't I slave like a horse from morning till night? I wish I had gone for a soldier as my brother did!

Wilk. Your brother, you dog! I wish I had never seen either of your faces. What shall I do? I have no son to restore him. (*Bell rings violently.*)

Cal. Coming, coming! There's a bill wanted in the General Elliot.

Wilk. Let them wait.

Cal. But suppose they won't wait, who'll pay off the score?

Wilk. Out of my sight, sirrah! or I'll pay off your score. Don't you see my temper is ruffled?

Cal. Yes; and I feel it, too. (*Bell rings.*) Coming! coming up, sir! [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Wilkins.

Mrs. W. My dear Mr. Wilkins, what's the matter? The whole house seems turned topsy-turvy.

Wilk. I am ruined.

Mrs. W. Ruined! Oh, heaven forbid!

Wilk. I say, woman, I'm undone; and the sooner I'm out of England the better.

Mrs. W. Lard, lard! you terrify me out of my wits, Jacob.

Wilk. Suppose the best friend you had in the world had intrusted an only child to your care, and that through neglect you had lost him, what would you have to say for yourself?

Mrs. W. And is that your case, my dear?

Wilk. It is.

Mrs. W. But tell me how it happened.

Wilk. You have frequently heard me make mention of Colonel Talbot, in whose family I was brought up?

Mrs. W. To be sure I have.

Wilk. It is a son of his I have lost.

Mrs. W. You astonish me! But how came so great a man's son to be left in your care?

Wilk. Why, you must know, that Colonel Talbot, previous to his going abroad, was privately married to a beautiful girl who waited on his mother: he had a son by this girl; and as the child came into the world just as he was obliged to embark with the army for Portugal, (the war before last,) he left him in my care, desiring me to let him pass for my own till his return, and in case he were killed, to continue the deception till the death of his father.

Mrs. W. And has the Colonel never been in England since?

Wilk. Never, till within these few days; therefore, his son continued with me till he was twelve years old, when I lost him.

Mrs. W. In what manner did you lose him?

Wilk. I cannot be certain: but, as he was a boy of great spirit, and ever prattled of being a soldier, I suspect he was inveigled off by a recruiting party, which, at that time, was beating up for men in the village.

Mrs. W. Didn't you acquaint his mother immediately with what had happened?

Wilk. She was dead.

Mrs. W. You wrote to the Colonel, to be sure.

Wilk. There I was to blame. I could not summon up resolution sufficient. I thought he would have attributed the child's leaving me to neglect, or cruel treatment.

Mrs. W. The best advice I can give you is, to tell Colonel Talbot his son is dead.

Wilk. But how shall I produce a certificate of that? Should he examine the parish-register, and no record of such a child's death be found, I should be taken up, and tried on a suspicion of murder.

Mrs. W. Then tell him the truth at once.

Wilk. Worse and worse! He'll suppose this a mere invention of my own, to screen my villany; else, why was I silent so long? and that I had been bribed by his relations to remove an obstacle to their inheriting both his acquired and paternal fortune.

Enter Caleb.

Cal. There's a gentleman from Colonel Talbot desires to see you.

Wilk. What's to be done? I dare not face him.

Cal. What shall I say to him, father?

Wilk. Was there ever anything so provoking as this fellow?

Mrs. W. I have it. Shew him into the parlour, my good boy; and tell him, Mr. Wilkins will be with him presently, my good boy.

Cal. "My good boy!" Ecod! she good boy's me to some tune this morning: I hope there's no mischief in the wind; for I'm sure those are the first good words I have had from her since she was my step-mother. [*Aside, and exit.*

Mrs. W. How old is your son Caleb?

Wilk. There is only a week difference between his age and young Talbot's.

Mrs. W. Pass him on the Colonel for his son.

Wilk. How!

Mrs. W. Put a good face on the matter, and you'll not only slip your neck out of a halter, but make your fortune. I can turn Caleb round my finger. Go and speak to this gentleman, and let him know you will introduce young Mr. Talbot to him immediately. Do as I bid you, and leave the management of the rest of the business to me.

Wilk. But what reason shall I give for not writing to him so long?

Mrs. W. You must say you never received one of his letters; and your quitting the country, will make it probable enough they might have miscarried.

Wilk. Then to give his son no better education!

Mrs. W. You must say he would not take any better; and you may find instances enough of as dull heirs to large estates, to give colour to your story.

Wilk. And make a drawer of him, too!

Mrs. W. Well, he'll not be the first great man that has cried "Coming up, sir!" What do you stand confounded for? Away, away, man! and let me break the matter to Caleb.

Wilk. It goes against my conscience; but self-preservation will have it so. [*Exit.*

Mrs. W. Now have I my gentleman under my thumb: whenever his tongue wags with the sound of jealousy, I'll threaten to discover upon him; and I'll see my dear, sweet fellow, who followed me home to-day, as often as I please. But to prepare this great booby—Oh! here he comes!

Re-enter CALEB.

Cal. Here, mother, I have brought you the bill.

Mrs. W. Well, never mind the bill; I have something very particular to say to you. Do you know, Caleb, that your father is a man of the first character in this town?

Cal. To be sure he is, for selling the best old port and sherry in the kingdom.

Mrs. W. But come, sit down, and listen to me. (*They sit.*)

Cal. What signifies hearing so much about father's character: who gets him that character? Why, Caleb. Is there one in the house fit to talk to a gentleman but myself?

Mrs. W. My dear Caleb, let me entreat you to hear me.

Cal. Dear Caleb! Yes, I'd listen to you all day for such words as these; good words are sugar-plums to me: besides, mother, you can't think how pretty folks look when they are pleased.

Mrs. W. Do you know, Caleb, whose son you are?

Cal. Whose son I am! My father's, to be sure.

Mrs. W. Certainly: but that father is not Jacob Wilkins.

Cal. No!

Mrs. W. Colonel Talbot, the great nabob just arrived from the Indies, is your father.

Cal. My godfather, I suppose you mean.

Mrs. W. I tell you he's your own father. You were given when an infant to my husband, and he was ordered to bring you up as his son; it being necessary, for family reasons, which you'll know another time, to conceal your birth.

Cal. I always thought I was a better man's son than I appeared to be. But, mother, isn't this all a joke?

Mrs. W. Can my husband convince you that I am in earnest?

Cal. He has often convinced me that he himself was in earnest, as my shoulders can witness.

Mrs. W. But, dear sir, I beg ten thousand pardons for keeping my seat so long. (*Getting up, and courtesying very low. Caleb keeps his seat, with a vacant stare, and chuckling laugh of joy.*)

Cal. I thought I'd come to something at last.

Mrs. W. Your father's gentleman, sir, is now waiting to see you.

Cal. My father's gentleman! I suppose I shall have a gentleman, too.

Mrs. W. Oh! no doubt.

Cal. Then there will be a pair of us. But you're sure, now, you are in earnest?

Mrs. W. Will you go and be convinced I am?

Cal. Come along, Mrs. Wilkins; I think that's your name.

Mrs. W. At your honour's service.

Cal. Great men are apt to forget such trifles; but I'll call and see you now and then, though I am a Colonel's son.

Mrs. W. We'll always think there's nothing too good at the George for your honour.

Cal. But, harkye! give old Jacob a hint not to forget himself, and make too free.

Mrs. W. I hope, sir, we shall never forget ourselves in your presence.

Cal. Well, well, I hope not, good woman. A Colonel's son! What a fool I must be not to have found out this of my own accord! But it's a wise child that knows its own father. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Drawing-room in the house of Sir Oliver Oldstock.*

Enter CHARLOTTE *and* HARRIET.

Char. How you tease me about this all-accomplished Sir Charles! I can't abide him.

Har. Can't abide him! I don't think it possible for any woman actually to dislike him.

Char. Yet, he's the last person breathing I should elect for my *caro sposo*. The man's well enough as an acquaintance; he's lively; does not want for understanding: but the best of him is, the talent he possesses for discovering the ridiculous, wherever it is to be found; then he paints it in colours so high, and so pleasantly ill-natured, that a woman takes him in her suite, as the natural appendage of superior understanding, to shew that her wit has raised her above the power of ridicule, and that she has the chief laughers in town upon her side.

Har. What you praise him for is, in my mind, the only exceptionable part of his character.

Char. Lard! what harm is there in a little good-humoured ill-nature? Besides, what would you have people talk of when they meet? As politics are to the men, scandal is to our sex; these two subjects are the vast magazines of the major part of our ideas; between them, the heads of half the nation are furnished.

Har. Have you seen Mandeville to-day?

Char. Poor Harriet! now do I perceive the cause of all this extraordinary zeal for the interests of the handsome baronet; you still are apprehensive, if you don't provide me with a husband, I shall take your beloved Mandeville from you.

Har. As he is sole heir to Colonel Talbot's immense fortune, I know your father will proceed to the last extremities.

Char. Dear Harriet, rest perfectly satisfied in my friendship for you; I never will have him: I don't know what I would not do to avoid it. My heart is, at present, a virgin tablet, on which Love

has not written a single character; however, should things come to the worst, you yourself must be my deliverer.

Har. As how?

Char. Even by taking wing with your beloved swain, for that blessed spot, where law forges no fetters for the heart; and Hymen, with a smile upon his cheek, and his torch burning clear, lights consenting votaries to the temple of real and lasting felicity. Heaven, and a generous uncle be praised, who bequeathed me ten thousand pounds independent of my father, I am not obliged to sacrifice my own and my friend's happiness! Oh! glorious independence! thou parent of every virtue! no wonder so many noble hearts emptied their crimson fountains to preserve thee!

Har. I'm ashamed, Charlotte, to have harboured a suspicion, but for a moment, that a mind like your's could act unworthy of itself.

Char. Now to put my theory into practice. Here comes Mandeville; do you step into the next room, where you may overhear our conversation, and you shall be entertained with a prologue truly anti-matrimonial.

Har. Dear Charlotte, I am already perfectly satisfied.

Char. But I insist on your going; it will entertain you. [*Exit Harriet.*

Enter Mandeville.

My dear Mandeville, I was just wishing for you: if you had staid much longer, I should have been insupportably vapoured; nothing runs in my head but our marriage; but I was thinking, as the fondest couples have certain dull hours that hang heavy upon their hands, how we two shall kill time during those spiritless seasons.

Man. I suppose we shall follow the example of other people; do all we can to make one another uneasy.

Char. That's one way, to be sure, of killing time: but we shall grow tired of that at last; don't you think so, Mandeville?

Man. When I entertain a good opinion of a lady's wit, it rids me of all apprehension on that score.

Char. Sir, your most obedient.

Man. I thought your cousin Harriet was here.

Char. My cousin Harriet! Lard! what's my cousin Harriet to the purpose? I shall grow jealous of you, at this rate. I wonder, Mandeville, what star shed its influence when our marriage was first talked of; no two people breathing agreed better.

Man. I always thought you the pleasantest companion imaginable.

Char. We were continually laughing at one body's expense or another.

Man. And as soon as we are married, I fancy everybody will be even with us.

Char. Heigho!

Man. What's that for, madam?

Char. Not for a husband, I assure you; it was only a requiem to friendship, going to be laid in the grave of matrimony. Methinks, we two are preparing ourselves for the penance of our future union, as knights-errant of old prepared themselves for the toils of chivalry: I've read somewhere, that those champions of distressed damsels, at first, wore heavy weights to their armour, which they fancied, on removal, would give a comparative lightness to the galling load with which they were about to tax their shoulders.

Enter Harriet.

Har. Just now, Mr. Mandeville, as I parted from my cousin, a servant came and told me that your uncle, Colonel Talbot, was arrived. Your father, Charlotte, has received a letter from him. But what do you think? It seems he has a son nobody ever heard of before.

Char. A son! Now, Mandeville, if you can be content with your mistress and a moderate income, I'm satisfied you may have her; as the bulk of Colonel Talbot's fortune will certainly devolve to his son, depend upon it, my father will no more press my ladyship on your worship.

Man. Madam, my uncle may dispose of his property as he pleases. I sincerely rejoice at his safe arrival in England; and as he has an heir, I shall be the first to congratulate him on the event; and I hope that heir may prove an heir to his virtues.

Char. You are a generous fellow, Mandeville; and, if it did not cost you so dear, I should congratulate you on the certain prospect you may indulge, that we two shall never be one.

Man. My dear Harriet—

Char. Now, why don't you say, my dear Mandeville? One as naturally follows the other, as the echo does the sound.

Man. The occasion, ladies, I trust, will apologize for my leaving you thus abruptly.

Char. Oh! go, go; you have my ample consent. But, Harriet, will you let him go off so easily?

Har. How can you be so ill-natured?

Char. She says, she gives you leave to go; but it's on condition that you do not dedicate a second of your time to any human being but herself, longer than common decency requires it. But, Mandeville, do you and I part as we ought—a betrothed pair?

Man. Yes, Charlotte; for we part wedded friends again. [*Exit.*

Char. Now, Harriet, are all your apprehensions removed?

Har. They are, my friend; Hope sits smiling at my heart, and once more cheers it with a prospect of happiness. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*An Apartment in Sir Oliver Oldstock's house.*

Enter Sir Oliver Oldstock.

Sir O. This is a devilish lucky hit, the Colonel's having a son; it enables me to provide for both my niece and daughter. I expect, from the latter, a good deal of contradiction in this business, but I like that; I should not love her half so much as I do, if she hadn't spirit enough to contradict me: it shews she has an opinion of her own, and gives me an opportunity to prove that I have one also; but of a much superior kind, and, upon occasions, of a very coercive quality: it's not one time in a hundred I can get anybody to contradict me; but men of large independent fortunes never hear the truth, nobody has spirit enough to oppose them in discourse. Henceforward, I am determined to take no man by the hand who does not speak and look, when we come to debate, as if he would knock me down in an argument. Well, I think I shall be as happy as a married man can be, when my girls are disposed of; my wife, to be sure, has a most unaccountable humour, to suppose I'm jealous of her, now she's in her fifty-fifth year. To do Lady Lucretia Oldstock justice, she was once a charming woman; but, at present, I think her as plain a piece of goods as a man could meet between

Temple-Bar and Whitechapel. Here she comes, brimfull of news.

Enter Lady Oldstock.

Lady O. Was ever anything so wonderful!

Sir O. Nothing upon earth! What's the matter, my love?

Lady O. Why, haven't you heard that Colonel Talbot has a son?

Sir O. A son! A dozen, I dare be sworn, if he would but own them; an old soldier has generally children in all the quarters of the globe.

Lady O. Sir Oliver, you are a censorious man, and judge of everybody by yourself.

Sir O. Upon my soul, my dear, you allow me too much credit; I never was a man of all that gallantry; no, no; I had a domestic magnet that attracted and fixed all my affections; united to such a woman as Lady Oldstock, who could be a rover?

Lady O. Why, to do you justice, Sir Oliver, you have, upon the whole, made a very good husband; and if it was not for the weakness of your temper in one particular, we might live very happily.

Sir O. (*Aside.*) Now she's off.

Lady O. If, indeed, I were one of the giddy flirts of the day, it would be another thing; but a woman, of whose truth you have had so many years experience, to be jealous of!

Sir O. I tell you, again and again, I am not jealous.

Lady O. Ah! Sir Oliver, I wish you would make your words good; if any man of the least tolerable appearance pays me a common mark of respect, don't you immediately sneer, and say, that fellow has a design upon you?

Sir O. So I do: I always think that person has a design upon another, to whom he gives their own way in everything: no, no; if I am to choose a friend, and an agreeable companion, give me the honest fellow who contradicts me.

Lady O. Then you are not jealous?

Sir O. No.

Lady O. No?

Sir O. No; d——e, if ever I were jealous of you!

Lady O. You are now more provoking, if possible, than ever; when you find I hold your ridiculous suspicions in contempt, you would wound me another way, and mortify my pride, by insinuating, that I never had attractions sufficient to have a civil thing said to me, like other women.

Sir O. Then it seems, my lady, you have had your civil things said to you, like other women, in your time?

Lady O. There, there it broke forth! What it is to be married to a jealous husband!

Sir O. Well, all this I can bear, because I like contradiction. I consider the mind like a spring; the more you press it, the more vigour you lend to its elasticity: since I can remember, I always delighted to be of a different opinion from other people; there's something wonderfully flattering to human pride in being singular; but in marriage it is absolutely necessary—man and wife are like the contending qualities of bitter and sweet; they naturally quarrel, and exist by downright opposition.

Enter Charlotte.

Lady O. I'll submit my cause to the judgment of Charlotte.

Char. Submit your cause to my judgment! my dear madam, by no means; in all cases of matrimonial litigation, the parties should be tried by their peers.

Sir O. Right, my girl! now, in order to qualify you to be impanelled on suits of the kind, I was that moment thinking about moving the court of Hymen, to shew cause why a rule should not be granted, to provide you with a husband.

Lady O. Whenever you marry, Charlotte, if you wish to be happy, above all things avoid a temper like your father's.

Sir O. And like your mother's, also, if you wish your husband to be happy.

Lady O. I clearly perceive my company is not agreeable.

Sir O. Your strange turn of mind, I confess, Lady Oldstock, is not altogether so agreeable; but you see, it does not make me angry.

Lady O. It's that that tortures me: if I could vex him, it would be a proof I had some power left; but he treats me like a child. [*Exit.*

Sir O. It's a spoiled one, if I do.

Char. Dear sir, let me follow her.

Sir O. You sha'n't budge a step after her; soothing her in these humours is only adding fuel to fire. Your mother, Charlotte, was born a coquette, and will die one. She was a reigning toast in her youth, and to this hour expects the adulation of those days. She had a whole army of lovers; and, what you'll say ought to make me set a very high value upon her, indeed, (either from necessity or choice,) she hung like an overblown rose on the virgin thorn, full four-and-thirty years waiting for me. But come, sit down, and let me talk to you. (*They sit.*) I have, for some time back, observed, Charlotte, that the match I proposed to you with Mandeville, does not meet your wishes.

Char. I confess, sir, it never did; besides, I know that gentleman's affections to be engaged elsewhere.

Sir O. I understand you; he's fond of my niece, Harriet: well, in the name of happiness, let them go together; I'll never mention his name to you again; nor, indeed, shall I propose any match to you upon which I may expect rational contradiction.

Char. Now, sir, you speak like my father. Oh! how my heart springs with gratitude and joy, to hear those generous words from your own lips!

Sir O. No, my girl, you shall never be sacrificed at the altar of Plutus; I say sacrificed, for what is it, in fact, but a sacrifice, to throw away a fine young woman upon a man it is impossible she should like; as many fathers do every day, who love money more than their children.

Char. The liberality of these sentiments delight me, they are so exactly in conformity with my own! Dear sir, you have given me such spirits! Do you know, when you asked me to sit down, I expected to have quite a different kind of conversation with you?

Sir O. I suppose you thought I had some golden calf to propose to you for a husband?

Char. I own I was so ungenerous.

Sir O. A fellow with nothing but gold in his pocket, and lead in his pate. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir O. How liable we are to be mistaken in our surmises of other people's thoughts! No, no, my girl; I have no such match to propose to you: I have a husband for you, it is true, in my eye; and a rich one, too; but it is not to riches you object, it is to the man; and provided he be agreeable, I imagine no woman in her senses can suppose a husband may be too rich?

Char. Provided riches be obtained without leaving a stain upon the principles, it is happiness to possess them, as they give us so much more

ample power of distributing felicity. I never was that romantic fool to imagine there can be happiness where there is not independency; grant me that, and all the wealth beside, which the earth contains, or the sea devours, should not bribe me to sell the free election of my heart, or barter for gold, what gold could never restore me.

Sir O. Give me a kiss, you jade! You are your father's own daughter; but everybody tells me you're the picture of me; and, if the Colonel's son be but as like his father as you are your's, you'll be the handsomest couple in Great Britain.

Char. (*Rising.*) The Colonel's son, sir!

Sir O. Yes, my old friend, Colonel Talbot's son; one of the finest young fellows, I am told—but no fop; he has none of the vices and follies of your young butterflies of fashion.

Char. No, sir; nor any of their accomplishments, or I'm misinformed.

Sir O. It was an excellent thought of his father's, to have him brought up in a snug private way.

Char. And yet, I'm told, he has lived some time in a snug public way.

Sir O. What, Charlotte, have you been listening to any scandalous reports of the youth?

Char. A pretty youth I understand he is for the husband of your daughter: I am told he was actually a waiter at some horrid place near Smithfield.

Sir O. Oh! infamous scandal! He a waiter at some horrid place near Smithfield! The next report, I suppose, will be, that you were bar-maid at the same place; and that I'm an old tobacconist, who supplied the house with cut and dry, from the sign of the Black Boy in a neighbouring alley.

Char. I am petrified at the very thought of the brute!

Sir O. Look you there, now! she knows I love contradiction in my heart, and, therefore, seems averse to the match, because she thinks it will please me. But, come; you and your mother and my niece shall go pay the Colonel and his son a morning visit.

Char. Sir, as you insist upon it, I will go as I would to see any other great natural curiosity.

Sir O. Was ever anything like this! she has heard a scandalous report of a man, and she won't wait to be undeceived by her own eyes and her own ears; this is downright inconvincible obstinacy, not rational, well-founded contradiction: and I hate the one, as much as I love the other; besides, I ever thought you a girl of too much sense to lay any kind of stress on a tale of mere rumour.

Char. But, if rumour should speak truth?

Sir O. He's so great a liar, I would not believe him. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*An Apartment at Mandeville's.*

Enter Johnson *and* Colonel Talbot.

Johns. He's a rough diamond, sir; he requires a little polishing, I must confess.

Col. T. Good masters may remove his ignorance, and good company polish his manners; but there is a meanness in the turn of his person, and the cast of his features, which is insuperable: but take man, in every point of view, and he will be found the creature of habit; his body, like his mind, is subdued by education.

Johns. I wonder, sir, you never wrote to any particular friend in England, to have inquired about him, when you received no letter from this man, to whose care you committed him.

Col. T. Who could I trust? None of my own family. Then, what solid friendships, do you suppose, are contracted at the age I left England? I was then but twenty; all my intimates were young fellows, sunk in pleasure and dissipation: if anything like friendship had subsisted between us, the many years we were asunder had dissolved the tie. His mother, I knew, was dead; and from Wilkins's silence, I concluded that he also had paid the debt of nature; therefore, I desisted from writing, thinking it was in vain to hope for any certainty till I had myself reached England.

Johns. I should not have believed it possible your honour could have had such a son, let his education be what it may.

Col. T. I own, Johnson, the weakness of a father induced me to believe I should have found him very different; I fancied I should have seen him emerging from the low contracted sphere to which his fate had consigned him, by the native energy of his own powers; and flattered myself with the pleasing dream of surprising a young man with affluence and distinction, who, in obscurity, had acquired virtue to deserve them.

Johns. I beg your honour's pardon; but, as I cannot see the least likeness of you in this young gentleman's face, I suppose he resembled his mother?

Col. T. His mother! She had the countenance of an angel.

Johns. Then he differs from you both most devilishly! But, sir, the sooner you provide him with a fencing and a dancing-master the better; the latter of these gentlemen seems indispensably necessary, if it's only to teach him to walk; for no raw recruit on the first day of drilling was ever more pigeon-toed.

Col. T. Where is he, now?

Johns. I left him, sir, very busy over his luncheon.

Col. T. His luncheon!

Johns. Yes, sir; a small morsel he takes before dinner, just to stay his stomach, consisting of about a pound of beef-steaks and a tankard of porter.

Col. T. Send him to me.—[*Exit Johnson.*]—I fear he's incorrigibly gone, beyond the power of reformation.

Enter Mandeville.

Dear Mandeville, what course do you advise me to pursue with this untoward boy? With all his faults, I must consider he is my son, and pity whilst he compels me to blush for him.

Man. Sir, we must endeavour to form him as well as we can; but I am rather inclined to think we shall never be able to give him the graces.

Col. T. He's not three-and-twenty; that's young; we have many begin later in life to acquire the rudiments of those sciences in which they afterwards arrived to the highest pitch of eminence. Have you been able to discover how the natural bent of his temper inclines, or if he has any strong propensities?

Man. Why, sir, from what I can collect in my short acquaintance with him, the natural bent of his temper seems inclined to gallantry; and if he has any strong propensity, it is to the game of skittles.

Col. T. No matter how low and vulgar the game be, it shews a spirit of play in him, and it must be crushed; but if he has a turn for gallantry, it gives me the greatest hopes of his reformation. The society of an accomplished and beautiful woman softens and refines the ronghest nature; she imparts, by a secret magic, her elegances and her graces; and to converse with her, is a kind of

study that insensibly polishes her admirer. But what reason have you to suppose he is inclined to gallantry?

Man. He has imparted all his amours to me; but one in particular, which very much diverted me, indeed: after having been successful with barmaids, young milliners, and tailors' daughters, out of number, Cupid shot him from a cheese-cake battery, and he fell in love with a pastry-cook's daughter; which, (oh! terrible,) was the cause of his having an affair of honour with an attorney's-clerk, in which both parties were bound over: but in painting this Helen, who bred the contention, how shall I do him justice at second-hand? Teniers lent him his pencil for her waist, and Titian for her head; for she was shaped like a Dutch cheese, and her locks were as red as a carrot.

Col. T. I have sent for him; and, as I shall examine him closely, in order to search if there be any latent seeds of ability which culture may bring forth, I wish you, Mandeville, to be present, and that you will also assist me in the inquiry.

Man. Certainly; as my cousin, I think it a duty I owe him. Oh! here he comes with Johnson.

Enter Caleb *and* Johnson.

Cal. (*Speaking as he enters.*) You don't know what's taste; my hair's the nattiest thing in town, as it's dressed now?

Col. T. Don't you know, sir, I sent for you?

Cal. Ah! father—Cousin, are you there, too?

Man. You don't attend.

Cal. Attend! no: I hope I sha'n't attend any more. Well, father, you sent for me: now, what do you want, my old cock?

Col. T. (*Turning away with disgust.*) It is in vain to think of cultivating a soil like this!

Man. His manner is terrible, to be sure; but we must correct him.

Cal. Correct him! Why, what have I done to be corrected? I thought I was corrected enough by my last father.

Col. T. Would that correction had taught you to speak!

Cal. That it did; and often to squeak, too, till you could hear me two streets off.

Col. T. Speak to him, Mandeville. There is something so barbarous in everything he says or does, that I can't bear to look at him.

Man. You'll excuse me, dear cousin, for giving you a little advice; but as I mean it well, I'm sure you'll not be offended.

Cal. Bless your heart! you can't offend me: I'm one of the best-tempered boys breathing. But what's the matter with old Firelock? he seems in the sulks.

Man. He's not pleased with your manner and address; it is too rude and abrupt: you should never approach him without evident marks of respect.

Cal. Oh! I understand you; I should always make a bow when I come into a place where he is. Ecod! with all my heart! but what set me wrong, was hearing it said, that to have no manners at all was the best of breeding.

Man. Ceremony is altogether as ridiculous, as rudeness is offensive; you must avoid both.

Col. T. Have you ever read anything in your life?

Cal. Why, do you think I can't read? Then I tell you I can; and write and cipher, too.

Man. He doesn't doubt that; he only wishes to know what kind of reading or books you are fond of.

Cal. Then you may tell him I am fond of histories.

Man. That's a good hearing, 'faith! If he's fond of history, he must possess from nature a strong inquisitive mind under all this unpromising *d'abord*. Men, educated in a low sphere of life, however uncouthly they express themselves, often manifest a strong intellect; and on being put to the test, discover a fund of knowledge the better-educated man would not expect from a slight acquaintance with them: I consider such minds like rich metals, as yet unpurified from alloy; but let it once be known that the ore is gold, and the refiner's hand will soon bring forth the bullion. As you are fond of history, you have, no doubt, dipped into the histories of Greece and Rome?

Cal. The best of their histories.

Man. Whose were they?

Cal. Why, in the first place, I have read "Don Bellianis's History of Greece," and the "Seven wise Masters' History of Rome."

Col. T. Ask him no more questions.

Cal. Then I've read the "History of Colonel Jack," and the "History of the English Rogue," and the "History of Moll Flanders."

Man. He appears as well read in modern as ancient history.

Col. T. I don't know anything more mortifying to human pride, than to pass the better part of a man's life in toil, anxiety, and danger, accumulating wealth, to leave it to a fool at last.

Cal. You can't think, father, how sensible money makes a fool look, and how foolish a wise man looks without it.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Serge, your honour's tailor.

Man. He's come to take measure of my cousin for his regimentals.

Cal. Regimentals! Why, am I to be a colonel as well as my father?

Col. T. Sir, you're to be a soldier.

Cal. A soldier! Why, what's all this? Am I to go for a soldier, after all? Has Doll Blouze been with the parish-officers?

Col. T. I have procured you a commission; no son of mine shall waste his youth in ease and indolence, dissipating that wealth I so hardly earned: the greater part, it is true, he shall enjoy; but he shall first prove, by his courage and his services to his country, that he deserves it.

Cal. There's not a boy within the sound of Bow-bell of a better spirit; I'll fight any man in England of my weight and inches, with fair fists, for a guinea; ay, d—e! if I don't, and say done first.

Man. Hadn't you better step to the tailor?

Cal. Presently, presently, cousin! But now I think of it, I'll not step to him; let the tailor step to me. A captain step to a tailor! Impossible! that's bidding a field-piece dance the hayes after a thimble.

Col. T. I insist upon your going this moment.

Cal. Why, the old boy's in his tantrums. Cousin, a word in your ear: there's one thing before I go, I must beg of you. (*Apart to Man.*)

Man. What's that?

Cal. Why, as you and I will be hand and glove, as a body may say, you'll call me Caleb, and I'll call you Tom, Frank, Harry, or—what is your name?

Man. My name is Frederick.

Cal. Frederick! what a pretty name! I wish my name was Frederick. Can't I be new-christened for one name as well as another?

Man. (*Aside.*) Till you're new born, I fancy nothing can be done with you.

Cal. But I was going to tell you—if you call

me Caleb, never do it loud, especially in company.

Man. For heaven's sake, why?

Cal. Why, if you were to cry out, as thus now, Caleb! (*Bawling out.*) I should cry, "Coming up, sir!" though you were to make a duke of me. [*Exit.*

Col. T. Well, Mandeville, what do you think?

Man. Hope is left us in the worst of times; however, I do not despair of making something of him yet: what I dread most, is introducing him to Charlotte.

Col. T. Why cannot man make over his mind, like his property, to his children? Any distinguishing quality in all other animals survives in the same species by hereditary descent for ever; man continues upon earth only in his name and his revenues. Oh! that he should leave behind him his least valuable part, and all that made him good or great should sink into the dust with him!

Enter Johnson.

Johns. Good news! good news, sir! the Carnatic is arrived safe. Captain Crevelt's servant is just come to acquaint you, that his master and Count Pierpoint will be here immediately.

Col. T. Good news, indeed, Johnson; and heavy and afflicted as my heart is, your tidings cheer it. The Count, Mandeville, is an officer of infinite merit; he was my prisoner during the war, and is warmly attached to English manners and our glorious constitution. But, Crevelt! to know the merit of such a man, you must be acquainted with him.

Man. Is he an Englishman?

Col. T. Yes; and you may judge of his merit as a soldier, when I tell you, he has risen from the ranks, at the age of three and twenty, to the commission he now holds of captain. He's the reverse of this ill-fated boy we have been speaking to. He is self-educated; for with scarcely any advantages but those he derived from a most noble and excellent nature, he is the man of sense, the scholar, and the polished gentleman. His father, old Crevelt, was no more than a sergeant, and served in Germany under Lord Granby; he brought this young man with him to India, whilst yet a boy. The first day he was in action, he saw his father fall; and he was found after the battle amongst the slain, close to his body, apparently lifeless with loss of blood, as if he had died in the pious office of defending a parent.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Captain Crevelt, sir.

Man. Let us go and receive him; my heart burns with impatience to call such a man my friend. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*An Apartment at Mandeville's.*

Enter Mandeville, Captain Crevelt, *and* Colonel Talbot.

Capt. C. I quitted England, Mr. Mandeville, when a boy, and never was in London in my life before. I am charmed with the appearance of this noble city, in which the ease, convenience, and safety of its poorest inhabitant seem consulted.

Col. T. There is no token seen in the streets of an exhausted people, drained by a tedious and expensive war, during which, Great Britain fought at more unequal odds than any nation on the earth ever did before.

Capt. C. So much the reverse, that I am astonished at the appearance of opulence and prosperity to be met with every where; and the pleasing sensation I feel, to find my country in that state, is indescribable.

Col. T. Let gloomy politicians continue to predict, and foresee calamities that exist only in imagination; whilst the genius of industry continues to smile upon the labours of the husbandman, the mechanic, and the manufacturer, and whilst strict probity is the character of England in her dealings with all other nations, the resources of this country will be found inexhaustible; and though its glory may be veiled by a momentary cloud, it soon recovers its former splendour.

Enter Caleb, *in regimentals.*

Cal. Here I am, father, in full feather.

Col. T. What, sir, is your dancing-master gone already?

Cal. Bless your heart! no master of any kind for me to-day: I never put on a new suit of clothes in my life, that I did not make holyday.

Man. (*Apart to Col. T.*) We had better, I think, in some degree, give way to him: you cannot expect immediately to reform manners so long confirmed by habit.

Col. T. (*Apart to Man.*) I believe you're right, so I'll try what effect indulgence may have on him. Well, it shall be as you would have it; this day shall be devoted to pleasure and amusement. Crevelt, give me leave to introduce you to my son.

Capt. C. I don't know any circumstance of my life affects me more than the high honour I now enjoy. (*Introducing himself.*)

Cal. Why, lookye, young man, as my father desires it, I'll shake hands with you, with all my heart; but I would not make so free with every old soldier's son.

Col. T. How dare you, sir, insult a man of his merit with language so gross?

Cal. Why, isn't he an old soldier's son? Pretty company truly to introduce me to!

Capt. C. Sir, the humility of my birth I acknowledge; but must tell you, this is the first time it ever brought a blush into my cheek. I am choaked with rage! Unused to insult, I cannot receive it without indignation even from the son of Colonel Talbot.

Col. T. I insist upon your asking that gentleman's pardon.

Cal. Why, is he a gentleman?

Col. T. A man of his worth, his honour, and abilities, is a gentleman, though sprung in the lowest vale of society.

Cal. Nay, if you say he's a gentleman, I ask his pardon with all my heart: nothing so common, now-a-days, as one gentleman asking pardon of another; it makes up a quarrel in a trice.

Capt. C. Sir, I accept your apology.

Col. T. (*To Caleb.*) But, sir, I will go farther with you: you must ever consider that man with respect; learn to esteem him, and it will do you more honour than your birth has done.

Enter Servant.

Serv. The gentleman from the India-house, sir, that was here before to-day, has called again.

Col. T. Let him know I'll wait on him immediately. [*Exit Servant.—Apart to Caleb.*]—Young man, I wish to undeceive you in one particular; seize all those opportunities of instruction I mean to give you, and redeem the time you have lost,

which, if you neglect, your provision from me shall be merely independence: my name you may disgrace, but I think it a crime to bestow riches on one who would abuse them; even that youth, whose birth is so inferior in your eye, I should consider as united to me by his merit in nearer ties of kindred. [*Exit.*

Cal. (*Strutting about.*) So, then, I am to be disinherited after all, and for an old soldier's son, too?

Capt. C. What's that you say, sir?

Cal. Say, sir! D—e! he looks so fierce, I don't know what to say to him. These old soldiers' sons are so used to cutting of throats, it's the devil to quarrel with them.

Man. I am ashamed of you, cousin. If you proceed in this manner, you must be locked up from all society.

Cal. I'll beg his pardon again: I know that's all he wants.

Capt. C. I'll spare you, sir, the mortification of descending to so humiliating an act. In respect to your father, I overlook everything you have hitherto said: I now coolly behold all that had past through a different medium; and rather feel for a youth, who, from his prospect of immense wealth, has been, perhaps, from his childhood, surrounded with sycophants, who never let him know what it was to be acquainted with himself; and persuaded him into an opinion, that wealth supplies the absence of every accomplishment and virtue.

Cal. I don't rightly understand you, Captain; but I fancy, (only you mince the matter,) that you meant to say I was much better fed than taught. Well, no matter! Are we good friends again?

Capt. C. Very good!

Cal. Then give me your hand.—(*Aside.*) He, he, he! I can't help laughing, after all, to think of such a fellow's being a gentleman. But I say, Captain; they tell me you are a devil of a fellow for fighting: now, do you see me, as I am an officer as well as yourself, I'd be glad to know how you generally found yourself before you went into the field of battle.

Capt. C. Much as I do at present.

Cal. What, no more frightened?

Capt. C. No, sir.

Cal. Come, come; no tricks upon travellers, Captain; do you think I'm such a fool as to believe you?

Capt. C. Sir!

Cal. (*Terrified.*) Sir!—(*Aside.*) He looks at me like a tiger. I'll ask him no more questions: he has half frightened me out of my commission already—Eh! (*Laughing out.*) Ecod! yonder I see my father talking to two fine girls; I'll go have a peep at them; Cousin Mandeville, good b'ye—Captain, your servant. (*Stifling a laugh.*)—A gentleman, truly! What a fine thing it is to be born one; it saves a world of trouble in learning.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Man. The story of this unhappy young man, and how his education came to be so much neglected, is too long to acquaint you of particularly, at present; but you see what he is, and I hope estimate an insult from him accordingly.

Capt. C. I think no more of it; but my heart bleeds for his father.

Man. You talk of leaving town to-day; why, dear sir, will you so suddenly quit friends, who, of all things, covet your society? Is the business which calls you from us, of that urgent nature you cannot postpone it for a few days at least?

Capt. C. It is what I ought not to do; for my relations in England, (if I have any living,) have never heard from me since I quitted the country: but, perhaps, it's better to prepare them for the meeting; so I shall write to them by this night's post, and continue your guest a little longer.

Man. Now this is truly friendly. I wouldn't for the world have you leave town till after my cousin Talbot's wedding.

Capt. C. Then he's going to be married?

Man. So his father intends, as the only means of reforming him. The lady is one of those two, who came here within this half hour; and whom we left with Count Pierpoint, admiring his magnificent present from the different princes of the east, at whose courts he has been occasionally envoy.

Capt. C. But which of the ladies is intended for Mr. Talbot?

Man. Charlotte; she whom you so much admired: and, short as the Count's acquaintance with them is, he appears already smitten with her cousin Harriet: unluckily for him, she happens to be engaged.

Capt. C. But, Charlotte! It is she, then, who is intended for Mr. Talbot; I think I never saw a finer girl.

Man. She's a divine creature! and though her Adonis is so near a relation, I confess, I wish her a better husband. But I don't know how matters may terminate; she's a girl of great spirit; has a very fine independency; and such is her disposition, that I'm confident there is no temptation in wealth could induce her to marry any man whom she did not like.

Enter Harriet.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! I beg your pardon, Mr. Mandeville, for laughing so much at the expense of your cousin Talbot; but his manner, person, and conversation, are all so truly original, that gravity itself must be provoked to laughter in his company.

Man. It's very true, Harriet; he is a most extraordinary being, I must confess.

Har. He introduced himself to Charlotte this moment; and such a figure does he cut! He can neither walk, sit, nor stand still, with gazing at his person. Charlotte and he are together; she seems delighted with him.

Capt. C. Then, madam, she likes him?

Har. She likes to laugh at him, sir. Do, Mandeville, come, and take a look at him.

Man. Will you go, Captain Crevelt?

Capt. C. I'll just speak to Johnson, sir, and follow you. [*Exeunt Mandeville and Harriet.*] I never saw that woman in my life before, who in a moment has had such a power over me. She will not marry him, they say; but what then? Does it follow of course, that she must like me?

Enter Johnson.

Johns. I understand your honour wished to see me.

Capt. C. Yes, Johnson; as you came to London before me, I wished to ask you, if you knew anything of the family of this young lady your master intends his son shall marry?

Johns. Why, sir, I understand she is the daughter of a Sir Oliver Oldstock; an old acquaintance of the Colonel's. Her father, I hear, meant she should marry Mr. Mandeville, supposing he would be my master's heir; but when a son made his appearance, like all worldly men, Sir Oliver changed his note; and the poor young lady is to become a sacrifice to this—I wish he wasn't my master's son.

Capt. C. But she won't, Johnson, be made a sacrifice.

Johns. I hope not, sir. But, lord! what won't money do? Don't we see money every day couple age and deformity to youth and beauty; a young creature, like an angel, linked to an old skeleton of dry bones; as if the demon of avarice and sin had acquired such ascendency in the world, as to bring about an union betwixt death and immortality?

Capt. C. Why, Johnson, you speak with great feeling and spirit on the subject.

Johns. Ah! Captain Crevelt, what a charming couple you two would make. I, who have seen your honour in the field, would expect a Granby or a Marlborough from such a marriage.

Capt. C. (*Musing.*) I promised to follow them; but the less I see her, the better for my peace: it's only feeding a passion I should banish from my heart for ever. Johnson, take no notice that I have asked you any questions concerning Miss Oldstock: should I be inquired for, I am gone to the library: books, or my own thoughts, are the only society I am fit for. [*Exit.*

Johns. Well, as long as I live, I never will think there is anything in great blood again. Here is a son of one of the best families in the kingdom, with neither person nor mind superior to one of his father's domestics; and if we turn our eyes to the other side, we behold the offspring of an old soldier, with the soul of a prince, and the head of a prime minister.

Enter Nancy, *running.*

Nancy. Mr. Johnson, Mr. Johnson! here's a letter for you, brought by the post; (*gives it*) and short a time as you have been in London, I'm sure it's a love-letter.

Johns. Ay; pray, Nancy, how have you made that discovery? Is it by the elegant penmanship of its pothook-and-hanger superscription, or by the god of love's own broad seal, stamped upon it by a wafer and thimble?

Nancy. Ecod! Mr. Johnson, you're a knowing hand; I'll engage you have hooked in many a poor girl in your time.

Johns. But I haven't paid the postage.

Nancy. That's always paid beforehand in to the office with the letter.

Johns. But you know, Nancy, letters are conveyed now upon a new establishment, and for fear of mistakes, I'll even pay double postage. (*Kisses her.*)

Nancy. It's mighty well! I suppose when you find this is a mistake, you'll be for having the overcharge back again. [*Exit.*

Johns. Now for my letter. 'Sdeath! it's from my sweet little Mrs. Wilkins! (*Reads.*) "*Mrs. Wilkins's compliments to Mr. Johnson; will be glad of his company this evening to tea, as she wishes to treat with him about those little matters he brought with him from India: if the two sets of China be as handsome as he said they were, she will take them both off his hands; she'll take, besides, some chintz and muslin for gowns, and half a dozen shawls: he need not send her any mandarins; she has more old figures than is worth house room.*

"*P.S.—Mr. Wilkins is very sorry he can't be at home the whole evening, very particular business calling him to Hogsden.*"

I was afraid I should have had no postscript; but all's right, I find. Yes, my sweet Mrs. Wilkins, I will go and talk to you about those trifles I brought with me from India; but you shall have no mandarins; indeed, I thought you had one too many of those old figures. [*Exit.*

Enter Caleb, *followed by* Charlotte.

Cal. Well, miss, how do you like me? Don't you think I look like a captain?

Char. Like a captain! It would be doing you injustice to compare you to any one officer under his Majesty: I am really at a loss for a comparison to match you with. Come, turn about, and let me see your shapes. Mercy! what a long sword they have tied you to!

Cal. That was all my own thought: I haven't learnt to fence yet; and as I am told a gentleman is nobody till he has fought about a score duels, I was determined the first time I fought, not to be overreached by anybody.

Char. A very prudent resolution, I must confess! valour is by no means incompatible with discretion. But pray, sir, are you so very quarrelsome, that you expect to have all those duels upon your hands?

Cal. Me quarrelsome! Bless your heart, I'm as quiet as a lamb.

Char. Then why do you expect to fight so much?

Cal. Because it's the fashion; and you know a man had better be out of the world than out of the fashion.

Char. Then I think you are taking an excellent method to have your choice.

Cal. Yes; fighting's quite a gentleman-like amusement; besides, it will be put in the newspapers; and I shall read my own name in print, along with the debates of lords and commons; and that's the cause, I suppose, of all duels.

Char. I believe duels have been fought more than once (and, oh! fatal delusion! perhaps a valuable life lost) for a cause altogether as frivolous!

Cal. But now I am dressed, do you see me, I wish to shew myself to some of my old acquaintances; therefore, suppose you and I go this evening to Bagnigge Wells, and drink tea; the hot-rolls are so nice there, you can't think!

Char. Some other time; I can't possibly go this evening.

Cal. Mayhap, you think I won't pay for the tea, but I will; and moreover than that, I'll treat you to the half-play afterwards.

Char. You must, indeed, excuse me, sir.—(*Aside.*) I wish I could get rid of him. This moment poor Crevelt passed me with a dejected air; I followed him with a stolen glance, till I traced him into the library. I wish I knew what was the matter with him; I never saw a man in my life I pity so much.

Cal. (*Looking at himself.*) How they'd stare at our hop, to see me in this dress!

Char. This fellow takes no notice of me; his regimentals have actually rivalled me! (*Aside.*)

Cal. (*With great delight.*) Dress I see is everything: such a suit of regimentals would make any man a great officer. How this world goes! fine fellows are made by tailors, and tailors undone by fine fellows!

Char. My Narcissus is so engaged with his person, it would be foolish to lose this opportunity of getting rid of him: I'll drop carelessly into the library—I never saw so sudden an alteration in a man's looks as in poor Crevelt's! I hope he's not in love—Poor Charlotte, if the object be not in England! [*Aside, and exit.*

Cal. (*To himself.*) To be sure, Caleb, you haven't a pair of legs! It is not every captain who can beat a march with such a pair of drum-sticks. I wonder how my legs would look in a pair of new boots: I never rode of a Sunday, but in a pair of my father's old ones. Most smart captains, I observe, foot as well as horse, mount the streets in boots. So, you won't go to Bagnigge Wells? (*Looking up.*) Eh! why, she's gone! Ecod! I'm glad of it! and now the coast is clear, I'll have a ramble. What signifies my being dressed, if no-

body sees me? I'll call over to Jacob Wilkins's, and take a glass with him. Who knows, but one of these days, when I return from abroad a great warrior, but old Jacob may take down his sign, and hang me up over his door. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Oldstock, *followed by* Count Pierpoint.

Lady O. Really, my lord, I tremble for the consequences of this interview; if Sir Oliver should meet us, and happen to be in one of his jealous moods, it is in vain to tell him of the innocency of our conversation; he will interpret my very looks, and draw the strangest inferences from even the tone of voice with which I utter the most good-natured sentence.

Count. P. Il est bien extraordinaire; it appears to me very strange, madam, dat people of fashion, en Angleterre, can be so bourgeois. Mon Dieu! en France, quand un homme est marié, ven ve marry, by gar, our friends cannot nous oblige more dan by take care of our vives.

Lady O. Oh! my lord, you're a refined people; we are, at least, half a century behind you in point of civilization.

Count P. But on my vord, you improve every day; people de fashion in both countries, vil be ver soon les mêmes; at present, voila le difference; at present, see the difference between France and England. Un Anglois est trop brusque, too rough; un François, peut-être trop poli; but dat be fault sur coté droit, on de right side. Suppose nous avous; suppose ve have von traité de commerce, pour un exchange des manieres; Jack Bull is von guinea too heavy; et un Frenchman, entre nous, peut-être un Louis-d'or too light; now to make a de balance even, scrape de Englis, or vat you call sweat a de English guinea, et augmentez le Louis-d'or, and you give de polish to de one, and the proper weight to the other.

Lady O. I blush, my lord, to think my education was so cruelly neglected, that I cannot hold a conversation with you in your own language. People of condition should always speak French.

Count P. Mais j'espère—me hope you understand?

Lady O. Oh! perfectly, my lord; you speak the language of the Graces; and that our sex understand in every country.

Count P. Si j'entends; vous, ma belle ange! If I understand, it is you have give me the instructions.

Lady O. How well he makes himself understood! I never heard such sweet broken English in my life before. (*Aside.*)

Count P. Mais, madam! may I beg leave to solicit—(*Taking her by the hand.*)

Lady O. My lord! Dear count! (*Seemingly confused.*)

Count P. Madam, may I solicit votre pitie, pour un passion qui brûle mon âme—my passion consume a my heart.

Lady O. Oh, heavens! what a discovery is here? How fatal to the happiness of both! I hope, my lord, you will exert your philosophy on this occasion, and consider the insurmountable obstacle.

Count P. Obstacle, madam! quelle obstacle to a man of my rank and fortune?

Lady O. Oh! fie, fie, my lord! can a man of your delicacy talk in this strain?

Count P. Ah! si vous pouviez lire—if you could read a my heart—

Lady O. Go, unhappy youth! and endeavour to extinguish a fruitless flame, that, if it continue to burn, must only prove a source of disquietude to us both: go, too-pleasing seducer! and like the faithful, but honourable Werter, leave your ill-starred, sympathising Charlotte to her tears! (*Affecting to weep.*)

Count P. My Charlotte! No, it is my Harriet.

Lady O. Harriet! What Harriet?

Count P. Your niece, madam; that petite ange—

Lady O. My niece! Was my niece the object of all this adoration?

Count P. Is there one else living deserves so much?

Lady O. Yes, a hundred, if you had eyes to see.

Count P. Eh bien! Madam, what you say to my proposal?

Lady O. My niece is engaged; or, if she wasn't, you should not have her.

Count P. Mais, le Chevalier Oldstock dit le contraire. Sir Oliver say quite different.

Lady O. Sir Oliver's an old fool, and I suppose didn't understand you, for you speak terrible English. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Oliver Oldstock.

Sir O. Well, Count, what says my wife?

Count P. She does refuse; she vill not consent.

Sir O. I'm glad of it.

Count P. Diable! pourquoi you glad of it?

Sir O. Because now I shall have an opportunity of shewing my authority, and letting her know you shall have my niece in spite of her. She's my own brother's daughter; he left her an orphan in my care, and I'll dispose of her as I like; I asked Lady Oldstock's approbation, only for the pleasure of being refused it. I love contradiction.

Count P. Mon cher chevalier! you transport me.

Sir O. Yes, Count; contradiction's my hobby-horse; I mount him every hour of the day; and the more he kicks and flings, the greater delight I take in riding him. I know you think me a whimsical old fellow; but you are new to our clime and our manners. We delight in thinking of ourselves. Opposition is the very soul of an Englishman; he likes it in himself, and in others also. Peace and prosperity, with good eating and drinking, would throw him into a lethargy, if imagination didn't supply that spur to goad him on constantly to action.

Count P. Now, mon chère père, me vill settle—

Sir O. Odso! that's right. Mind, the foundation-stone of our agreement is, that you settle in England: a niece of mine shall never breed subjects to fight against her king and country!

Count P. Monsieur, you have my vord of honour; and now I vill go visit my pretty miss, vat you call Harriet: mais, monsieur, rest assure me vill die and live in England. [*Exit.*

Sir O. Well said, monsieur! cart before the horse. But now I am alone, let me see how my accounts stand: I have secured the French nabob for my niece; now it would be a master-stroke if I could obtain the English one for my daughter, and thus centre the two nabobs in my own family. This son of the Colonel's is a downright savage: Charlotte never could like him; or if she could, interest tells me I should not; therefore, her liking's out of the question: there's to be a division of the Colonel's property, between the son and Mandeville: I want the whole, if possible. The Colonel is not fifty; and, in my mind, he's a better looking fellow than either his son or his nephew. Charlotte's having ten thousand pounds independent of me, makes her very obstinate. Debates will run high, I fear; as, indeed, they very often do in my family; where, though I'm constantly left in a minority, I never lose a question. 'Tis true, I

have open mouths upon me from all sides, till, like greater men, I'm fairly badgered: but it's only waiting till the strangers are all out, and I tell the house as I please afterwards. Zounds! here comes Mandeville: I wish I could get decently out of his way.

Enter Mandeville.

Man. I have been in search of you, Sir Oliver.

Sir O. I wish I had known that; I'd have saved you a good deal of trouble. Well, my good sir, had you anything particular to say to me?

Man. Is your conduct towards me consistent with honour?

Sir O. I don't understand you.

Man. How convenient it is to assume ignorance of a subject of which it is painful to hear the truth, even to the man incapable of respecting it! Honour, though shut out from the heart, will still knock at its gates, and tell the guilty there is a register kept in the avenging court of remorse for every act of injustice.

Sir O. Upon my word, Mr. Mandeville, you speak to me in a very strange style; this is not a manner in which I am accustomed to be addressed. You bounce in all of a sudden, transported with rage, (for what cause is best known to yourself,) and with a knock-me-down countenance, treat me as if my age and my rank had no kind of respect due to them.

Man. Sir, no man honours age more than I; or more readily yields rank every respect it can claim, when that rank does not forfeit its title to esteem, by meanly sinking and degrading itself; but, when men in superior stations behave as if their actions were above all censure and control, they must be told that they are deceiving themselves, as well as the world, and that no man is suffered to injure another with impunity.

Sir O. Well, sir, in what particular have I injured you, to provoke the thunder of this terrible philipic?

Man. Can you seriously ask me that question, when you sanction the addresses of Count Pierpoint to your niece?

Sir O. Well, and what then?

Man. Have you forgot, then, your prior engagement to me?

Sir O. Mr. Mandeville, the poet says, that "Every day's a satire on the last," now I say that every day's a contradiction to the last; as circumstances vary, or events fall out, we are compelled by necessity to change our minds. As to my niece, whom I consider in the light of a daughter, I think it my duty, in providing her with a husband, to make the best bargain I can for her.

Man. Sir, have you no regard for what the world will say on this occasion? The world, sir; that harsh, blind, misjudging multitude; whose slander, if it soil the ermine purity of virtue, what will it say, when it has justice upon its side?

Sir O. Nothing that I value. Young man, when you have lived as many years with the world as I have, you'll learn to make your happiness independent of its opinion. Don't you see knaves and fools every day rise into consequence, and all from the opinion of the world. The opinion of the world, sir! it's a mouthful of moonshine!

Man. I believe with you that the world is too indolent; too much occupied with its pleasures, or its miseries, to take up the business of censor. I fear it never examines, thoroughly, any man's pretensions to its favour: the more he asks, the more he generally obtains from the world; hence, folly, confidence, and vice, revel in the arms of luxury, whilst merit, proud and retiring from the conscious dignity of genius and virtue, is suffered to perish for want of bread!—But, sir,—

Sir O. But me no more this debate, Mr. Mandeville; the question is put, and I am going. Partial as I am to a polemical mode of discourse, I find that there may be sometimes even too much contradiction. [*Exit.*

Man. What shall I do with this deceitful, unfeeling man? But can I hesitate whilst I have a particle of spirit left? I'll go this moment, state the matter to Count Pierpoint, and he shall resign or fight for his mistress!

Enter Harriet.

Har. Dear Mandeville, what is the matter? My uncle has just parted from you, seemingly much out of temper; and the wildness and disorder of your looks, terrify me?

Man. My heart is torn to pieces, Harriet. Indignation at the ungenerous treatment I have met with from your uncle, added to my fears of losing you, distract me.

Har. But can you doubt your Harriet? There is no power upon earth shall force me to be another's; do then, dear Mandeville! strive to calm this tumult in your mind. Betrayed by the violence of your passion, you talked of going in search of Count Pierpoint: let me beseech you not.

Man. You were deceived, Harriet, in what you heard me say. Do not prevent my going; I have business of a most particular nature calls me.

Har. I know perfectly the business that calls you; but let me conjure you, by all that regard you ever professed for me, not to think of it. You say your fears of losing me distract you; judge, then, of the state of my heart, by your own. Has Harriet no fears for her Mandeville, at a moment she sees him eat up with an ungovernable rage; about, perhaps, to hurry himself or a fellow-creature into eternity?

Man. Your apprehensions, Harriet, are groundless. From what I learn of the Count's character, I believe him to be a man of too nice honour; too equitable, too generous, to reduce me to the necessity of proceeding to extremities; I only wish to explain matters to him.

Har. I can recommend a much better course to you, and one much more likely to succeed. Go to your uncle, that good, that noble-hearted man, tell him your story; if anybody has weight with Sir Oliver, it is Colonel Talbot.

Man. Nobody has weight with him, when avarice claims his ear.

Har. You are mistaken: he is not so great a slave to avarice as you suppose him.

Man. He is your uncle, Harriet, and I cannot speak of him with harshness.

Har. I know by your eyes, you are not so angry as you were.

Man. I will be guided by you in everything. There is a fascinating power, Harriet, in your looks and accents, when you would persuade, that cannot be resisted; a melting softness clings about my heart as I listen and behold you: there is, surely, a divinity in angel-beauty! You caused the tempest in my soul, and have calmed it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*A Room.*

Caleb *and* Johnson *discovered drinking.*

Cal. Come, my boy, since you won't go to Jacob Wilkins's with me, we'll tope a little here. Fill

your glass higher; higher yet; I'll have no sky-lights. This is a bumper toast.

Johns. Well, what is it?

Cal. Our noble selves. (*Drinks.*)

Johns. I find that you think a sentiment, like charity, should begin at home.

Cal. I do to be sure.

Johns. We should have begun with the king and constitution.

Cal. Then here it goes; and, though it's the second toast now, it shall be first next bottle.

Johns. Next bottle! But, Mr. Talbot, I have a particular engagement upon my hands this evening. I hope you'll excuse my leaving you.

Cal. You sha'n't stir a foot (*Pushes him to his chair.*) Your wine's so good: I wonder how anybody can quit such liquor.

Johns. But suppose there's a lady in the case; you won't press me to stay, surely, after I tell you that?

Cal. D—n it! take me with you!

Johns. Impossible!

Cal. Then sit down and drink with me, for I won't part with you.

Johns. What the devil shall I do? (*Looking at his watch.*) It wants but a quarter to six, and Mrs. Wilkins will be waiting tea for me. (*Aside.*)

Cal. Come, to the charge again, and a brimmer it shall be.

Johns. (*Aside.*) I shall get fuddled, too. I have often in a frolic assumed drunkenness; suppose I practise that stratagem now to get away from him? (*Hiccups.*)

Cal. Why, now I look at you, I think you are getting a little forward.

Johns. But I am not quite so bad as you think. (*Aside.*) Do let me go, Mr. Talbot.

Cal. Do you think I have no more regard for you? I tell you, you must go to bed; now do go to bed.

Johns. How the devil shall I get away from him?—Zounds! sir, I am not drunk. (*Appearing to be sober.*)

Cal. Poor fellow! I am sorry to see you so far gone; but I'll take care of you for this night. No, no; no going out this night. (*Impeding him.*)

Johns. 'Sdeath and fire! Will this convince you that I am sober? (*Walking firmly.*)

Cal. Take another turn, and I'll tell you.

Johns. But will you let me go, then?

Cal. After we have had another bottle.

Johns. Zounds! another bottle!—Well, I'll go down to the cellar for it.

Cal. Mind you don't stay.

Johns. No, no; I sha'n't stay (*aside*)—long in this house, now I have got out of your clutches, young gentleman. [*Exit.*

Cal. This is a devilish honest bottle; there is half a pint in it yet. Well, my friend is gone, so here goes his health. (*Drinks.*) Poor fellow! I never saw a man so soon drunk and sober. D—n it, how he stays! I long for a glass of wine; though he's not here, ecod! I'll fill my glass. A good bottle of wine is excellent company. (*Drinks.*)

Enter Mandeville.

Man. What, sir, drinking by yourself?

Cal. I'm sure that's not my fault; I shall be very glad if you'll sit down and keep me company: I expect Johnson every minute with the other bottle.

Man. I suppose, sir, Johnson has been your companion?

Cal. Yes; and a choice companion he is; only apt to get muzzed too soon. Come, come, let me fill you a glass.

Man. I'll drink none, sir; nor shall you drink any more; your father desires to see you instantly.

Cal. You'll let me finish the bottle?

Man. You must drink no more! He puts me beyond all patience. (*Aside.*)

Cal. Ecod! then I'll take it with me. (*Takes it up.*)

Man. Set it down, sir, (*Lays hold of him violently. Caleb, in a fright, drops and breaks the bottle.*)

Cal. There, (*looking at it,*) I have set it down, and am ready to go with you: we must be good friends again now we have cracked a bottle together. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Library.*

Captain Crevelt *discovered reading.*

Capt. C. (*Throws the book down.*) It is to no purpose; I cannot read. This adorable girl has taken such entire possession of my mind, it has not room for any other object. When Mr. Mandeville told me she were going to be married, and to whom, my hope died within me; for then I knew all hope was lost; but grant there were no dishonour, no ingratitude in harbouring a passion for a woman intended for the son of my benefactor; how should a low-born, abject thing, like me, aspire to one so much above him? Would not my birth be an insurmountable bar to my hopes? She comes this way—I would avoid her, but have not the power.

Enter Charlotte *with a volume of Shakspeare in her hand.*

Char. ——— "*She never told her love;*
But let concealment, like a worm i'th' bud,
Feed on her damask cheek: she pin'd in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy,
She sat like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief."

Bless me! Captain Crevelt, I didn't see you; I was quite absorbed in poor Viola's melancholy relation of undivulged love; this little picture is so highly finished, so delicately coloured with touches of the true pathetic, that I never read it without being wonderfully affected. Don't you think it one of the finest passages in all Shakspeare?

Capt. C. I so much admire it, madam, that I would give the world this moment for the pencil of its immortal writer, to paint one of our sex in the same state of uncomplaining despondency.

Char. I protest you spoke those last words with so serious an air, that I'm half inclined to think you are in love yourself: if that be the case, come, make me your confidante; I'll be as secret and as silent as Shakspeare's own marble Grief and Patience: I have the music of the Avon swan this moment at my heart, and could bear a lover whisper his tale under a tree in which the nightingale sung, and the moon tipped its boughs with silver.

Capt. C. You speak, madam, like one well versed in the passion.

Char. And is that strange, sir, when I come with Shakspeare in my hand; a master who teaches the whole history of the passions? His keen and ardent eye in a fine frenzy rolling, pierced into the secret chambers of the heart where the passions slumber; and awoke them, as he swept his lyre divine to all their changeful moods of pain and joy, till kindled up to madness, or to ecstacy; but, when he touches upon love, (though the flash be momentary,) it resembles lightning, suddenly rift-

ing the surface of the earth, and disclosing the radiant portal of a diamond quarry.

Capt. C. Were I to wish another laurel on the grave of Shakspeare, it should be planted by the hand of so charming a commentator.

Char. Sir, there is a laurel already planted on his grave by one of our sex, which will flourish till the spirit of his genius and his writings are no more remembered. But to the point, I have pronounced you in love; now let me know who your mistress is?

Capt. C. Madam, I dare not.

Char. Dare not! is that a soldier's phrase? Courage, man; there is nothing impossible to spirit and perseverance: besides, the more difficulties that lay in the road to your mistress, the better she'll like you for surmounting them.

Capt. C. But suppose there were a difficulty not to be surmounted?

Char. If your mistress does not dislike you, I know of no other difficulty which is not to be surmounted.

Capt. C. But even presuming that were the case, (which I have by no means reason to imagine,) I cannot think of her without condemning myself.

Char. Is she so much beneath you?

Capt. C. She's above my praise, and above my hopes.

Char. If she deserves all this adoration, she never will think herself above a man of merit.

Capt. C. Then, madam, you don't think marrying for love entirely out of fashion?

Char. I never should marry for anything else.

Capt. C. (*Aside.*) Then I'm undone; she loves the man for whom she is intended; and the assurance of it, that I have now received from her own lips, was meant as a reproach to a passion she has discovered, in spite of all my efforts to conceal it.

Char. (*Seeing his disorder.*) What's the matter, sir?

Capt. C. I fear, madam, I only interrupt your studies. (*Going.*)

Char. How can you talk so? I don't know any one whose conversation, on so short an acquaintance, is so agreeable to me; this last has been particularly interesting.

Capt. C. It is plain from the sarcasm of that reply, that she understands me; but I am justly punished for my apostacy to honour, in daring to think of her. (*Aside.*)

Char. He appears confused and embarrassed all of a sudden; I fear my vanity has betrayed me too far, and that I have been mistaken in the object of his affections. (*Aside.*)

Capt. C. I have not power to speak to her. (*Aside.*)

Char. No, no; I'm not the object. (*Aside.*)

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, the Colonel wishes to see you immediately.

Capt. C. What a release from torture! (*Aside.*) I shall wait on him.—[*Exit Servant.*]—Madam, your most obedient. [*Exit.*

Char. So, I have as good as told a man I like him, who, it is plain, is in love with another woman. Unhappy Charlotte!

Enter Sir Oliver Oldstock.

Sir. O. (*Speaking as he enters.*) Charlotte!

Char. Sir!

Sir O. Sir! How melancholy a monosyllable comes from a woman's mouth; it sounds as dismal as a single bell after a full peal. But, Charlotte, what's the matter? I never saw you so thoughtful before: I hope it is not your marriage that makes you uneasy.

Char. It never gave me an uneasy moment. I had made up my mind on the subject.

Sir O. Well, well; let the matter rest, then: however, I must confess I should like to see my girl well married and settled before I left the world.

Char. I don't think I shall ever marry.

Sir O. Never marry!

Char. No.

Sir O. Confound those monosyllables! Charlotte, let me have no more of them; the laconic style does not become you: I wonder from whom you take it; for my part I'm fond of the figure of amplification in discourse; and I'm sure your mother deals in an eloquence, copious at times, even to redundancy.

Char. Sir, I have not spirits for conversation.

Sir O. I am surprised at that, when you have everything your own way: you won't marry this body, nor you won't marry t'other; and I, like an easy, indulgent, old soul, humour you in everything, fond as I am of contradiction.

Char. Haven't you all's one as held me up to sale to the highest bidder? I was first intended for Mr. Mandeville, next destined to Colonel Talbot's new-found heir—

Sir O. His new-found bear you should say! But Charlotte, Charlotte, how uncandid you are! when I proposed the last match, I had not seen the man.

Char. Sir, you change your mind so often, and band me about in so extraordinary a manner, that I shall become a topic for public ridicule.

Sir O. Well, and if I do change my mind often, is it not for your good? As one project starts up in my mind better than another, in order to take advantage of that, I must naturally contradict myself. The Spanish proverb says, "A wise man often changes his mind, a fool never."

Char. According to that proverb, you should be a second Solomon. Who you intend for me next, I cannot possibly guess; but as I never will marry without your consent, I trust it will not be deemed undutiful, if I always retain a negative to myself, in a matter which so nearly concerns my happiness as the choice of a husband. [*Exit.*

Sir O. I fear, like all great projectors and politicians, I refine too much; I spin the wires that compose my nets so fine, that though they answer the purpose of deceiving the eye, when their strength is tried, a touch breaks them. What's to be done? she actually sets my authority at defiance. But this comes of rich uncles leaving fat legacies to their nieces; it converts a father into a cipher.

Enter Lady Oldstock *and* Harriet.

Lady O. Sir Oliver, Sir Oliver, the whole world is condemning you!

Sir O. So much the better; a quarter of the world never were right, but the whole is always wrong. You have brought me this good news, I suppose, knowing I was out of spirits.

Har. To contract for me, without my knowledge, and with an utter stranger, too! as if I had not the common privilege of a thinking, rational creature?

Sir O. Ecod! I think you have too much of that privilege: why, you ungrateful minx, do you fly in my face for endeavouring to get a count for you?

Lady O. A count! A strange kind of count; the fellow made love to me.

Sir O. Then, indeed, must he be a strange kind of count.

Lady O. I shall sue for a separate maintenance.

Har. And I shall sue for the little property my father left in his hands.

Sir O. D—n it, since you have begun, come, fire away from both sides, volley after volley; don't spare me, I'll make you raise the siege at last: contradiction's my element, as fire is the Salamander's. I can't have too much of it; my opinion is impregnable.

Har. It's in vain to speak to him.

Lady O. Speak to him, child! now he's in all his glory.

Sir O. Hobbes maintains that the whole world is in a state of warfare, and I believe him. (*Speaking to himself.*)

Lady O. I say, Sir Oliver, are you deaf?

Sir O. But it is a wise law in nature.

Har. Dear uncle, will you listen to me?

Sir O. Opposition calls forth the latent powers of the mind.

Lady O. Was there ever anything so provoking!

Sir O. Your greatest men have been formed by difficulties.

Har. Every moment is big with danger to my happiness.

Sir O. Methinks, I now resemble the memorable column of English infantry at Fontenoy, marching down between two forts, with all their batteries playing upon it: whiz, fly the small shot from the left; and bang go the great guns from the right; but on we march, (firm as a wedge,) without confusion, without disorder, without dismay; and quit the field of battle with honour. [*Exit.*

Har. My principal fear, is a quarrel between Count Pierpoint and Mr. Mandeville.

Lady O. You had better speak to his friend, Captain Crevelt; for my part, I have no influence with the Count.

Har. Dear aunt, how can you talk thus? So fine a woman will never lose her influence.

Lady O. Pray, Harriet, have you ever read that elegant fellow, St. Evremond's account of the lovely Ninon; she who retained her beauty and power of fascination to the age of eighty?

Har. I have never read St. Evremond, madam.

Lady O. Then you have read nothing: he was the intimate friend of Fontaine, Racine, and Corneille; all the great men of his time valued his friendship. But what most endears him to me, was his esteem for the lovely Ninon: I shall never forget one of her letters, in which she mentions her first wearing spectacles; but, said that charming woman, as I had always a grave look, spectacles become me.

Har. I declare, aunt, I have always thought the same of you, when I have seen you with your spectacles on.

Lady O. But you're mistaken, Harriet, if you suppose I wear spectacles from any necessity I have for them; I wear them by way of prevention.

Har. As I hope to live, here comes the Count; he'll tease me to death if I stay. (*Aside.*)—I never saw you look so well, aunt.

Lady O. You may go, Harriet, and find Captain Crevelt. [*Exit Harriet.*]—I'll once more try my influence with this Frenchman.

Enter Count Pierpoint.

Well, Count, I hope you have changed your opinion since our last conversation, and that you're become a little more anglicised.

Count P. Eh bien! Madam, je ne puis pas comprendre, I no understand.

Lady O. Why, we have changed characters; you can't understand me now, and I couldn't understand you before. But, Count, I'd advise you to consider you are in England; and tho' it may be the etiquette in France to treat a married lady with as much attention as a single, it is, in this country of jealous circumspection, very dangerous: it is almost sufficient to cause a separation.

Count P. Ah! madam, have a some pity on those whom your charms enslave; quand l'amour est dans le cœur; il fait l'esprit comme lui même; dat is, ven love is in de heart, he make a dey understand blind as himself, by gar.

Lady O. The French are certainly the most agreeable people in the world; if they transgress, they make reparation with so good a grace, that it's delightful to be on good or bad terms with them.

Count P. I made von grand faux-pas; but like good general, me vill profit by my loss. (*Aside.*)—Madam Oldstock is vat you call von grand bastion, or outwork: I will take a that first, et la petite citadel, Mademoiselle Harriet, follow of course, by gar.

Lady O. Well, Count, I forgive you; but it's on condition that you are more circumspect in future.

Enter Sir Oliver Oldstock.

Sir O. If I could lay my hand on Burn's Justice in the library, that would set me right: but I think it's a question for gentlemen of the common law.—Eh! what's all this? (*Seeing Count P. and Lady O.*)

Count P. Madam, permettez-moi baiser votre main; I must kiss a your von pretty hand in sign of reconciliation. (*Kissing her hand.*)

Sir O. I was thinking of the common law; but here promises to arise a question for gentlemen of the civil law. (*Aside.*)

Lady O. Jealousy, Count, is a tree of English growth.

Sir O. It may be a tree of English growth; but it's a tree would never flourish, if a taste for French gardening did not so often make the branches sprout. (*Aside.*)

Count P. Mon Dieu! quelle grand disproportion in your age and the Chevalier Oldstock!

Lady O. When a woman marries very young, my lord, a dozen years' difference is nothing in the age of a husband.

Sir O. A dozen years! D—e, if there's a dozen months between us. (*Aside.*)

Lady O. That's a most beautiful brilliant, Count, on your finger, I think I never saw so large a one: the rich cluster of its rays cast a light actually celestial.

Sir O. If that poor diamond could speak, now, perhaps we'd find it was not very celestially come by. (*Aside.*)

Count P. To reconcile me complete, permettez-moi to make you von present.

Lady O. Dear Count, I cannot think of accepting a ring of such immense value.—No, no, Count; I am not such an infant as to wish to possess everything that I admire.

Sir O. No, to be sure, you a'n't.—Why, Count, how is all this? (*Coming forward.*)

Lady O. Oh, heavens! Sir Oliver!

Sir O. Yes, my lady; does the great disproportion of our years frighten you?

Count P. Upon my vord, Monsieur Oldstock, this is not behave with your usual politesse.

Sir O. Why, what the devil, man! aren't you content with one of my chickens, but you must have my old hen into the bargain?

Lady O. Old hen!

Sir O. Yes, my lady; when I had you first you were no pullet.

Lady O. Now there will be no end to his suspicions.

Sir O. Ecod! I think this is putting suspicion out of the question. Well, my lady, what have you to say for yourself? You asked me if I were not deaf; now, are you dumb? D—n it, say something, if it's only to contradict me.

Count P. Monsieur Oldstock, je suis—I am your very good friend.

Sir O. You are, Count; and, what's more, I find you're my wife's friend.

Lady O. Sir Oliver, conscious as I am of the purity of my thoughts, I could look down with contempt on every extravagance to which your jealous temper hurries you; but when I consider how the fairest reputations are every day injured from the slightest foundations—if it should creep into the public prints—

Sir O. Then I'll give you a little comfort; nobody will believe it.

Lady O. The cool malignity of his temper is even more provoking than his jealousy—I can't bear to have been all my life reproached for nothing. [*Aside, and exit.*

Count P. Monsieur Oldstock—

Sir O. Count Pierpoint, no apologies: I am not at all angry with you, nor do I entertain any suspicion of my wife. Love of admiration is her ruling passion; and as long as she lives, she'll fancy herself an object of that admiration.

Count P. Vous savez très bien my passion pour Mademoiselle Harriet.

Sir O. I know everything. I now see your view, in all this attention to Lady Oldstock: you imprudently made her your enemy, not knowing her character; but you have very wisely rectified your mistake. You see, Count, I'm a keen old fellow; I haven't lived for nothing so many years in the world.

Count P. Mon Dieu! vous êtes un Machiavel.

Sir O. Come along, Count—but, before you go, how do you think your friend Colonel Talbot stands affected as to matrimony? Do you imagine, if a fine girl were thrown in his way, that he'd marry her?

Count P. Nothing more like, on my vord; il est un homme de galanterie; sans doute, he has a de son, if dat be no objection.

Sir O. Objection! he should marry for that very reason, and get more sons, if it were only to convince the world that he has mended his hand in the business. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*An Apartment at Mandeville's.*

Enter Harriet *and* Charlotte.

Har. I am half in love with Count Pierpoint for his noble behaviour. The moment matters were properly explained to him, he withdrew his claim instantly. Well, I never more will hear the French spoken ill of; they carry the point of honour to a pitch of heroism. But, Charlotte, what is the matter? Your spirits are intolerably depressed!

Char. You only fancy so, from the unusual gaiety of your own.

Har. I have a great mind to send Captain Crevelt to you; you are just fit company for each other: two moping, melancholy fools.

Char. From some conversation I have had with him, I take it that he is in love.

Har. And I fancy I have a fair friend much in the same situation.

Char. He leaves town to-day.

Har. Unless you issue your sovereign commands to the contrary.

Char. My sovereign commands! How you trifle: what influence have I over him?

Har. That influence which a beautiful woman will always have over a man of exquisite sensibility. Mandeville told me he was eternally talking of you.

Char. Talking of me! Lud, I wonder what the man can have to say about me?

Har. Oh! a thousand handsome things, I dare say: but if you wish to be satisfied as to the particulars, you may have them from the gentleman's own mouth, for here he comes; so I'll leave you together.

Char. Then you will be so ill natured?

Har. Good natured, sweet cousin! [*Exit.*

Char. Eternally talking of me! Whence, then, arose his sudden coldness and reserve, when I but too plainly discovered my partiality for him? Yet I may have been mistaken; a mind possessed of so much delicacy as his, might have deemed it criminal to address me on the score of love, at a time he thought I was intended for the son of his friend, Colonel Talbot. It is, it must be so; the pulses of my heart quicken at the thought—But he's here.

Enter Captain Crevelt.

Capt. C. Miss Oldstock, as I mean to quit town this evening, and possibly may never see you again, I am come to solicit the honour of a few minutes' conversation.

Char. Never see me again! I hope you are not going back to India.

Capt. C. No, madam; that is not my intention.

Char. Oh! then, I understand you; it is that compound of every female excellence, of whom you spoke to me in such raptures, who is the cause of your leaving us.

Capt. C. I own it, madam.

Char. But you talked of never seeing me again. Is your mistress that jealous creature as to exact such a promise from you?

Capt. C. No, madam; that is a punishment I voluntarily inflict upon myself.

Char. You do say the most gallant things, with the most sombre countenance. Your wit and your face, Captain Crevelt, are the diamond and its foil; the dark shade of the one, lends a more vivid glow to the other's sparkling brilliancy: what an alteration the presence of your mistress would make in your looks. Could you look thus in her presence?

Capt. C. In the present state of my heart, I could not look otherwise.

Char. No! not if she smiled upon you?

Capt. C. A smile from her would raise me from despair: but that, madam—Confusion! yonder I see Colonel Talbot; this is the second time to day he has found me in earnest conversation with her. (*Aside.*)

Char. I didn't think it possible, till now, Colonel Talbot could put me out of temper.

Capt. C. Will he not suspect that I am meanly stealing myself upon her affections, and attribute her dislike of his son to me?—But he comes; I cannot meet his eye in the present state of my feelings. (*Aside.*)—Adieu, dear Miss Oldstock!

Char. But are we never to meet again?

Capt. C. It is a sacrifice, madam, that pierces and widows my heart for ever; but honour and gratitude demand it. [*Exit.*

Enter Colonel Talbot.

Col. T. Wasn't that Captain Crevelt, Miss Oldstock, that parted from you?

Char. Yes, sir; he has just taken his leave of me, and said I shall never see him again.

Col. T. There is a refinement in Crevelt's temper, that to strangers makes his conduct, at times, appear very unaccountable; but I fancy I have discovered the cause of this extraordinary resolution.

Char. And surely, sir, you can prevail upon him to alter it?

Col. T. Then, my lovely girl wishes he should alter his resolution?

Char. Oh, sir! is it possible to be acquainted with so noble, so accomplished, so brave a youth, and not esteem him? Never see me more!—

Col. T. It is as I suspected; and, indeed, as I wish; for who but Crevelt is worthy of such a woman? (*Aside.*)—I hope, Miss Oldstock, you are now perfectly convinced, that I would not purchase the greatest earthly happiness at the price of your peace of mind: highly as my pride, and natural affection would be gratified to call you daughter, I trust I can turn my eye with manly firmness from the bright, the flattering prospect; and, resigned to the dispensations of a Power who never afflicts his creature but for wise and good purposes, point out a man in every respect but birth and fortune deserving of you.

Char. Birth and fortune, Colonel! despicable distinctions! When nature asserts her superior claims to reverence, by ennobling the spirit, how low it lays the insolence of ancestry, and humbles the vanity of wealth.

Col. T. Madam, your words penetrate my very soul; with an aching, joyless heart, I look back to those imaginary scenes of happiness fancy had painted in meeting with a son; the only pledge of love from the first object of my affections, and whose image still warms this desolated bosom. Birth! when I survey my own offspring, and behold poor Crevelt, I am ashamed to think so empty a thing as family pride had ever any influence over me.

Char. But you will prevail upon him to alter his resolution?

Col. T. On one condition, madam.

Char. What is that, Colonel?

Col. T. That you will receive him as my adopted son. Your father's objections I will remove, by making him your equal in fortune.

Char. I don't know how to thank you, Colonel; but, perhaps, he's already gone.

Col. T. Gone, without seeing me first; impossible! But what says my sweet girl to the proposal I have made her?

Char. You are so good, so disinterested, and so generous, that it is impossible not to acquiesce in any proposal of your's: but yet I will not make you an absolute promise, (mind that, Colonel,) till I find you have effectually accomplished my request, and induced Captain Crevelt to alter his resolution. [*Exit.*

Col. T. Luckily, Sir Oliver has taken a very great liking to him; and told me that he would insist upon his passing a few days at his house, previous to visiting his relations. Though Crevelt possesses the spirit of a lion, there is a gentleness and flexibility in his nature, which cannot resist solicitation from a friend. Oh! my heart, be still! though I am denied happiness in that quarter whence I fondly expected it, let me enjoy it as heaven thinks proper to bestow the boon, by exerting my best efforts to impart it to the truly deserving.

Enter COUNT PIERPOINT *and* MANDEVILLE.

Count P. J'espère, Monsieur Mandeville, you are perfectly satisfy: sur mon honneur, had I know Mademoiselle Harriet was engagé, I never would pay l'addresse.

Man. I believe it, Count; and hope you will forgive the warmth, I was at first betrayed into.

Count. P. Mon Dieu! il est l'effervescence d'un grande âme; no brave man ever resign sa maitresse avec sang froid.

Col. T. Now, Mandeville, to completely remove your fears in regard to Harriet, know, I have made your peace with her uncle—would you believe it? he actually proposed his daughter to me—however by the dint of argument, added to the influence of an old friendship, I at last brought him to reason.

Enter SIR OLIVER OLDSTOCK.

Sir O. Colonel, Colonel, is this strict observance of treaty? the carriages are waiting for us at the door. Were we not all to set off for my house immediately? did you not promise to pass ten days with me when you had contradicted me into consent at last?

Count P. Monsieur Oldstock, your niece was very pretty, to be sure; mais, mon Dieu! votre fille be very pretty, aussi: me understand she vill not marry young Monsieur Talbot, and mon ami, the Colonel, vill not have her: eh, bien! vat you say to me for von husband?

Sir O. With all my heart and soul, Count! I don't know a French gentleman of a long time I have taken such a liking to. D—e! if you haven't a fine roast-beef countenance.

Col. T. I fancy, Count, that lady's affections are also engaged.

Count P. Je suis très malheureux! all de English lady be engaged! but me be not surprised; for if de foreigner set so much value on de English lady, vat must their own countrymen, who know them better, do?

Sir O. Why, what the deuce, Colonel, is all this? You won't marry my daughter yourself; you won't suffer your son, whatever her inclinations may be, to marry her; and now you put the Count against her.

Col. T. Will you leave the lady to her own choice?

Sir O. The worst of it is, I must do that. Count, a word in your ear: to her yourself; you're a devilish straight, well-looking-fellow; no appearance of frogs about you, except upon your coat. I should like to see an union between France and England, if it were only because it has been so long thought a contradiction in politics.

Col. T. How unsubstantial are all the prospects of man, in whatever hope flatters him with happiness! this unhappy boy distracts me!

Sir O. D—e! if I wouldn't send him down into Wales or Yorkshire; for about fifteen pounds a-year, you may get him decently boarded and clad, and educated into the bargain.

Enter Servant.

Serv. I have been in search of Mr. Talbot, sir, since you spoke to me; and have just heard that he is gone to one Jacob Wilkins's, an innkeeper, near Smithfield.

Col. T. I am exposed you see, already.

Sir O. It's your own fault if you continue to be exposed. Come along, Colonel; yonder I see Captain Crevelt putting the women into the carriages. We'll drive round by this Wilkins's, and take this young mohawk by surprise: the moment you get possession of him, banish him into Wales.

Col. T. I will myself go in person to Wilkins's; and from his own lips learn every particular respecting this unhappy youth, from the hour I left him in his care; and as you propose going home

that way, Sir Oliver, I will trespass so far upon your patience as to request you will wait for me, whilst I make this inquiry.

Man. Dear sir, don't make yourself so unhappy.

Col. T. What is there wealth can purchase I cannot possess? My feelings are at once a satire and a lesson to avarice. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room at Jacob Wilkins's.*

JOHNSON *and* MRS. WILKINS *discovered at tea.*

Mrs. W. I'm sure I shall never forget the first time I was in this room; where you see Mr. Wilkins has his honour the Colonel's picture hung up. Dear heart, what a handsome man he is! It's a great pity he does not marry.

Johns. He's very much altered. Consider, it's many years since that picture was painted; his face is parched to the complexion of an old drum head, and his hair is perfectly silver.

Mrs. W. What effect silver hair may have upon your great ladies I will not pretend to say; but this I'll swear to, bait your hook properly with gold, and a poor girl is a trout you may take with a single hair of any colour. If it wasn't for his money, do you think I'd ever have married old Jacob Wilkins?

Johns. Why, no, I hardly think you would; but why, my dear creature, has his name escaped your lips? Should he possess such a treasure! the man worthy of you should always meet you with the ardour of a lover, and dart, as I do, with transport into your arms.

Enter BETTY.

Betty. Oh! madam, madam! my master is come home, and is raving like mad at your leaving the bar, and drinking tea up-stairs.

Mrs. W. He doesn't know I have anybody with me?

Betty. Lard! ma'am, to be sure he doesn't; I told him you were not well, and that you found the bar too cold for you.

Mrs. W. You're an excellent girl.

Johns. How the devil will you get me out?

Betty. I hear his cough at the foot of the stairs: dear madam, he's coming up.

Johns. 'Sdeath! I'll run and shut myself up in that little room yonder.

Mrs. W. By no means! that's our own bedchamber; his bureau is in it; and as he pays his brewer to-day, perhaps it's there he's going now for money.

Betty. I have it, madam; I'll let down this window-curtain, and the gentleman may get behind it; if my master asks why it is down, you may say you were so ill, the light was too much for you. (*Drops the window-curtain before Johnson.*)

Mrs. W. Such a servant is worth her weight in gold.

Betty. Here, madam, tie this handkerchief about your head; appear very bad, indeed. There, madam, let him come now when he pleases, we are ready for him. [*Exit.*

Enter WILKINS *and* AMBER.

Wilk. So, Mr. Amber, you have a curiosity to see the upper part of my house: you can't think how pleasant it is; my wife can tell you what a prospect there is on my upper story.

Amber. Poor Mrs. Wilkins is quite muffled up: she's very bad, poor woman; I'm sorry we disturbed her.

Wilk. Why, Fanny, my love, what's the matter? you were very well when I went out.

Mrs. W. I have been seized all of a sudden, with such a terrible pain on one side of my face, I can hardly get my words out.

Wilk. I am sorry to hear this, Fanny; but what wiseacre has let this curtain down? I can't bear to shut out the light of a fine day.

Mrs. W. Has the brute a mind to be the death of me? (*Seizing him by the arm.*)

Wilk. Will it do you any good to keep me in the dark?

Mrs. W. To be sure it will, when I can't bear the light.

Amber. Friend Wilkins, friend Wilkins, the light is too much for her.

Mrs. W. You're a considerate man, Mr. Amber, and, I dare say, make an excellent husband.

Wilk. Well, well; then let the curtain remain down. Come, Fanny, give your old Jacob a kiss.

Mrs. W. I'm too fond of you, Jacob, and you take advantage of that.

Wilk. No, but I don't. Kiss me again, you fond fool, it will do you good.

Amber. Ah! you're a happy couple; but you take the right method to be so, by giving way to one another.

Wilk. But now we are up stairs, friend Amber, sit down, and I'll go bring some money out of the next room, and pay you.

Mrs. W. I beg of you, Jacob, to take him down stairs and pay him; even your talking sets my head distracted.

Wilk. (*Apart to Mrs. W.*) My dear, I sha'n't be two minutes settling with him; it will affront him if you turn him out of the room; you shall have the place to yourself immediately. [*Exit.*

Re-enter BETTY.

Betty. (*Apart to Mrs. W.*) Madam, you're undone, if you don't come down stairs immediately! Ned, the new waiter, saw Mr. Johnson, and he as good as told me he'd acquaint my master.

Mrs. W. (*Apart to Betty.*) What shall I do? I'm afraid to leave the room.

Betty. (*Apart to Mrs. W.*) You needn't stop a minute; it's only squeezing Ned's hand, and slipping a sly half-guinea into it, and all will be right.

Mrs. W. (*Apart to Betty.*) Oh! Betty, I wish he was well out of the house. You'll excuse me, Mr. Amber, a little; I'm wanted down stairs.

[*Exit with Betty.*

Amber. Don't notice me, child, business must be minded: but let me see; suppose I sign my receipt, and have it ready for him. (*Taking out his pocket-book and ink-horn.*)

Enter WILKINS.

Wilk. Here is the money, my old boy; have you got your receipt ready?

Amber. I was going to sign it; but my eyes are so dim, I can't see with that curtain down.

Wilk. As my wife's not here to complain of the light, I'll draw it up for you. (*Draws up the curtain.*)

Amber. That will do; I have light enough, now.

Wilk. And I have too much—Oh! the Jezabel.

Enter MRS. WILKINS.

Mrs. W. Ruined!

Amber. My dear Mrs. Wilkins, I beg ten thousand pardons for letting so much light into the room, but I declare I could not see to write my receipt.

Wilk. Well, Mr. Johnson, what brought you here? what have you to say for yourself? are you come to rob my house?

Amber. Oh, ho! I fear the dimness of my eyes have made others too clear-sighted. But, friend Wilkins, don't be too hasty in judging.

Wilk. 'Sdeath and fire, man! sha'n't I believe my own eyes?

Amber. Not always.

Wilk. You're devilish considerate!

Amber. But we are apt to be suspicious at times. I'll wish you a good evening. There is my receipt: the fondest couples will spar now and then; but I never like to meddle in family quarrels. [*Exit.*

Wilk. Go, madam, pack up your alls, and leave my house immediately; if you are in want of a morsel of bread, it would give me pleasure to refuse it to you. As for you, sir, I'll take care your business shall be done with Colonel Talbot. I'll see you both beggars, and that will be some satisfaction to me.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Colonel Talbot is coming up stairs, sir, to speak to you.

Johns. Confusion! I'm undone!

Enter COLONEL TALBOT.

Col. T. Johnson here!

Wilk. Yes, sir, Johnson; your worthy gentleman is here on a visit to that wretch my wife.

Mrs. W. Wretch, Mr. Wilkins!

Wilk. Yes, madam; an ungrateful wretch.

Col. T. I'm sorry, Johnson, for this. I was given to understand you were come in search of my son.

Mrs. W. Wretch! I'll discover all, if I'm ruined for ever. (*Aside.*)—He's not your son, sir! (*Going up to Col. T.*)

Wilk. Devil, devil! what is she going to say? (*Aside.*)

Col. T. Not my son! Speak again, woman.

Wilk. But, dear Colonel, surely, you won't believe what this wicked woman will say?

Col. T. Away, villain! and let me hear her. Alarmed nature stirs up in my heart, and opens a thousand ears to listen to her.

Mrs. W. He lost your son, sir, when he was a boy of twelve years old; and you may be sure, sir, it wasn't the kindest usage made the child leave him. The booby he palmed upon you, is his own.

Col. T. Unprincipled, inhuman villain! let me hear the whole truth from your own lips; or, by every power that's sacred and divine, this moment is your last.

Wilk. Dear sir, put up your sword, and I'll tell you everything. What she says is partly true: your son strayed from me when he was about twelve years old; but had he been my own, I couldn't have used him better: as a proof of it, his mother, (in her last illness,) came, as she often did, privately to see him; and was so well pleased with my wife's and my treatment of her son, that she gave me a fifty-pound bank-note. I shall never forget the day; it was the last time I ever saw her: she hung a small picture of herself, set in gold, about the child's neck, and wept bitterly over him.

Col. T. Can you produce that picture?

Wilk. Your son took it with him. He was so fond of it, I could never keep it out of his hands but by locking it up; which I sometimes did, as the severest of all punishments I could inflict upon him.

Col. T. I must have better proof this tale is true, before I let you escape that justice I fear is due to your wickedness. Johnson, take him from my sight, and let him be secured: I cannot bear to look at him.—Tell the company waiting for me in carriages at the door, to come in; for I am so agitated, and anxious for more particulars, I cannot quit this detested spot.

Johns. They are here, sir.

[*Exeunt all but Col. T.*

Enter CAPTAIN CREVELT, MANDEVILLE, COUNT PIERPOINT, CHARLOTTE, HARRIET, SIR OLIVER OLDSTOCK, *and* LADY OLDSTOCK.

Capt. C. Dear sir, what is the matter? Observing a confusion in the house, immediately after you went in, we were alarmed for your safety.

Col. T. Oh! Crevelt, I am the unhappiest of fathers! That creature whom you all suppose my son, is not so.

Char. Good fortune be praised!

Col. T. He's son to the fellow who keeps this house: he says, my poor child strayed from him when a boy; but this tale is so improbable, that I rather fear he has fallen a victim to this fellow's villany and avarice.

Capt. C. Dear sir, compose yourself; and hope human nature cannot be so depraved. It wrings my heart to see you in this distress. But who is this villain?

Col. T. His name is Wilkins.—When I committed my child to his care, he lived at Henly: and he pretends he lost him at twelve years old; and, oh! agony to think! if he, indeed, be living, he is at this moment a wandering outcast and a beggar.

Capt. C. Merciful heaven! what do I hear? Can it be possible! Shall I, in my loved and honoured patron, find a fond and living father? Sir, did that man lose a son of your's at twelve years of age?

Col. T. Yes, Crevelt; I have no son but you, now.

Capt. C. I am your son, sir; your happy son! that son you lost.

Col. T. You! you, Crevelt?

Capt. C. Yes, sir: the veteran, whose name I bear, took me with him, at the age you mention, from Henly; where I lived with the man you have just named, whom I always thought my father. It was the pride of poor Crevelt's heart to have me believed his son: I bore his name, and publicly acknowledged him as my father; for you, sir, could not have loved me better: his dying request to me was, still to retain the name of Crevelt, and never forget the man who made me a soldier.

Col. T. My son! my son! the hand of Providence has surely directed every circumstance of your life: you were brought to me a stranger and a child; I became your parent by resistless instinct: in battle once I owed my life to you, and now a second time you save it.

Char. Oh! Harriet, there is a chord of delight in my heart never touched before: and, surely, he who made that heart, now moves its springs to ecstacy by the finger of an angel.

Col. T. He talked of your taking with you a picture of your mother; had you ever any such thing?

Capt. C. I have it still, sir; and ever wore it next my heart. (*Producing the picture from his bosom.*) You see the frame is shattered; it was by a musket-ball, the day every body thought I were killed.

Col. T. It is, indeed, your mother! and see here those specks under the eye; are they my child's blood, or the tears of a fond parent?

Johns. (*To Caleb, without.*) You must not come in; I have already explained everything sufficiently.

Enter Caleb *and* Johnson.

Cal. I tell you I will come in. Zounds! will nobody father me?

Col. T. Young man, you have been deceived; you are Wilkins's son, not mine.

Cal. Pooh, pooh! father, do you think I know no better?

Johns. If you don't come out this moment, and no longer disturb my master, I'll take you by the shoulder.

Cal. Why, here's a fellow for you, forgets he is talking to a captain!

Col. T. That is a rank you are so utterly unfit for, that it would only expose you to unhappiness and ridicule; therefore, your commission shall be sold, and, (for being one day my son,) the purchase-money shall be appropriated to setting you up in business.

Johns. Well, what keeps you now?

Cal. You are in a devil of a hurry, Mr. Johnson! I find I must put up with old Jacob again. (*Aside.*) But let me ask you one question, am not I to be entitled to half-pay for my services.

Johns. You shall have full pay, if you don't go about your business. (*Shakes his cane at him.*)

Cal. Well, if I can't be a half-pay captain, I'll be a no-pay captain: for once a captain, and always a captain. [*Exit.*

Sir O. Captain Crevelt,—I beg your pardon,—Captain Talbot, give me your hand; you want nothing now but a wife, and if my daughter Charlotte—

Count P. Eh bien! Monsieur Chevalier, you have forgot?

Sir O. Why, no, Count, I have not forgot; but you must know, whatever my respect for you may be, there is not that man living whose alliance I so much desire as Colonel Talbot's; besides, I understand there is another branch of the family of my mind.

Count P. Chevalier, I love and respect the English; and, by gar, me vil have a wife among you.

Man. It is not in words to express my pleasure: to make a bosom friend, and find a near relation, in less time than others form a common acquaintance, overflows my heart with transport.

Lady O. I could wish also to shew this affecting discovery touches me, if I was not apprehensive, Sir Oliver, of your unfortunate suspicious temper.

Sir O. Captain Talbot, be so good as to step this way: do give my wife a kiss; I know, my dear, your lips itch for it; and, with all her faults, believe me, she has a heart that beats in unison to the feelings of all present, and a tear for misery and friendship.

Col. T. Miss Oldstock, it is your father's wish as well as mine, to unite our families; now that I have a son I can propose to you, there is only your acceptance of him necessary to make me happy.

Char. Why, sir, if the gentleman has but courage to speak for himself—

Sir O. As I don't expect the pleasure of contradiction from either party on this occasion, I'll join their hands, (*joining their hands,*) without waiting for an answer. There, Colonel, you are now one of my family.

Col. T. That assurance, Sir Oliver, seals and completes my happiness. You, Mandeville, shall share a portion of my fortune, as a son; and may happiness still wait on you and your lovely Harriet. And now (*addressing the audience*) if this court-martial, (to whom we appeal,) acquit us with honour, I shall bless the hour my boy said—"He would be a soldier." [*Exeunt.*

THE HONEY-MOON;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JOHN TOBIN.



Act V.—Scene 3.

CHARACTERS.

DUKE OF ARANZA	ROLANDO	CAMPILLO	VOLANTE
COUNT MONTALBAN	LAMPEDO	LOPEZ	ZAMORA
BALTHAZAR	JAQUES	JULIANA	HOSTESS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Madrid.*

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA, *and* COUNT MONTALBAN, *followed by a Servant.*

Duke. (*Speaking to Servant.*) This letter you will give my steward; this
To my old tenant, Lopez. Use despatch, sir;
Your negligence may ruin an affair
Which I have much at heart. [*Exit Servant.*
Why, how now, Count!
You look but dull upon my wedding day,
Nor show the least reflection of that joy [friend.
Which breaks from me, and should light up my
Count. If I could set my features to my tongue,
I'd give your highness joy. Still as a friend,
Whose expectation lags behind his hopes,
I wish you happy.
Duke. You shall see me so.
Is not the lady I have chosen fair?
Count. Nay, she is beautiful.
Duke. Of a right age? [of womanhood.
Count. In the fresh prime of youth, and bloom
Duke. A well-proportioned form, and noble pre-
Count. True. [sence?
Duke. Then her wit;—Her wit is admirable!
Count. There is a passing shrillness in her voice.
Duke. Has she not wit?
Count. A sharp-edged tongue, I own;
But uses it as bravoes do their swords—
Not for defence, but mischief. Then, her gentleness!
You had almost forgot to speak of that.
Duke. Ay, there you touch me! Yet, though she be prouder
Than the vexed ocean at its topmost height,
And ev'ry breeze will chafe her to a storm,
I love her still the better. Some prefer
Smoothly o'er an unwrinkled sea to glide;
Others to ride the cloud-aspiring waves,
And hear, amid the reading tackle's roar,
The spirit of an equinoctial gale.
What, though a patient and enduring lover—
Like a tame spaniel, that, with crouching eye,
Meets buffets, and caresses—I have ta'en,
With humble thanks, her kindness and her scorn;
Yet, when I am her husband, she shall feel
I was not born to be a woman's slave!
Can you be secret?
Count. You have found me so
In matters of some moment.
Duke. Listen, then:
I have prepar'd a penance for her pride,
To which a cell and sackcloth, and the toils
Of a barefooted pilgrimage, were pastime.
As yet she knows me, as I truly am,
The Duke Aranza: in which character
I have fed high her proud and soaring fancy
With the description of my state and fortunes,
My princely mansions, my delicious gardens,
My carriages, my servants, and my pomp.
Now, mark the contrast. In the very height
And fullest pride of her ambitious hopes,
I take her to a miserable hut,
(All things are well digested for the purpose),
Where, throwing off the title of a duke,
I will appear to her a low-born peasant.
There, with coarse raiment, household drudgery,
Laborious exercise, and cooling viands,
I will so lower her distemper'd blood,
And tame the devil in her, that, before
We have burnt out our happy honey-moon,
She, like a well-train'd hawk, shall, at my whistle,

Quit her high flights, and perch upon my finger,
To wait my bidding.
Count. Most excellent! A plot of rare invention!
Duke. When, with a bold hand, I have weeded out
The rank growth of her pride, she'll be a garden
Lovely in blossom, rich in fruit; till then,
An unprun'd wilderness. But to your business.
How thrives your suit with her fair sister, Count?
Count. The best advancement I can boast of in it
Is, that it goes not backward. She's a riddle,
Which he that solv'd the sphinx's, would die guessing.
If I but mention love, she starts away,
And wards the subject off with so much skill,
That whether she be hurt or tickled most,
Her looks leave doubtful. Yet I fondly think
She keeps me (as the plover from her nest
Fearful misleads the trav'ller) from the point
Where live her warmest wishes, that are breath'd
For me in secret.
Duke. You've her father's voice? [evening,
Count. Yes; and we have concerted, that this
Instead of Friar Dominic, her confessor,
Who from his pious office is disabled
By sudden sickness, I should visit her;
And, as her mind's physician feel the pulse
Of her affection.
Duke. May you quickly find
Her love to you the worst of her offences!
For then her absolution will be certain.
Farewell! I see Rolando.
He is a common railer against women;
And, on my wedding day, I will hear none
Blaspheme the sex. Besides, as once he fail'd
In the same suit that I have thriven in,
'Twill look like triumph. 'Tis a grievous pity
He follows them with such a settled spleen,
For he has noble qualities.
Count. Most rare ones—
A happy wit, and independent spirit.
Duke. And then he is a brave, too.
Count. Of as tried a courage
As ever walk'd up to the roaring throats
Of a deep rang'd artillery; and planted,
'Midst fire and smoke, upon an enemy's wall,
The standard of his country.
Duke. Farewell, Count.
Count. Success attend your schemes!
Duke. Fortune crown yours! [*Exit.*

Enter Rolando.

Count. Signor Rolando, you seem melancholy.
Rol. As an old cat in the mumps. I met three women—
I marvel much they suffer them to walk
Loose in the streets, whilst other untam'd monsters
Are kept in cages—three loud talking women!
They were discoursing of the newest fashions,
And their tongues went like—I have since been thinking,
What most that active member of a woman
Of mortal things resembles.
Count. Have you found it? [smoke-jack!
Rol. Umph! not exactly—something like a
For it goes ever without winding up:
But that wears out in time—there fails the simile.
Next I bethought me of a water-mill;
But that stands still on Sundays; woman's tongue
Needs no reviving sabbath—and besides,
A mill, to give it motion, waits for grist;
Now, whether she has aught to say or no,
A woman's tongue will go for exercise.
In short, I came to this conclusion:
Most earthly things have their similitudes,
But a woman's tongue is yet incomparable.—
Was't not the duke that left you?
Count. 'Twas.
Rol. He saw me,
And hurried off!
Count. Ay! 'twas most wise in him,
To shun the bitter flowing of your gall.
You know he's on the brink of matrimony.
Rol. Why now, in reason, what can he expect?
To marry such a woman!
A thing so closely pack'd with her own pride,
She has no room for any thought of him.
Why, she ne'er threw a word of kindness at him,
But when she quarrell'd with her monkey. Then,
As he with nightly minstrelsy dol'd out
A lying ballad to her peerless beauty,
Unto his whining lute, and, at each turn,
Sigh'd like a paviour, the kind lady, sir,
Would lift the casement up—to laugh at him,
And vanish like a shooting star; whilst he
Stood gazing on the spot whence she departed:
Then, stealing home, went supperless to bed,
And fed all night upon her apparition.
Now, rather than espouse a thing like this,
I'd wed a bear that never learnt to dance,
Though her first hug were mortal.
Count. Peace, Rolando!
You rail at women as priests cry down pleasure;
Who, for the penance which they do their tongues,
Give ample licence to their appetites.
Come, come, however you may mask your nature,
I know the secret pulses of your heart
Beat towards them still. A woman hater! Pshaw!
A young and handsome fellow, and a brave one—
Rol. Go on.
Count. Had I a sister, mother, nay, my grandam,
I'd no more trust her in a corner with thee,
Than cream within the whiskers of a cat. [right,
Rol. Right! I should beat her. You are very
I have a sneaking kindness for the sex;
And, could I meet a reasonable woman,
Fair without vanity, rich without pride,
Discreet though witty, learn'd, yet very humble;
That has no ear for flattery, no tongue
For scandal: one who never reads romances;
Who loves to listen better than to talk,
And rather than be gadding would sit quiet;
Hates cards and cordials, goes ill-dress'd to church;—
I'd marry certainly. You shall find two such,
And we'll both wed together.
Count. You are merry.
Where shall we dine together?
Rol. Not to-day.
Count. Nay, I insist.
Rol. Where shall I meet you, then?
Count. Here, at the Mermaid.
Rol. I don't like the sign;
A mermaid is half woman.
Count. Pshaw, Rolando!
You strain this humour beyond sense or measure.
Rol. Well, on condition that we're very private,
And that we drink no toast that's feminine,
I'll waste some time with you.
Count. Agreed.

Enter Zamora, *disguised.*

Rol. Go on, then;
I will but give directions to my page,
And follow you.
Count. A pretty smooth-fac'd boy!
Rol The lad is handsome; and, for one so young—
Save that his heart will flutter at a drum,
And he would rather eat his sword than draw it—
He is the noblest youth in Christendom,
The kindest and most gentle. Talk of woman!
Not all the rarest virtues of the sex,
If any cunning chemist could compound them,
Would make a tythe of his. When before Tunis
I got well scratch'd for leaping on the walls
Too nimbly, that same boy attended me,
'Twould bring an honest tear into thine eye,
To tell thee how, for ten days, without sleep,
And almost nourishment, he waited on me;

Cheer'd the dull time, by reading merry tales;
And when my festering body smarted most,
Sweeter than a fond mother's lullaby
Over her peevish child, he sung to me,
That the soft cadence of his dying tones
Dropp'd like an oily balsam on my wounds,
And breath'd an healing influence throughout me.
But this is womanish! Order our dinner,
And I'll be with you presently.
Count. I will not fail. [*Exit Count.*

ZAMORA *comes forward.*

Rol. The wars are ended, boy.
Zam. I'm glad of that, sir. [master.
Rol. You should be sorry, if you love your
Zam. Then I am very sorry.
Rol. We must part, boy!
Zam. Part?
Rol. I am serious.
Zam. Nay, you cannot mean it.
Have I been idle, sir, or negligent?
Saucy I'm sure I have not. If aught else,
It is my first fault; chide me gently for it—
Nay, heavily; but do not say, we part!
Rol. I'm a disbanded soldier, without pay;
Fit only now with rusty swords and helmets
To hang up in the armoury, till the wars
New-burnish me again; so poor, indeed,
I can but leanly cater for myself,
Much less provide for thee.
Zam. Let not that
Divide us, sir; thought of how I far'd
Never yet troubled me, and shall not now.
Indeed, I never follow'd you for hire,
But for the simple and the pure delight
Of serving such a master. If we must part,
Let me wear out my service by degrees;
To-day omit some sweet and sacred duty,
Some dearer one to-morrow: slowly thus
My nature may be wean'd from her delight:
But suddenly to quit you, sir! I cannot!
I should go broken-hearted.
Rol. Pshaw, those tears!
Well, well, we'll talk of this some other day.
I dine with Count Montalban at the Mermaid;
In the mean time, go, and amuse yourself
With what is worthiest note in that fam'd city.
But hark, Eugenio! 'Tis a wicked place;
You'll meet (for they are weeds of ev'ry soil)
Abundance here of—women; keep aloof!
For they are like the smooth, but brittle, ice,
That tempts th' unpractis'd urchin to his ruin.
Keep aloof, boy! keep aloof!
They are like comets, to be wonder'd at,
But not approach'd. Go not within their reach.
[*Exit Rolando.*

Zam. Doubt me not, sir.
What a hard fate is mine! to follow thus
With love a gentleman that scorns my sex,
And swears no great or noble quality
Ever yet liv'd in woman! When I read to him
The story of Lucretia, or of Portia,
Or other glorious dame, or some rare virgin,
Who, cross'd in love, has died, 'mid peals of laugh-
He praises the invention of the writer; [ter,
Or, growing angry, bids me shut the book,
Nor with such dull lies wear his patience out.
What opposition has a maid like me
To turn the headstrong current of his spleen!
For though he sets off with a lavish tongue
My humble merits, thinking me a boy,
Yet, should I stand before his jaundic'd sight
A woman, all that now is fair in me
Might turn to ugliness; all that is good
Appear the smooth gloss of hypocrisy:
Yet, I must venture the discovery,
Though, 'tis a fearful hazard. This perplexity
Of hopes and fears makes up too sad a life;
I will or lose him quite or be his wife. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in Balthazar's House.*

Enter VOLANTE *and* BALTHAZAR.

Balth. Not yet apparel'd?
Vol. 'Tis her wedding-day, sir:
On such occasions women claim some grace.
Balth. How bears she
The coming of her greatness?
Vol. Bravely, sir.
Instead of the high honours that await her,
I think that, were she now to be enthron'd,
She would become her coronation:
For, when she has adjusted some stray lock,
Or fix'd at last some sparkling ornament,
She views her beauty with collected pride,
Musters her whole soul in her eyes, and says,
"Look I not like an empress?" But, she comes.

Enter JULIANA, *in her wedding dress.*

Jul. Well, sir, what think you? do I to the life
Appear a duchess, or will the people say,
She does but poorly play a part which nature
Never design'd her for? But, where's the duke?
Balth. Not come yet.
Jul. How! not come? the duke not come!
Vol. Patience, sweet sister; oft without a mur-
It has been his delight to wait for you. [mur.
Jul. It was his duty. Man was born to wait
On woman, and attend her sov'reign pleasure!
This tardiness upon his wedding-day
Is but a sorry sample of obedience.
Balth. Obedience, girl!
Jul. Ay, sir, obedience. [make
Vol. Why, what a wire-drawn puppet you will
The man you marry! I suppose, ere long,
You'll chuse how often he shall walk abroad
For recreation; fix his diet for him;
Bespeak his clothes, and say on what occasions
He may put on his finest suit.
Jul. Proceed. [friends,
Vol. Keep all the keys, and when he bids his
Mete out a modicum of wine to each.
Had you not better put him on a livery
At once, and let him stand behind your chair?
Why, I would rather wed a man of dough,
Such as some spinster, when the pye is made,
To amuse her childish fancy, kneads at hazard
Out of the remnant paste—a paper man,
Cut by a baby. Heavens preserve me ever
From that dull blessing—an obedient husband!
Jul. And make you an obedient wife! a thing
For lordly man to vent his humours on;
A dull domestic drudge. To be abus'd
Or fondled as the fit may work upon him:
"If you think so, my dear;" and, "As you please;"
And, "You know best;" even when he nothing knows.
I have no patience—that a free-born woman
Should sink the high tone of her noble nature
Down to a slavish whisper, for that compound
Of frail mortality they call a man,
And give her charter up to make a tyrant!
Balth. You talk it most heroically. Pride
May be a proper bait to catch a lover,
But, trust me, daughter, 'twill not hold a husband.
Jul. Leave that to me. And what should I have
If I had fish'd with your humility? [caught
Some pert apprentice, or rich citizen.
Who would have bought me? Some poor gentleman,
Whose high patrician blood would have descended
To wed a painter's daughter, and—her ducats.
I felt my value, and still kept aloof;
Nor stoop'd my eye till I had met the man,
Pick'd from all Spain, to be my husband, girl:
And him I have so manag'd, that he feels
I have conferr'd an honour on his house,
By coyly condescending to be his. (*Knocking.*)
Balth. He comes.
Vol. Smooth your brow, sister.

Jul. For a man!
He must be one not made of mortal clay, then.

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA *and two Attendants.*

Oh! you are come, sir? I have waited for you!
Is this your gallantry? at such a time, too?
Duke. I do entreat your pardon—if you knew
The pressing cause—
Vol. Let me entreat for him.
Balth. Come, girl, be kind.
Jul. Well, sir, you are forgiven.
Duke. You are all goodness; let me on this hand—
(*Taking her hand, which she withdraws.*)
Jul. Not yet, sir; 'tis a virgin hand as yet,
And my own property: forbear awhile,
And, with this humble person, 'twill be yours.
Duke. Exquisite modesty! Come, let us on!
All things are waiting for the ceremony;
And, till you grace it, Hymen's wasting torch
Burns dim and sickly. Come, my Juliana. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Cottage.*

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA, *leading in Juliana.*

Duke. You are welcome home.
Jul. Home! you are merry; this retired spot
Would be a palace for an owl!
Duke. 'Tis ours.
Jul. Ay, for the time we stay in it.
Duke. By heaven,
This is the noble mansion that I spoke of!
Jul. This! You are not in earnest, though you bear it
With such a sober brow. Come, come, you jest.
Duke. Indeed I jest not; were it ours in jest,
We should have none, wife.
Jul. Are you serious, sir?
Duke. I swear, as I'm your husband, and no duke.
Jul. No duke!
Duke. But of my own creation, lady.
Jul. Am I betray'd? Nay, do not play the fool!
It is too keen a joke.
Duke. You'll find it true.
Jul. You are no duke, then?
Duke. None.
Jul. Have I been cozen'd? (*Aside.*)
And have you no estate, sir?
No palaces, nor houses?
Duke. None but this:
A small snug dwelling, and in good repair.
Jul. Nor money, nor effects?
Duke. None, that I know of.
Jul. And the attendants that have waited on us?
Duke. They were my friends; who, having done my business,
Are gone about their own.
Jul. Why, then, 'tis clear. (*Aside.*)
That I was ever born! What are you, sir?
Duke. I am an honest man, that may content you:
Young, nor ill-favour'd. Should not that content you,
I am your husband, and that must content you.
Jul. I will go home! (*Going.*)
Duke. You are at home, already. (*Staying her.*)
Jul. I'll not endure it! But, remember this—
Duke, or no duke, I'll be a duchess, sir!
Duke. A duchess! you shall be queen, to all
Who, of their courtesy, will call you so.
Jul. And I will have attendance.
Duke. So you shall,
When you have learnt to wait upon yourself.
Jul. To wait upon myself! must I bear this?
I could tear out my eyes, that bade you woo me,
And bite my tongue in two, for saying yes!
Duke. And if you should, 'twould grow again.
I think, to be an honest yeoman's wife
(For such, my would-be duchess, you will find me,)
You were cut out by nature.
Jul. You will find then,
That education, sir, has spoilt me for it.
Why! do you think I'll work?
Duke. I think 'twill happen, wife.
Jul. What! rub and scrub
Your noble palace clean?
Duke. Those taper fingers
Will do it daintily.
Jul. And dress your victuals
(If there be any)? Oh! I could go mad.
Duke. And mend my hose, and darn my night-caps neatly;
Wait, like an echo, till you're spoken to—
Jul. Or, like a clock, talk only once an hour?
Duke. Or like a dial; for that quietly
Performs its work, and never speaks at all.
Jul. To feed your poultry and your hogs! oh, monstrous!
And when I stir abroad, on great occasions,
Carry a squeaking tithe pig to the vicar;
Or jolt with higglers' wives the market trot,
To sell your eggs and butter!
Duke. Excellent!
How well you sum the duties of a wife!
Why, what a blessing I shall have in you!
Jul. A blessing!
Duke. When they talk of you and me,
Darby and Joan shall be no more remember'd;
We shall be so happy!
Jul. Shall we?
Duke. Wondrous happy!
Oh, you will make an admirable wife!
Jul. I'll make a devil.
Duke. What?
Jul. A very devil.
Duke. Oh, no! we'll have no devils.
Jul. I'll not bear it.
I'll to my father's!
Duke. Gently: you forget
You are a perfect stranger to the road.
Jul. My wrongs will find a way, or make one.
Duke. Softly!
You stir not hence, except to take the air;
And then I'll breathe it with you.
Jul. What, confine me?
Duke. 'Twould be unsafe to trust you yet abroad.
Jul. Am I a truant school-boy?
Duke. Nay, not so;
But you must keep your bounds.
Jul. And if I break them,
Perhaps you'll beat me.
Duke. Beat you!
The man, that lays his hand upon a woman,
Save in the way of kindness, is a wretch
Whom 'twere gross flattery to name a coward.
No, madam, I'll talk to you, I'll not beat you.
Jul. Well, if I may not travel to my father,
I may write to him surely! and I will—
If I can meet within your spacious dukedom
Three such unhop'd-for miracles at once,
As pens, and ink, and paper.
Duke. You will find them
In the next room. A word, before you go.
You are my wife, by ev'ry tie that's sacred;
The partner of my fortune and my bed—
Jul. Your fortune!
Duke. Peace! no fooling, idle woman!
Beneath the attesting eye of heav'n I've sworn
To love, to honour, cherish, and protect you.
No human pow'r can part us. What remains, then?
To fret, and worry, and torment each other,
And give a keener edge to our hard fate
By sharp upbraidings, and perpetual jars?
Or, like a loving and a patient pair,
(Wak'd from a dream of grandeur, to depend
Upon their daily labour for support),
To soothe the taste of fortune's lowliness
With sweet content, and mutual fond endearment?
Now to your chamber; write whate'er you please;

But pause before you stain the spotless paper,
With words that may inflame, but cannot heal!

Jul. Why what a patient worm you take me for!

Duke. I took you for a wife; and ere I've done,
I'll know you for a good one.

Jul. You shall know me
For a right woman, full of her own sex;
Who, when she suffers wrong, will speak her anger;
Who feels her own prerogative, and scorns,
By the proud reason of superior man,
To be taught patience, when her swelling heart
Cries out revenge! [*Exit.*

Duke. Why, let the flood rage on!
There is no tide in woman's wildest passion
But hath an ebb. I've broke the ice, however.
Write to her father! She may write a folio—
But if she send it! 'Twill divert her spleen;
The flow of ink may save her blood letting;
Perchance she may have fits, they're seldom mortal,
Save when the doctor's sent for.—
Though I have heard some husbands say, and wisely,
A woman's honour is her safest guard,
Yet there's some virtue in a lock and key.
(*Locks the door.*)
So thus begins our honey moon. 'Tis well!
For the first fortnight, ruder than march winds,
She'll blow a hurricane. The next, perhaps,
Like April, she may wear a changeful face
Of storm and sunshine: and, when that is past,
She will break glorious as unclouded May;
And where the thorns grew bare, the spreading blossoms
Meet with no lagging frost to kill their sweetness.
Whilst others for a month's delirious joy,
Buy a dull age of penance, we, more wisely,
Taste first the wholesome bitter of the cup,
That after to the very lees shall relish;
And to the close of this frail life prolong
The pure delights of a well-govern'd marriage. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Balthazar's House.*

Enter BALTHAZAR, *followed by the Count, disguised as a Friar.*

Balth. These things premis'd, you have my full consent
To try my daughter's humour: to that end
I have sent for her. But observe me, sir!
I will use no compulsion with my child:
Though of a merry spirit, I have found her,
In weighty matters, of so ripe a judgment,
That she shall chuse a husband for herself.
If I had tendered thus her sister Zamora,
I should not now have mourn'd a daughter lost!

Enter VOLANTE.

Vol. What is your pleasure?

Balth. Know this holy man;
(*Introducing the Count to her.*)
It is the father confessor I spoke of.
Though he looks young, in all things which respect
His sacred function, he is deeply learn'd.

Vol. It is the Count! (*Aside.*)

Balth. I leave you to his guidance:
And do not, with that wild wing you are wont,
Fly from his questions; act as may befit
The sober purpose of his visit here;
And, without diminution or concealment,
To his examination and free censure
Commit your actions and your private thoughts.

Vol. I shall observe, sir. [*Exit Balthazar.*
Nay, 'tis he, I'll swear! (*Aside.*)

Count. 'Pray heaven she don't suspect me!
Well, young lady, you have heard your father's commands? [are we to do?

Vol. Yes: and now he has left us alone, what

Count. I am to listen, and you are to confess.

Vol. What! and then you are to confess, and I am to listen? I'll take care you shall do penance though.

Count. Pshaw! (*Aside.*)

Vol. Well; but what am I to confess?

Count. Your sins, daughter; your sins.

Vol. What! all of them?

Count. Only the great ones.

Vol. The great ones! Oh, you must learn those of my neighbours, whose business it is, like yours, to confess everybody's sins but their own. If now you would be content with a few trifling peccadilloes, I would own them to you with all the frankness of an author, who gives his reader the paltry errata of the press, but leaves him to find out all the capital blunders of the work himself.

Count. Nay, lady, this is trifling: I am in haste.

Vol. In haste! then suppose I confess my virtues? you shall have the catalogue of them in a single breath.

Count. Nay, then I must call your father.

Vol. Why, then, to be serious: If you will tell me of any very enormous offences which I may have lately committed, I shall have no objection in the world to acknowledge them to you.

Count. It is publicly reported, daughter, you are in love.

Vol. So, so! are you there! (*Aside.*) That I am in love?

Count. With a man—

Vol. Why, what should a woman be in love with?

Count. You interrupt me, lady. A young man.

Vol. I'm not in love with an old one, certainly. But is love a crime, father?

Count. Heaven forbid!

Vol. Why, then, you have nothing to do with it.

Count. Ay, but the concealing it is a crime!

Vol. Oh, the concealing it is a crime?

Count. Of the first magnitude.

Vol. Why, then, I confess—

Count. Well, what?

Vol. That the Count Montalban—

Count. Go on!

Vol. Is—

Count. Proceed!

Vol. Desperately in love with me.

Count. Pshaw! That's not to the point.

Vol. Well, well, I'm coming to it: and not being able in his own person to learn the state of my affections, has taken the benefit of clergy, and assumed the disguise of a friar.

Count. Discovered!

Vol. Ha, ha, ha! You are but a young masquerader, or you wouldn't have left your vizor at home. Come, come, Count, pull off your lion's apparel, and confess yourself an ass.

Count. Nay, Volante, hear me!

Vol. Not a step nearer! The snake is still dangerous, though he has cast his skin. I believe you're the first lover on record that ever attempted to gain the affections of his mistress by discovering her faults. Now, if you had found out more virtues in my mind than there will ever be room for, and more charms in my person than even my looking-glass can create, why, then, indeed—

Count. What then?

Vol. Then I might have confessed what it is now impossible I can ever confess: and so farewell, my noble count confessor! [*Exit.*

Count. Farewell!
And when I've hit upon the longitude,
And plumb'd the yet unfathom'd ocean,
I'll make another venture for thy love.
Here comes her father. I'll be fool'd no longer!

Enter BALTHAZAR.

Balth. Well, sir, how thrive you?

Count. E'en as I deserve: [me.
Your daughter has discovered, laughed at, and left

Balth. Yet I've another scheme.

Count. What is't?

Balth. My daughter,

Being a lover of my art, of late
Has vehemently urg'd to see your portrait;
Which, now 'tis finish'd, I stand pledg'd, she shall.
Go to the picture room—stand there conceal'd:
Here is the key. I'll send my daughter straight:
And if, as we suspect, her heart leans tow'rds you,
In some ungnarded gesture, speech, or action,
Her love will suddenly break out. Away!
I hear her coming.

Count. There's some hope in this.

Balth. It shall do wonders. Hence. [*Exit Count.*
I'll tax her home.

Enter Volante.

Vol. What, is he gone, sir?

Balth. Gone! d'ye think the man is made of marble? Yes, he is gone.

Vol. For ever?

Balth. Ay, for ever.

Val. Alas, poor Count! or, has he only left you,
To study some new character? Pray, tell me!
What will he next appear in?

Balth. This is folly.
'Tis time to call your wanton spirits home;
You are too wild of speech.

Vol. My thoughts are free, sir;
And those I utter.

Balth. Far too quickly, girl:
Your shrewdness is a scare-crow to your beauty.

Vol. It will fright none but fools, sir: men of sense must naturally admire in us the quality they most value in themselves; a blockhead only protests against the wit of a woman, because he can't answer her drafts upon his understanding. But now we talk of the Count, don't you remember your promise, sir?

Balth. Umph! (*Aside.*) What promise, girl?

Vol. That I should see your picture of him.

Balth. So you shall, when you can treat the original with a little more respect.

Vol. Nay, sir, a promise!

Balth. Well, you'll find the door open: but, before you go, tell me honestly, how do you like the Count, his person, and understanding?

Vol. Why, as to his person, I don't think he's handsome enough to pine himself to death for his own shadow, like the youth in the fountain—nor yet so ugly as to be frightened to dissolution if he should look at himself in a glass. Then, as to his understanding, he has hardly wit enough to pass for a madman, nor yet so little as to be taken for a fool. In short, sir, I think the Count is very well worth any young woman's serious contemplation—when she has no other earthly thing to think about. (*Runs off.*)

Balth. So the glad bird, that flutters from the net.
Grown wanton with the theaght of his escape,
Flies to the limed bush, and there is caught,
I'll steal and watch their progress. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*The Picture Room.*

(*The Count concealed behind his Portrait.*)

Enter Volante.

Vol. Confess that I love the Count! A woman may do a more foolish thing than fall in love with such a man, and a wiser one than to tell him of it. (*Looks at the picture.*) 'Tis very like him; the hair is a shade too dark—and rather too much complexion for a despairing inamorato. Confess that I love him! Now there is only his picture; I'll see if I can't play the confessor a little better than he did. "Daughter, they tell me you are in love?" "Well, father, there is no harm in speaking the truth." "With the Count Montalban, daughter?" "Father, you are not a confessor, but a conjuror!" "They add, moreover, that you have named the day for your marriage?" "There, father, you are misinformed; for like a discreet maiden, I have left that for him to do." Then he should throw off his disguise; I should gaze at him with astonishment; he should open his arms, whilst I sunk gently into them. (*The Count catches her in his arms.*) The Count!

Enter Balthazar.

My Father, too! Nay, then, I am fairly hunted into the toil. There, take my hand, Count, while I am free to give it.

Enter a Servant, with a letter.

Serv. A letter, sir. [*Exit.*

Balth. From Juliana! (*Opens the letter.*)

Vol. Well, what says she, sir?

Count. This will spoil all. (*Aside.*)

Vol. It bears untoward news:
Is she not well, sir?

Balth. 'Tis not that.

Vol. What then, sir?
See how he knits his brow!

Balth. Here must be throats cut.

Vol. What moves you thus, sir?

Balth. That, would stir a statue.
Your friend's a villain, sir! (*To the Count.*) Read, read it out.
And you, if I mistake not, are another.

Vol. What can this mean?

Balth. Peace! Hear him read the letter.

Count. (*Reads.*) *Dearest father! I am deceived, betrayed, insulted!*
The man, whom I have married, is no duke!

Vol. No duke!

Balth. I'll be revenged! Read, sir; read!

Count. (*Reads.*) *He has neither fortune, family, nor friends.*

Balth. You must have known all this, sir. But proceed.

Count. (*Reads.*) *He keeps me prisoner here, in a miserable hovel; from whence, unless I am speedily rescued by your interference, you may never hear more of your forlorn, abused* Juliana.

Balth. What answer you to this, sir?

Count. Nothing.

Vol. How!

Balth. 'Tis plain you are a partner in the trick
That robb'd a doting father of his child.

Count. Suspend your anger but a few short days,
And you shall find, though now a mystery
Involves my friend—

Balth. A mystery! What mystery?
There are no mysteries in honest men:
What mystery I say, can solve this conduct?
Is he a duke?

Count. I cannot answer that.

Balth. Then he's a villain!

Count. Nay, upon my soul,
He means you fairly, honourably, nobly.

Balth. I will away to-night. Olmedo! Perez!
Perhaps your Countship means me fairly too,
Nobly and honourably!
Get my horses! [*Exeunt Servants.*
You have some mystery, too, sir; but ere I set
My sole surviving hope on such a hazard,
I'll look into your countship's pedigree:
And for your noble, honourable duke,
I'll travel night and day until I reach him!
And he shall find I am not yet so old,
But that my blood will flame at such an insult,
And my sword leap into my grasp. Believe me,
I will have full revenge!

Count. You shall.

Balth. I will, sir!
And speedily!

Count. Proceed, then, on your journey.
With your good leave, I'll bear you company:
And as the traveller, perplex'd awhile
In the benighted mazes of a forest,
Breaks on a champain country, smooth and level,
And sees the sun shine glorious; so shall you, sir,
Behold a bright close, and a golden end,
To this now dark adventure.

Vol. Go, my father! [fairly.
Balth. You speak in riddles, sir; yet you speak
Count. And, if I speak not truly, may my hope
In this fair treasure be extinct for ever!
Balth. Then quickly meet us here, prepar'd for travel.
If, from the cloud that overhangs us now,
Such light should break as you have boldly promis'd,
My daughter and my blessing still are yours, sir.
Count. Blest in that word, I quit you. [*Exit.*
Balth. Come, girl!
This shall be sifted thoroughly: till then
You must remain a fresh ungather'd flow'r.
Vol. Well, sir; I am not yet so overblown,
But I may hang some time upon the tree,
And still be worth the plucking.
Balth. True, my girl.
And better 'twere to wither on thy stem,
And scatter on the earth thy maiden leaves,
Than graft thee where thy sweetness and thy beauty
Would all be wasted. Come, we must prepare.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Cottage.*

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA, *in a Peasant's Dress.*

Duke. She hath compos'd a letter; and, what's worse,
Contriv'd to send it by a village boy [prison,
That pass'd the window. Yet she now appears
Profoundly penitent.
'Tis a conversion too miraculous.
Her cold disdain yields with too free a spirit;
Like ice, which, melted by unnatural heat—
Not by the gradual and kindly thaw
Of the resolving elements—give it air, [her.
Will straight congeal again—She comes—I'll try

Enter JULIANA, *in a Peasant's Dress.*

Why, what's the matter now?
Jul. That foolish letter!
Duke. What! you repent of having written it?
Jul. I do, indeed. I could cut off my fingers
For being partners in the act.
Duke. No matter;
You may indite one in a milder spirit,
That shall pluck out its sting.
Jul. I can.
Duke. You must.
Jul. I can.
Duke. You shall.
Jul. I will, if 'tis your pleasure.
Duke. Well replied!
I now see plainly you have found your wits,
And are a sober, metamorphos'd woman.
Jul. I am, indeed.
Duke. I know it: I can read you.
There is a true contrition in your looks;
Yours is no penitence in masquerade—
You are not playing on me.
Jul. Playing, sir! [things
Duke. You have found out the vanity of those
For which you lately sighed so deep.
Jul. I have, sir.
Duke. A dukedom! pshaw! it is an idle thing.
Jul. I have begun to think so.
Duke. That's a lie! (*Aside.*)
Is not this tranquil and retired spot
More rich, in real pleasures, than a palace?
Jul. I like it infinitely.
Duke. That's another! (*Aside.*)
The mansion's small, 'tis true, but very snug.
Jul. Exceeding snug.
Duke. The furniture not splendid,
But then all useful.
Jul. All exceeding useful.
There's not a piece on't but serves twenty purposes.
(*Aside.*)
Duke. And, though we're seldom plagued by visitors,
We have the best of company—ourselves.
Nor, whilst our limbs are full of active youth,
Need we loll in a carriage, to provoke
A lazy circulation of the blood;
When walking is a nobler exercise.
Jul. More wholesome, too.
Duke. And far less dangerous.
Jul. That's certain.
Duke. Then for servants, all agree,
They are the greatest plagues on earth.
Jul. No doubt on't.
Duke. Who then, that has a taste for happiness,
Would live in a large mansion, only fit
To be an habitation for the winds;
Keep gilded ornaments for dust and spiders;
See everybody, care for nobody;
When they could live as we do?
Jul. Who, indeed?
Duke. Here we want nothing.
Jul. Nothing. Yes, one thing.
Duke. Indeed! what's that?
Jul. You will be angry.
Duke. Nay—
Not if it be a reasonable thing.
Jul. What wants the bird, who, from his wiry prison,
Sings to the passing travellers of air
A wistful note—that she were with them, sir?
Duke. Umph! What, your liberty! I see it now,
(*Aside.*)
Jul. 'Twere a pity that in such a paradise
I should be cag'd.
Duke. Why, whither would you, wife?
Jul. Only to taste the freshness of the air,
That breathes a wholesome spirit from without;
And weave a chaplet for you, of those flow'rs
That throw their perfume through my window bars,
And then I will return, sir.
Duke. You are free;
But use your freedom wisely.
Jul. Doubt me not, sir!
I'll use it quickly, too. [*Aside, and exit.*
Duke. But I do doubt you.
There is a lurking devil in her eye,
That plays at bopeep there, in spite of her.
Her anger is but smother'd, not burnt out,
And ready, give it vent, to blaze again.
You have your liberty—
But I will watch you closely, lady,
And see that you abuse it not. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Inn.*

ROLANDO *sitting at a table.*

Rol. 'Sdeath, that a reasonable thinking man
Should leave his friend and bottle for a woman!
Here is the Count, now, who, in other matters,
Has a true judgment, only seethe his blood
With a full glass beyond his usual stint,
And women, like a wildfire, runs throughout him.
Immortal man is but a shuttlecock,
And wine and women are but the battledores
That keep him going! What! Eugenio!

Enter ZAMORA.

Zam. Your pleasure, sir?
Rol. I am alone, and wish
One of your songs to bear me company.
Zam. A merry or a sad one, sir?
Rol. No matter.
Zam. I have but one that you have ever heard.
Rol. Let it be that.
Zam. I shall obey you, sir.
Now woman's wit assist me. (*Sings.*)

SONG.—ZAMORA.

In vain the tears of anguish flow,
In vain I mourn, in vain I sigh;
For he, alas! will never know,
That I must live for him, or die.

Ah! could I dare myself reveal!
Would not my tale his pity move?
And sighs of pity seldom fail
In noble hearts to waken love.
But should he view, without a tear,
My altering form, my waning bloom,
Then, what is left me but despair!
What refuge but the silent tomb!

Rol. It is a mournful ditty, yet 'tis pleasing.

Zam. It was, indeed, a melancholy tale
From which I learnt it.

Rol. Lives it with you still? [dream, sir:

Zam. Faintly, as would an ill-remember'd
Yet so far I remember—Now my heart— (*Aside.*)
'Twas of a gentleman—a soldier, sir,
Of a brave spirit: and his outward form
A frame to set a soul in. He had a page,
Just such a boy as I, a faithful stripling,
Who, out of pure affection, and true love,
Follow'd his fortune to the wars.

Rol. Why this
Is our own history.

Zam. So far, indeed,
But not beyond, it bore resemblance, sir.
For in the sequel (if I well remember)
This loving boy (so, sir, the story ran)
Turn'd out to be a woman.

Rol. How! a woman!

Zam. Yes, sir, a woman.

Rol. Live with him a twelvemonth, and he not find the secret out!

Zam. 'Twas strange.

Rol. Strange! 'twas impossible! At the first blush,
A palpable and most transparent lie!
Why, if the soldier had been such an ass,
She had herself betray'd it.

Zam. Yet, 'tis said,
She kept it to her death; that, oft as love
Would heave the struggling passion to her lips,
Shame set a seal upon them: thus long time
She nourish'd, in this strife of love and modesty,
An inward slow-consuming martyrdom,
'Till in the sight of him her soul most cherish'd—
Like flow'rs, that on a river's margin, fading
Through lack of moisture, drop into the stream,
So, sinking in his arms, her parting breath
Reveal'd her story.

Rol. You have told it well, boy.

Zam. I feel it deeply, sir; I know the lady.

Rol. Know her! you don't believe it?

Zam. What regards
Her death, I will not vouch for. But the rest—
Her hopeless love, her silent patience,
The struggle 'twixt her passion and her pride—
I was a witness to. Indeed, her story
Is a most true one.

Rol. She should not have died;
A wench like this were worth a soldier's love:
And were she living now,—

Enter Count Montalban.

Zam. 'Tis well! (*Aside.*)

Count. Strange things have happen'd, since we parted, captain!
I must away to-night.

Rol. To-night! and whither? [know:

Count. 'Tis yet a secret. Thus much you shall
If a short fifty miles you'll bear me company,
You shall see—

Rol. What?

Count. A woman tam'd.

Rol. No more;
I'll go a hundred. Do I know the lady?

Count. What think you of our new-made duchess?

Rol. She?
What mortal man has undertaken her?
Perhaps the keeper of the beasts, the fellow
That puts his head into the lion's mouth.
Or else some tiger-tamer to a nabob.

Count. Who, but her husband?

Rol. With what weapons?

Count. Words. [language

Rol. With words? why then he must invent a
Which yet the learned have no glimpses of.
Fasting and fustigation may do something;
I've heard that death will quiet some of them;
But words! mere words! cool'd by the breath of man!
He may preach tame a howling wilderness;
Silence a full-mouth'd battery with snow-balls;
Quench fire with oil; with his repelling breath
Puff back the northern blast; whistle 'gainst thunder:
These things are feasible. But still a woman
With the nine parts of speech!—

Count. You know him not.

Rol. I know the lady.

Count. Yet, I tell you
He has the trick to draw the serpent's fang,
And yet not spoil her beauty.

Rol. Could he discourse, with fluent eloquence,
More languages than Babel sent abroad,
The simple rhet'ric of her mother tongue
Would pose him presently; for woman's voice
Sounds like a fiddle in a concert, always
The shrillest, if not loudest instrument.
But we shall see. [*Exeunt Count and Rolando.*

Zam. He was touch'd surely, with the piteous tale
Which I deliver'd; and, but that the Count
Prevented him, would have broke freely out
Into a full confession of his feeling
Tow'rds such a woman as I painted to him.
Why then, my boy's habiliments, adieu!
Henceforth, my woman's tire—I'll trust to you.
[*Exit.*

Scene II.—*The Duke's Palace.*

Enter Campillo, *the Duke's Steward, and another Servant.*

Serv. But can no one tell the meaning of this fancy?

Camp. No: 'tis the duke's pleasure, and that's enough for us. You shall hear his own words:—

For reasons, that I shall hereafter communicate, it is necessary that Jaquez should, in all things, at present, act as my representative: you will, therefore, command my household to obey him as myself, until you hear further from (*Signed*) Aranza.

Serv. Well, we must wait the upshot. But how bears Jaquez his new dignity?

Camp. Like most men in whom sudden fortune combats against long-established habit. (*Laughing without.*)

Serv. By their merriment, this should be he.

Camp. Stand aside, and let us note him.

Enter Jaques, *dressed as the Duke, followed by six Attendants, who in vain endeavour to restrain their laughter.* [*Exit Servant.*

Jaquez. Why, you ragamuffins! what d'ye titter at? Am I the first great man that has been made off-hand by a tailor? Show your grinders again, and I'll hang you like onions, fifty on a rope. I can't think what they see ridiculous about me, except, indeed, that I feel as if I was in armour, and my sword has a trick of getting between my legs, like a monkey's tail, as if it was determined to trip up my nobility. And now, villains! don't let me see you tip the wink to each other, as I do the honours of my table. If I tell one of my best stories, don't any of you laugh before the jest comes out, to show that you have heard it before: take care that you don't call me by my christian name, and then pretend it was by accident; that shall be transportation at least: and when I drink a health to all friends, don't fancy that any of you are in the number.

Enter a Servant.

Well, sir?

Serv. There is a lady without, presses vehemently to speak to your grace.

Jaquez. A lady?

Serv. Yes, your highness.

Jaquez. Is she young?

Serv. Very, your grace!

Jaquez. Handsome?

Serv. Beautiful, your highness!

Jaquez. Send her in.—[*Exit Servant.*]—You may retire; I'll finish my instructions by-and-by. Young and handsome! I'll attend to her business *in propriâ personâ*. Your old and ugly ones I shall despatch by deputy. Now to alarm her with my consequence, and then soothe her with my condescension. I must appear important; big as a country pedagogue, when he enters the school-room with—a hem! and terrifies the apple-munching urchins with the creaking of his shoes. I'll swell like a shirt bleaching in a high wind; and look burly as a Sunday beadle, when he has kicked down the unhallowed stall of a profane old apple-woman. Bring my chair of state! Hush!

Enter JULIANA.

Jul. I come, great duke, for justice!

Jaquez. You shall have it.
Of what do you complain?

Jul. My husband, sir! [offence?

Jaquez. I'll hang him instantly! What's his

Jul. He has deceived me.

Jaquez. A very common case; few husbands answer their wives' expectations.

Jul. He has abused your grace.

Jaquez. Indeed! if he has done that, he swings most loftily. But how, lady, how?

Jul. Shortly thus, sir:
Being no better than a low-born peasant,
He has assum'd your character and person.

Enter DUKE ARANZA.

Oh! you are here, sir? This is he, my lord.

Jaquez. Indeed! (*Aside.*) Then I must tickle him. Why, fellow, d'ye take this for an ale-house, that you enter with such a swagger? Know you where you are, sir?

Duke. The rogue reproves me well! (*Aside.*) I had forgot.
Most humbly I entreat your grace's pardon,
For this unusher'd visit; but the fear
Of what this wayward woman might allege
Beyond the truth—

Jul. I have spoke naught but truth.

Duke. Has made me thus unmannerly.

Jaquez. 'Tis well. You might have us'd more ceremony.
Proceed. (*To Juliana.*)

Jul. This man, my lord, as I was saying,
Passing himself upon my inexperience
For the right owner of this sumptuous palace,
Obtain'd my slow consent to be his wife;
And cheated, by this shameful perfidy,
Me of my hopes—my father of his child.

Jaquez. Why, this is swindling; obtaining another man's goods under false pretences; that is, if a woman be a good: that will make a very intricate point for the judges. Well, sir, what have you to say in your defence?

Duke. I do confess I put this trick upon her;
And for my transient usurpation
Of your most noble person, with contrition
I bow me to the rigour of the law.
But for the lady, sir, she can't complain.

Jul. How! not complain? To be thus vilely co- [zen'd,
And not complain!

Jaquez. Peace, woman! Though Justice be blind, she is not deaf.

Duke. He does it to the life! (*Aside.*)
Had not her most exceeding pride been doting,
She might have seen the diff'rence, at a glance,
Between your grace and such a man as I am.

Jaquez. She might have seen that certainly. Proceed.

Duke. Nor did I fall so much beneath her sphere,
Being what I am, as she had soar'd above it
Had I been that which I have only feign'd.

Jaquez. Yet, you deceiv'd her.

Jul. Let him answer that. [wives;

Duke. I did: most men in something cheat their
Wives gull their husbands; 'tis the course of wooing.
Now, bating that my title and my fortune
Were evanescent, in all other things
I acted like a plain and honest suitor.
I told her she was fair, but very proud;
That she had taste *in* music, but no voice;
That she danc'd well, yet still might borrow grace
From such or such a lady. To be brief;
I prais'd her for no quality she had not,
Nor over-priz'd the talents she possess'd:
Now, save in what I have before confess'd,
And I challenge her worst spite to answer me,
Whether, in all attentions, which a woman,
A gentle and a reasonable woman,
Looks for, I have not to the height fulfill'd,
If not outgone her expectations?

Jaquez. Why, if she has no cause of complaint since you were married—

Duke. I dare her to the proof on't.

Jaquez. Is it so, woman? (*To Juliana.*)

Jul. I don't complain of what has happen'd since;
The man has made a tolerable husband,
But for the monstrous cheat he put upon me,
I claim to be divorc'd.

Jaquez. It cannot be.

Jul. Cannot, my lord?

Jaquez. No. You must live with him.

Jul. Never!

Duke. Or, if your grace will give me leave—
We have been wedded yet a few short days—
Let us wear out a month as man and wife;
If, at the end on't, with uplifted hands,
Morning and ev'ning, and sometimes at noon,
And bended knees, she doesn't plead more warmly— [part us.

Jul. If I do—

Duke. Then let her will be done, that seeks to

Jul. I do implore your grace to let it stand
Upon that footing.

Jaquez. Humph! Well, it shall be so; with this proviso, that either of you are at liberty to hang yourselves in the meantime. (*Rises.*)

Duke. We thank your providence. Come, Ju- liana— [and then,

Jul. Well, there's my hand: a month's soon past, I am your humble servant, sir.

Duke. For ever.

Jul. Nay, I'll be hang'd first.

Duke. That may do as well.
Come, you'll think better on't.

Jul. By all—

Duke. No swearing.

Jaquez. No, no; no swearing.

Duke. We humbly take our leaves.
[*Exit with Juliana, and Servants.*

Jaquez. I begin to find, by the strength of my nerves, and the steadiness of my countenance, that I was certainly intended for a great man; for what more does it require to be a great man, than boldly to put on the appearance of it? How many sage politicians are there, who can scarce comprehend the mystery of a mousetrap; valiant generals, who wouldn't attack a bulrush, unless the wind were in their favour; profound lawyers, who would make excellent wigblocks; and skilful physicians, whose knowledge extends no further than writing death-warrants in Latin; and are shining examples that a man will never want gold in his pocket, who carries plenty of brass in his face. It will be rather awkward, to be sure, to resign at the end of a month: but, like other great men in office, I must make the most of my time, and retire with a good grace, to

avoid being turned out; as a well-bred dog always walks down stairs, when he sees preparations ripe for kicking him into the street. [*Exit.*

Scene III.—*An Inn.*

Enter Balthazar, *as having fallen from his horse, supported by* Volante, Count Montalban, *&c. and preceded by the Hostess.*

Hostess. This way, this way, if you please. Alas! poor gentleman! (*Brings a chair.*) How do you feel now, sir? (*They set him down.*)

Balth. I almost think my brains are where they should be—
Confound the jade!—though they dance merrily
To their own music.

Count. Is a surgeon sent for?

Hostess. Here he comes, sir.

Enter Lampedo.

Lamp. Is this the gentleman?

Balth. I want no surgeon; all my bones are whole.

Vol. Pray, take advice.

Balth. Well! Doctor, I have doubts
Whether my soul be shaken from my body;
Else I am whole.

Lamp. Then you are safe, depend on't;
Your soul and body are not yet divorc'd;
Though if they were, we have a remedy.
Nor have you fracture, sir, simple or compound;
Yet very feverish! I begin to fear
Some inward bruise—a very raging pulse!
We must phlebotomize.

Balth. You won't. Already
There is too little blood in these old veins
To do my cause full justice.

Lamp. Quick and feverish!
He must lie down a little; for, as yet,
His blood and spirits being all in motion,
There is too great confusion in the symptoms,
To judge discreetly from.

Balth. I'll not lie down.

Vol. Nay; for an hour or so.

Balth. Well, be it so.

Hostess. I'll shew you to a chamber: this way, this way, if you please. [*Exeunt all but Lampedo.*

Lamp. 'Tis the first patient, save the miller's mare,
And an old lady's cat, that has the phthisic,
That I have touch'd these six weeks. Well, good hostess!

Enter Hostess.

How fares your guest?

Hostess. He must not go to-night.

Lamp. No; nor to-morrow—

Hostess. Nor the next day, neither.

Lamp. Leave that to me.

Hostess. He has no hurt, I fear. [his doctor,

Lamp. None: but, as you're his cook, and I'm
Such things may happen. You must make him ill,
And I must keep him so; for, to say truth,
'Tis the first biped customer I've handled
This many a day: they fall but slowly in;
Like the subscribers to my work on fevers.

Hostess. Hard times, indeed! No business stirring my way. [hostess.

Lamp. So I should guess, from your appearance,
You look as if, for lack of company,
You were obliged to eat up your whole larder.

Hostess. Alas! 'tis so:
Yet I contrive to keep my spirits up.

Lamp. Yes; and your flesh, too. Look at me.

Hostess. Why, truly,
You look half starv'd.

Lamp. Half starv'd! I wish you'd tell me
Which half of me is fed. I shew more points
Than an old horse, that has been three weeks pounded:
Yet I do all to tempt them into sickness.
Have I not, in the jaws of bankruptcy,
And to the desolation of my person,
Painted my shop, that it looks like a rainbow?
New double-gilt my pestle and my mortar,
That some, at distance, take it for the sun?
And blaz'd in flaming letters o'er my door,
Each one a glorious constellation,
"Surgeon, apothecary, accoucheur?"
(For midwife is grown vulgar.) Yet they ail not:
Phials and gallipots still keep their ranks,
As if there were no cordial virtue in them.
The healing chime of pulverizing drugs
They shun as 'twere a tolling bell, or death-watch.
I never give a dose, or set a limb!
But, come, we must devise, we must devise
How to make much of this same guest, sweet hostess.

Hostess. You know I always make the most of them. [let's in;

Lamp. Spoke like an ancient tapstress! Come,
And, while I soothe my bowels with an omelette,
(For, like a nest of new-wak'd rooklings, hostess,
They caw for provender,) and take a glass
Of thy Falernian, we will think of means;
For though to cure men be beyond our skill,
'Tis hard, indeed, if we can't keep them ill.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.—*The Cottage.*

Enter Duke of Aranza, *bringing in* Juliana, *having overtaken her in an attempt to escape.*

Duke. Nay, no resistance: for a month, at least,
I am your husband.

Jul. True! and what's a husband? [him,

Duke. Why, as some wives would metamorphose
A very miserable ass, indeed!

Jul. True, there are many such.

Duke, And there are men
Whom not a swelling lip, or wrinkled brow,
Or the loud rattle of a woman's tongue,
Or, what's more hard to parry, the warm pressure
Of lips, that from the inmost heart of man
Plucks out his stern resolves, can move one jot
From the determin'd purpose of his soul,
Or stir an inch from his prerogative.
Ere it be long, you'll dream of such a man.

Jul. Where, waking, shall I see him?

Duke. Look on me.
Come to your chamber.

Jul. I won't be confin'd.

Duke. Won't! Say you so?

Jul. Well, then, I do request
You won't confine me.

Duke. You'll leave me?

Jul. No, indeed;
As there is truth in language, on my soul
I will not leave you!

Duke. You've deceiv'd me once—

Jul. And, therefore, do not merit to be trusted.
I do confess it: but, by all that's sacred,
Give me my liberty, and I will be
A patient, drudging, most obedient wife.

Duke. Yes; but a grumbling one.

Jul. No, on my honour,
I will do all you ask, ere you have said it.

Duke. And with no secret murmuring of your spirit?

Jul. With none, believe me.

Duke. Have a care;
For if I catch thee on the wing again,
I'll clip ye closer than a garden hawk,
And put ye in a cage where daylight comes not;
Where you may fret your pride against the bars,
Until your heart break. (*Knocking at the door.*)
See who's at the door. See who's at the door.
(*She goes and returns.*)

Enter Lopez.

My neighbour Lopez! Welcome, sir! My wife—
(*Introducing her.*)
A chair. (*To Juliana. She brings a chair to Lopez, and throws it down.*)

Your pardon; you'll excuse her, sir;
A little awkward, but exceeding willing.
One for your husband. (*She brings another chair, and is going to throw it down as before; but the Duke looking steadfastly at her, she desists, and places it gently by him.*)
Pray, be seated, neighbour.
Now, you may serve yourself.
Jul. I thank you, sir.
Duke. I'd rather you should sit.
Jul. If you will have it so. 'Would I were dead! (*Aside. Brings a chair, and sits down.*)
Duke. Though, now I think again, 'tis fit you stand,
That you may be more free to serve our guest.
Jul. Even as you command. (*Rises.*)
Duke. You will eat something? (*To Lopez.*)
Lopez. Not a morsel, thankye. [least?
Duke. Then you will drink? a glass of wine, at
Lopez. Well, I am warm with walking, and care not if I do taste your liquor.
Duke. You have some wine, wife?
Jul. I must e'en submit. [*Exit.*
Duke. This visit, sir, is kind and neighbourly.
Lopez. I came to ask a favour of you. We have, to-day, a sort of merry-making on the green hard by—'twere too much to call it a dance—and as you are a stranger here—
Duke. Your patience for a moment.

Re-enter JULIANA, *with a horn of liquor.*

Duke. (*Taking it.*) What have we here?
Jul. 'Tis wine; you call'd for wine.
Duke. And did I bid you bring it in a nutshell?
Lopez. Nay, there is plenty.
Duke. I can't suffer it.
You must excuse me. (*To Lopez.*) When friends drink with us,
'Tis usual, love, to bring it in a jug,
Or else they may suspect we grudge our liquor.
You understand—a jug.
Jul. I shall remember. [*Exit.*
Lopez. I am asham'd to give you so much trouble.
Duke. No trouble; she must learn her duty, sir: I'm only sorry you should be kept waiting.
But you were speaking—
Lopez. As I was saying, it being the conclusion of our vintage, we have assembled the lads and lasses of the village—

Re-enter JULIANA.

Duke. Now we shall do. (*Pours out.*)
Why, what the devil's this?
Jul. Wine, sir.
Duke. This wine? 'Tis foul as ditch-water!
Did you shake the cask?
Jul. What shall I say? (*Aside.*) Yes, sir.
Duke. You did?
Jul. I did.
Duke. I thought so.
Why, do you think, my love, that wine is physic,
That must be shook before 'tis swallow'd?
Come, try again.
Jul. I'll go no more.
Duke. You won't?
Jul. I won't.
Duke. You won't! (*Shewing the key.*)
You had forgot yourself, my love.
Jul. Well, I obey! [*Exit.*
Duke. Was ever man so plagued!
I am asham'd to try your patience, sir;
But women, like watches, must be set with care,
To make them go well.

Re-enter JULIANA.

Ay, this looks well. (*Pouring it out.*)
Jul. The heavens be prais'd!
Duke. Come, sir, your judgment.
Lopez. 'Tis excellent! But, as I was saying, to-day we have some country pastimes on the green: will it please you both to join our simple recreations? [draught, sir.
Duke. We will attend you. Come, renew your
Lopez. We shall expect you presently: till then, good even, sir. [and make you ready.
Duke. Good even, neighbour. [*Exit Lopez.*] Go
Jul. I take no pleasure in these rural sports.
Duke. Then you shall go to please your husband. Hold!
I'll have no glittering gewgaws stuck about you,
To stretch the gaping eyes of idiot wonder,
And make men stare upon a piece of earth
As on the star-wrought firmament; no feathers,
To wave as streamers to your vanity;
Nor cumbrous silk, that, with its rustling sound,
Makes proud the flesh that bears it. She's adorn'd
Amply, that in her husband's eye looks lovely—
The truest mirror that an honest wife
Can see her beauty in.
Jul. I shall observe, sir.
Duke. I should like well to see you in the dress
I last presented you.
Jul. The blue one, sir?
Duke. No, love, the white. Thus modestly attir'd,
An half-blown rose stuck in thy braided hair,
With no more diamonds than those eyes are made of,
No deeper rubies than compose thy lips,
Nor pearls more precious than inhabit them;
With the pure red and white, which that same hand
Which blends the rainbow mingles in thy cheeks;
This well proportion'd form, (think not I flatter,)
In graceful motion to harmonious sounds,
And thy free tresses dancing in the wind—
Thou'lt fix as much observance as chaste dames
Can meet without a blush. [*Exit Jul.*
I'll trust her with these bumpkins. There no coxcomb
Shall buz his fulsome praises in her ear,
And swear she has in all things, save myself,
A most especial taste. No meddling gossip
(Who, having claw'd, or cuddled into bondage
The thing misnam'd a husband, privately
Instructs less daring spirits to revolt)
Shall, from the fund of her experience, teach her
When lordly man can best be made a fool of;
And how, and when, and where, with most success,
Domestic treaties, on the woman's side,
Are made and ratified.
Ye that would have obedient wives, beware
Of meddling woman's kind, officious care. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Inn.*

Enter Hostess, followed by LAMPEDO.

Hostess. Nay, nay; another fortnight.
Lamp. It can't be.
The man's as well as I am: have some mercy!
He hath been here almost three weeks already.
Hostess. Well, then, a week.
Lamp. We may detain him a week.

Enter BALTHAZAR *behind, in his nightgown, with a drawn sword.*

You talk now like a reasonable hostess,
That sometimes has a reck'ning with her conscience.
Hostess. He still believes he has an inward bruise.
Lamp. I would to heaven he had! or that he'd slipp'd
His shoulder-blade, or broke a leg or two,
(Not that I bear his person any malice,)
Or lux'd an arm, or even sprain'd his ancle!
Hostess. Ay, broken anything except his neck.
Lamp. However, for a week I'll manage him:
Though he has the constitution of a horse—
A farrier should prescribe for him.
Balth. A farrier! (*Aside.*)
Lamp. To-morrow we phlebotomise again;
Next day, my new invented patent draught;

Then I have some pills prepar'd;
On Thursday we throw in the bark; on Friday—
Balth. (*Coming forward.*) Well, sir, on Friday—what on Friday? come,
Proceed.
Lamp. Discovered!
Hostess. Mercy, noble sir!
(*They fall on their knees.*)
Lamp. We crave your mercy!
Balth. On your knees? 'tis well!
Pray, for your time is short.
Hostess. Nay, do not kill us. [wait
Balth. You have been tried, condemn'd, and only
For execution. Which shall I begin with?
Lamp The lady, by all means, sir.
Balth. Come, prepare. (*To the Hostess.*)
Hostess. Have pity on the weakness of my sex!
Balth. Tell me, thou quaking mountain of gross flesh,
Tell me, and in a breath, how many poisons—
If you attempt it—(*to Lamp. who is endeavouring to make off*)—you have cook'd up for me?
Hostess. None, as I hope for mercy!
Balth. Is not thy wine a poison?
Hostess. No, indeed, sir;
'Tis not, I own, of the first quality;
But—
Balth. What?
Hostess. I always give short measure, sir,
And ease my conscience that way.
Balth. Ease your conscience!
I'll ease your conscience for you.
Hostess. Mercy, sir!
Balth. Rise, if thou canst, and hear me.
Hostess. Your commands, sir?
Balth. If in five minutes all things are prepar'd
For my departure, you may yet survive.
Hostess. It shall be done in less.
Balth. Away, thou lump-fish! [*Exit Hostess.*
Lamp. So! now comes my turn! 'tis all over with me!
There's dagger, rope, and ratsbane in his looks!
Balth. And now, thou sketch and outline of a man!
Thou thing that hast no shadow in the sun!
Thou eel in a consumption, eldest born
Of Death on Famine! thou anatomy
Of a starv'd pilchard!
Lamp. I do confess my leanness. I am spare;
And, therefore, spare me.
Balth. Why! wouldst thou have made me
A thoroughfare for thy whole shop to pass through?
Lamp. Man, you know, must live.
Balth. Yes: he must die, too.
Lamp. For my patients' sake—
Balth. I'll send you to the major part of them.
The window, sir, is open; come, prepare.
Lamp. Pray, consider;
I may hurt some one in the street.
Balth. Why, then,
I'll rattle thee to pieces in a dice-box,
Or grind thee in a coffee-mill to powder,
For thou must sup with Pluto: so, make ready;
Whilst I, with this good small-sword for a lancet,
Let thy starv'd spirit out, (for blood thou hast none,)
And nail thee to the wall, where thou shalt look
Like a dry'd beetle, with a pin stuck through him.
Lamp. Consider my poor wife.
Balth. Thy wife!
Lamp. My wife, sir.
Balth. Hast thou dar'd think of matrimony, too?
No flesh upon thy bones, and take a wife!
Lamp. I took a wife because I wanted flesh.
I have a wife, and three angelic babes,
Who, by those looks, are well nigh fatherless.
Balth. Well, well! your wife and children shall plead for you.
Come, come; the pills! where are the pills? produce them.
Lamp. Here is the box.
Balth. Were it Pandora's, and each single pill
Had ten diseases in it, you should take them.
Lamp. What, all?
Balth. Ay, all; and quickly, too. Come, sir, begin—that's well! another.
Lamp. One's a dose.
Balth. Proceed, sir!
Lamp. What will become of me?
Let me go home, and set my shop to rights,
And, like immortal Cæsar, die with decency.
Balth. Away! and thank thy lucky star I have not
Bray'd thee in thine own mortar, or expos'd thee
For a large specimen of the lizard genus.
Lamp. Would I were one! for they can feed on air.
Balth. Home, sir, and be more honest. [*Exit.*
Lamp. If I am not,
I'll be more wise, at least. [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*A Wood.*

Enter Zamora, *in woman's apparel, veiled.*

Zam. Now, all good spirits, that delight to prosper
The undertakings of chaste love, assist me!
Yonder he comes: I'll rest upon this bank.
If I can move his curiosity,
The rest may follow.
[*She reclines upon the bank, pretending sleep.*

Enter Rolando.

Rol. What, ho! Eugenio!
He is so little apt to play the truant,
I fear some mischief has befallen him.
(*Sees Zamora.*)
What have we here? a woman! By this light,
Or rather, by this darkness, 'tis a woman!
Doing no mischief—only dreaming of it.
It is the stillest, most inviting spot!
We are alone: if, without waking her,
I could just brush the fresh dew from her lips,
As the first blush of morn salutes the rose—
Hold, hold, Rolando! art thou not forsworn,
If thou but touchest even the finger's end
Of fickle woman? I have sworn an oath, [me;
That female flesh and blood should ne'er provoke
That is, in towns, or cities: I remember
There was a special clause, or should have been,
Touching a woman sleeping in a wood;
For though, to the strict letter of the law,
We bind our neighbours, yet, in our own cause,
We give a liberal and large construction
To its free spirit. Therefore, gentle lady—
(*She stirs, as if awaking.*)
Hush! she prevents me. Pardon, gentle fair one,
That I have broke thus rudely on your slumbers;
But, for the interruption I have caus'd,
You see me ready, as a gentleman,
To make you all amends.
Zam. To a stranger
You offer fairly, sir; but from a stranger—
Rol. What shall I say? Not so; you are no Stranger.
Zam. Do you, then, know me? Heav'n forbid!
(*Aside.*)
Rol. Too well.
Zam. How, sir?
Rol. I've known you, lady, 'bove a twelvemonth;
And, from report, lov'd you an age before.
Why, is it possible you never heard
Of my sad passion?
Zam. Never.
Rol. You amaze me!
Zam. What can he mean! (*Aside.*)
Rol. The sonnets I have written to your beauty
Have kept a paper-mill in full employ!
And then the letters I have given by dozens
Unto your chambermaid! But I begin,
By this unlook'd-for strangeness you put on,
Almost to think she ne'er deliver'd them.
Zam. Indeed she never did. He does but jest.

I'll try. (*Aside.*) Perhaps you misdirected them?
What superscription did you put upon them?
Rol. What superscription? None.
Zam. None!
Rol. Not a tittle.
Think ye, fair lady, I have no discretion?
I left a blank, that, should they be mislaid,
Or lost, you know—
Zam. And in your sonnets, sir,
What title was I honour'd by?
Rol. An hundred!
All but your real one.
Zam. What is that?
Rol. She has me.
'Faith! lady, you've run me to a stand.
I know you not; never before beheld you;
Yet I'm in love with you extempore:
And though, by a tremendous oath, I'm bound
Never to hold communion with your sex,
Yet has your beauty and your modesty—
Come, let me see your face.
Zam. Nay; that would prove
I had no modesty; perhaps, nor beauty.
Besides, I, too, have taken a rash oath,
Never to love but one man—
Rol. At a time?
Zam. One at all times.
Rol. You're right: I am the man.
Zam. You are, indeed, sir.
Rol. How? now you are jesting.
Zam. No, on my soul! I have sent up to heav'n
A sacred and irrevocable vow;
And if, as some believe, there does exist
A spirit in the waving of the woods,
Life in the leaping torrent, in the hills
And seated rocks a contemplating soul,
Brooding on all things round them, to all nature
I here renew the solemn covenant,
Never to love but you, sir.
Rol. And who are you?
Zam. In birth and breeding, sir, a gentlewoman:
And, but I know the high pitch of your mind
From such low thoughts maintains a tow'ring distance,
I would add, rich; yet is it no misfortune.
Virtuous, I will say boldly. Of my shape,
Your eyes are your informers. For my face,
I cannot think of that so very meanly,
For you have often prais'd it.
Rol. I! Unveil, then,
That I may praise it once again.

Enter VOLANTE.

Zam. Not now, sir.
We are observ'd.
Rol. (*Seeing Volante.*) Confusion! this she-devil!
'Tis time, then, to redeem my character. (*Aside.*)
I tell you, lady, you must be mistaken;
I'm not the man you want. (*To Zam.*) Meet me
to-night. (*Apart.*)
Will not that answer serve?—At eight precisely.
(*Apart.*)
I tell you, 'tis not I.—Here, on this spot. (*Apart.*)
Zam. I humbly beg your pardon.
Rol. Well, you have it.—
Remember!
Zam. Trust me. [*Exit.*
Rol. A most strange adventure! Pray, lady, do
you know who that importunate woman is that just left us?
Vol. No signor.
Rol. (*They walk by each other, he whistling, and she humming a tune.*) Have you any business with me?
Vol. I wanted to see you, that's all. They tell me you are the valiant captain that have turned woman-hater, as the boy left off eating nuts, because he met with a sour one.
Rol. Would I were in a freemason's lodge!
Vol. Why there?
Rol. They never admit women.
Vol. It must be a dull place.
Rol. Exceeding quiet. How shall I shake off this gad-fly? Did you ever see a man mad?
Vol. Never.
Rol. I shall be mad presently.
Vol. I hope it won't be long first. I can wait an hour or so.
Rol. I tell you, I shall be mad.
Vol. Will it be of the merry sort? [mad!
Rol. Stark-staring, maliciously, mischievously
Vol. Nay, then, I can't think of leaving you; for you'll want a keeper.
Rol. 'Would thou hadst one! If it were valiant now to beat a woman—
Vol. Well, why don't you begin? Psha! you have none of the right symptoms. You don't stare with your eyes, nor foam at the mouth. Mad, indeed! You're as much in your sober senses as I am. [ward?
Rol. Then I am mad incurably! Will you go for-
Vol. No.
Rol. Backward?
Vol. No.
Rol. Will you stay where you are?
Vol. No. Rank and file, captain: I mean to be one of your company.
Rol. Impossible! You're not tall enough for anything but a drummer: and then, the noise of your tongue would drown the stoutest sheepskin in Christendom.
Vol. Can you find any employment for me?
Rol. No: you are fit for nothing but to beat hemp in a workhouse, to the tuneful accompaniment of a beadle's whip.
Vol. I could be content to be so employed, if I were sure you would reap the full benefit of my labour.
Rol. Nay, then, I'll go another way to work with you—What, ho! Eugenio, serjeant, corporal!
Vol. Nay, then, 'tis time to scamper: he's bringing his whole regiment on me. [*Exit.*
Rol. She's gone; and has left me happy.
But this other—How is her absence irksome!
There is such magic in her graceful form,
Such sweet persuasion in her gentle tongue,
As thaws my firm resolves, and changes me
To that same soft and pliant thing I was,
Ere yet I knew a haughty woman's scorn. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Rural Scene.*

A dance of Rustics. LOPEZ *comes forward.*
Lopez. (*Seeing the Duke and Juliana approach.*)
Hold! our new guests.

Enter DUKE OF ARANZA *and* JULIANA.

Neighbours, you're kindly welcome!
Will't please you join the dance, or be mere gazers?
Duke. I am for motion, if this lady here
Would trip it with me.
Lopez. My wife, sir, at your service.
If it be no offence, I'll take a turn with your's.
Duke. By all means. Lady, by your leave—
(*Salutes Lopez's Wife.*)
Lopez. A good example—
(*Attempts to salute Juliana; she boxes his ears.*)
Jul. Badly follow'd, sir.
Lopez. Zounds! what a tingler!
Duke. Are you not asham'd? (*To Juliana.*)
My wife is young, sir; she'll know better soon
Than to return a courtesy so tartly.
Your's has been better tutor'd. (*Salutes her.*)
Lopez. Tutor'd! Zounds!
I only meant to ape your husband, lady:
He kisses where he pleases.
Jul. So do I, sir;
Not where I have no pleasure.
Duke. Excellent! (*Aside.*)

Jul. My lips are not my own. My hand is free, sir, (*Offering her hand.*)
Lopez. Free! I'll be sworn it is!
Jul. Will't please you take it?
Duke. Excuse her rustic breeding: she is young; And you will find her nimble in the dance.
Lopez. Come, then, let's have a stirring roundelay.
[*They dance; Jul. at first perversely, but afterwards entering into the spirit of it. Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Cottage.*

JULIANA, *sitting at her needle, sings; during which the* DUKE OF ARANZA *steals in behind.*

SONG.—JULIANA.

At the front of a cottage, with woodbine grown o'er,
Fair Lucy sat turning her wheel,
Unconscious that William was just at the door,
And heard her her passion reveal.
The bells rung,
And she sung,
Ding, dong, dell,
It were well
If they rung for dear William and me.

But when she look'd up, and her lover espy'd,
Ah! what was the maiden's surprise!
She blush'd as he woo'd her and call'd her his bride,
And answer'd him only with sighs.
The bells rung,
And she sung,
Ding, dong, dell,
It is well!
They shall ring for dear William and me!

Duke. Ay, this looks well, when, like the humming bee,
We lighten labour with a cheerful song.
Come, no more work to-night. (*Sits by her.*) It is the last
That we shall spend beneath this humble roof:
Our fleeting month of trial being past,
To-morrow you are free.
Jul. Nay, now you mock me,
And turn my thoughts upon my former follies.
You know, that to be mistress of the world,
I would not leave you.
Duke. No!
Jul. No, on my honour!
Duke. I think you like me better than you did:
And yet, 'tis natural—come, come, be honest;
You have a sort of hank'ring,—no wild wish,
Or vehement desire, yet a slight longing,
A simple preference, if you had your choice,
To be a duchess, rather than the wife
Of a low peasant?
Jul. No, indeed, you wrong me.
Duke. I mark'd you closely at the palace, wife.
In the full tempest of your speech, your eye
Would glance to take the room's dimensions,
And pause upon each ornament; and then
There would break from you a half-smother'd sigh,
Which spoke distinctly—"these should have been mine!"
And, therefore, (though with a well-temper'd spirit,)
You have some secret swellings of the heart
When these things rise to your imagination.
Jul. No, never: sometimes in my dreams, I own;
You know we cannot help our dreams.
Duke. What then? [dreams,
Jul. Why, I confess that, sometimes, in my
A noble house and splendid equipage,
Diamonds and pearls, and gilded furniture,
Will glitter, like an empty pageant, by me;
And then I'm apt to rise a little feverish.
But never do my sober, waking thoughts,
As I'm a woman worthy of belief,
Wander to such forbidden vanities.
Yet, after all, it was a scurvy trick!
Your palace, and your pictures, and your plate!
Your fine plantations, your delightful gardens,
That were a second paradise—for fools!
And then, your grotto, so divinely cool!
Your Gothic summer-house, and Roman temple!
'Twould puzzle much an antiquarian
To find out their remains.
Duke. No more of that.
Jul. You had a dozen spacious vineyards, too!
Alas! the grapes are sour: and above all,
The Barbary courser that was breaking for me!
Duke. Nay, you shall ride him yet.
Jul. Indeed!
Duke. Believe me,
We must forget these things.
Jul. They are forgot.
And by this kiss, we'll think of them no more,
But when we want a theme to make us merry.
Duke. It was an honest one, and spoke thy soul;
And by the fresh lip and unsullied breath
Which join'd to give it sweetness—

Enter BALTHAZAR.

Jul. How! my father!
Duke. Signor Balthazar! You are welcome, sir,
To our poor habitation.
Balth. Welcome, villain!
I come to call your dukeship to account,
And to reclaim my daughter.
Duke. You will find her
Reclaim'd already; or I've lost my pains. (*Aside.*)
Balth. Let me come at him! [sir;
Jul. Patience, my dear father!
Duke. Nay, give him room. Put up your weapon,
'Tis the worst argument a man can use;
So let it be the last. As for your daughter,
She passes by another title here,
In which your whole authority is sunk—
My lawful wife.
Balth. Lawful! his lawful wife!
I shall go mad! Did you not basely steal her,
Under a vile pretence?
Duke. What I have done,
I'll answer to the law.
Of what do you complain?
Balth. Are you not
A most notorious, self-confess'd impostor? [state
Duke. True, I am somewhat dwindled from the
In which you lately knew me; nor alone
Should my exceeding change provoke your wonder,
You'll find your daughter is not what she was.
Balth. How, Juliana?
Jul. 'Tis, indeed, most true.
I left you, sir, a froward, foolish girl,
Full of capricious thoughts and fiery spirits,
Which, without judgment, I would vent on all.
But I have learnt this truth indelibly,
That modesty, in deed, in word, and thought,
Is the prime grace of woman; and with that,
More than by frowning looks, and saucy speeches,
She may persuade the man that rightly loves her,
Whom she was ne'er intended to command.
Balth. Amazement! Why, this metamorphosis
Exceeds his own! What spells, what cunning witchcraft
Has he employ'd?
Jul. None: he has simply taught me
To look into myself: his powerful rhet'ric
Hath with strong influence impress'd my heart,
And made me see, at length, the thing I have been,
And what I am, sir.
Balth. And are you, then, content
To live with him?
Jul. Content! I am most happy!
Balth. Can you forget your crying wrongs?
Jul. Not quite, sir:
They sometimes serve us to make merry with.
Balth. How like a villain he abus'd your father?
Jul. You will forgive him that for my sake.

Balth. Never!
Duke. Why, then, 'tis plain, you seek your own revenge,
And not your daughter's happiness.
Balth. No matter.
I charge you, on your duty as my daughter,
Follow me!
Duke. On a wife's obedience,
I charge you, stir not!
Jul. You, sir, are my father;
At the bare mention of that hallow'd name,
A thousand recollections rise within me,
To witness you have ever been a kind one:
This is my husband, sir—
Balth. Thy husband! well—
Jul. 'Tis fruitless now to think upon the means
He us'd—I am irrevocably his:
And when he pluck'd me from my parent tree,
To graft me on himself, he gather'd with me
My love, my duty, my obedience;
And, by adoption, I am bound as strictly
To do his reasonable bidding now,
As once to follow your's.
Balth. Yet I will be reveng'd.
Duke. You would have justice. (*To Balth.*)
Balth. I will.
Duke. Then forthwith meet me at the duke's.
Balth. What pledge have I for your appearance there?
Duke. Your daughter, sir. Nay, go, my Juliana!
'Tis my request: within an hour at farthest,
I shall expect to see you at the palace. [sir.
Balth. Come, Juliana. You shall find me there,
Duke. Look not thus sad at parting, Juliana:
All will run smooth yet.
Balth. Come!
Jul. Heav'n grant it may!
Duke. The duke shall right us all, without delay.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Wood.*

Enter VOLANTE, *and four of Count Montalban's servants, masked.*

Vol. That's he, stealing down the pathway yonder.
Put on your vizors; and remember, not a word.
(*They retire.*)

Enter ROLANDO.

Now I shall be even with your hemp-beating. [*Exit.*
Rol. Here am I come to be a woman's toy,
And spite of sober reason, play the fool.
'Tis a most grievous thing, that a man's blood
Will ever thwart his noble resolution,
And make him deaf to other argument
Than the quick beating of his pulse. (*Count's Servants come forward, and surround him.*)
Heyday!
Why, what are these? If it be no offence,
May I enquire your business?
(*They hold a pistol to each side of his head.*)
Now I can guess it. Pray, reserve your fire.
(*They proceed to bind him.*)
What can this mean? Mute, gentlemen; all mute!
Pray, were ye born of woman? Still ye are mute!
Why, then, perhaps, you mean to strangle me.
(*They bind him to a tree, and go off.*)
How! gone? Why, what the devil can this mean?
It is the oddest end to an amour!

Enter VOLANTE, *and three other Women.*

Vol. This is the gentleman we're looking for.
Rol. Looking for me! You are mistaken, ladies:
What can you want with such a man as I am?
I am poor, ladies, miserably poor;
I am old, too, though I look young; quite old;
The ruins of a man. Nay, come not near me!
I would for you I were a porcupine,
And every quill a death!
Vol. By my faith, he rails valiantly, and has a valiant sword, too, if he could draw it. Was ever poor gentleman so near a rope without being able to hang himself!
Rol. I could bear being bound in every limb,
So ye were tongue-ty'd.
That I could cast out devils to torment you!
Though ye would be a match for a whole legion.
Vol. Come, come.
Rol. Nay, ladies, have some mercy: drive me not
To desperation, though, like a bear,
I'm fix'd to the stake, and must endure the baiting.
(*After repeated struggles, disengages his right arm, with which he draws his sword, and cuts the ropes that bind him.*)
Vol. The bear is breaking his chain. 'Tis time to run, then. (*The Women run off; Rolando extricates himself, and comes forward.*)
Rol. So, they are gone! What a damnable condition I am in! The devils that worried St. Anthony were a tame set to these! My blood boils! By all that's mischievous, I'll carbonado the first woman I meet! If I do not, why, I'll marry her. Here's one already!

Enter ZAMORA, *veiled.*

Zam. I've kept my word, sir. [oath.
Rol. So much the worse! for I must keep my
Are you prepar'd to die?
Zam. Not by your hand.
I hardly think, when you have seen my face,
You'll be my executioner.
Rol. Thy face!
What, you are handsome? Don't depend on that:
For if those rosy fingers, like Aurora's,
Lifting the veil from day, should usher forth
Twin sparkling stars, to light men to their ruin;
Balm-breathing lips, to seal destrction on;
An alabaster forehead, hung with locks
That glitter like Hyperion's; and a cheek,
Where the live crimson steals upon the white,
You have no hope of mercy!
Zam. (*Unveiling.*) Now, then, strike!
Rol. Eugenio?
Zam. Your poor boy, sir.
Rol. How! a woman!
A real woman!
What a dull ass have I been! Nay, 'tis so!
Zam. You see the sister of that scornful lady,
Who, with such fix'd disdain, refus'd your love;
Which, like an arrow failing of its aim,
Glancing from her impenetrable heart,
Struck deep in mine: in a romantic hour,
Unknown to all, I left my father's house,
And follow'd you to the wars. What has since happen'd,
It better may become you to remember
Than me to utter.
Rol. I am caught at last!
Caught by a woman! excellently caught,
Hamper'd beyond redemption! Why, thou witch!
That, in a brace of minutes, hast produc'd
A greater revolution in my soul [ress,
Than thy whole sex could compass! thou enchant-
Prepare: for I must kill thee certainly;
(*Throws away his sword.*)
But it shall be with kindness. My poor boy!
(*They embrace.*)
I'll marry thee to-night. Yet, have a care!
For I shall love thee most unmercifully. [me,
Zam. And as a wife, should you grow weary of
I'll be your page again.
Rol. We'll to your father.
Zam. Alas! I fear I have offended him
Beyond the reach of pardon.
Rol. Think not so.
In the full flood of joy at your return,
He'll drown his anger, and absolving tears
Shall warmly welcome his poor wanderer home.
What will they say to me? Why, they may say,
And truly, that I made a silly vow,
But was not quite so foolish as to keep it. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*Duke of Aranza's Palace.*

Enter Balthazar *and* Juliana, Count Montalban *and* Volante, *preceded by a Servant.*

Balth. You'll tell his highness I am waiting for him.

Serv. What name, sir?

Balth. No matter; tell him, an old man,
Who has been basely plunder'd of his child,
And has perform'd a weary pilgrimage
In search of justice, hopes to find it here.

Serv. I will deliver this. [*Exit.*

Balth. And he shall right me;
Or I will make his dukedom ring so loud
With my great wrongs, that—

Jul. Pray, be patient, sir.

Balth. Where is your husband?

Jul. He will come, no doubt. [quickly.

Count. I'll pawn my life for his appearance, quickly.

Enter Servant.

Balth. What news, sir?

Serv. The duke will see you presently.

Balth. 'Tis well!
Has there been here a man to seek him lately?

Serv. None, sir.

Balth. A tall, well-looking man enough,
Though a rank knave, dress'd in a peasant's garb?

Serv. There has been no such person.

Balth. No, nor will be.
It was a trick to steal off safely,
And get the start of justice. He has reach'd,
Ere this, the nearest sea-port, or inhabits
One of his air-built castles. (*Trumpets, &c.*)

Serv. Stand aside!

Enter Duke of Aranza, *superbly dressed, preceded by* Jaquez, *and followed by Attendants and Six Ladies.*

Duke. Now, sir, your business with me?

Balth. How?

Jul. Amazement!

Duke. I hear you would have audience.

Jaquez. Exactly my manner. (*Aside.*)

Balth. Of the duke, sir.

Duke. I am the duke.

Balth. The jest is somewhat stale, sir.

Duke. You'll find it true.

Balth. Indeed!

Jaquez. Nobody doubted my authority. (*Aside.*)

Jul. Be still, my heart; (*Aside.*)

Balth. I think you would not trifle with me now.

Duke. I am the Duke Aranza.

Count. 'Tis e'en so. (*To Balthazar.*)

Duke. And what's my greater pride, this lady's husband;
Whom, having honestly redeem'd my pledge,
I thus take back again. You now must see
The drift of what I have been lately acting,
And what I am. And though, being a woman
Giddy with youth and unrestrained fancy,
The domineering spirit of her sex
I have rebuk'd too sharply; yet, 'twas done,
As skilful surgeons cut beyond the wound,
To make the cure complete.

Balth. You have done most wisely.
And all my anger dies in speechless wonder.

Jaquez. So does all my greatness. (*Aside.*)

Duke. What says my Juliana?

Jul. I am lost, too,
In admiration, sir: my fearful thoughts
Rise, on a trembling wing, to that rash height,
Whence, growing dizzy once, I fell to earth;
Yet since your goodness, for the second time,
Will lift me, though unworthy, to that pitch
Of greatness, there to hold a constant flight,
I will endeavour so to bear myself,
That in the world's eye, and my friends' observance,
And, what's far dearer, your most precious judgment,
I may not shame your dukedom.

Duke. Bravely spoken!
Why, now you shall have rank and equipage;
Servants, for you can now command yourself;
Glorious apparel, not to swell your pride,
But to give lustre to your modesty.
All pleasures, all delights, that noble dames
Warm their chaste fancies with, in full abundance
Shall flow upon you; and it shall go hard
But you shall ride the Barbary courser, too.
Count, you have kept my secret, and I thank you.

Count. Your grace has reason; for, in keeping that,
I well nigh lost my mistress. On your promise,
I now may claim her, sir. (*To Balthazar.*)

Balth. What says my girl?

Vol. Well, since my time is come, sir—

Balth. Take her, then. (*Joins their hands.*)

Duke. But who comes yonder?

Count. 'Sdeath! why, 'tis Rolando!

Duke. But that there hangs a woman on his arm, I'd swear 'twas he.

Vol. Nay, 'tis the gentleman.

Duke. Then have the poles met!

Vol. Oh! no; only two of the planets have jostled each other. Venus has had too much attraction for Mars.

Enter Rolando, *with* Zamora, *veiled.*

Count. Why, captain!

Duke. Signor Rolando! [a woman!

Rol. (*After they have laughed some time.*) Nay, 'tis And one that has a soul, too, I'll be bound for't.

Vol. He must be condemned to her for some offence, as a truant horse is tied to a log, or a great school-boy carries his own rod to the place of execution. [still!

Rol. Laugh till your lungs crack, 'tis a woman

Count. I'll not believe it till I see her face.

Vol. It is some boy dress'd up to cozen us.

Rol. It was a boy dress'd up to cozen me.
Suffice it, sirs, that being well convinc'd,
In what I lately was a stubborn sceptic,
That women may be reasonable creatures:
And finding that your grace, in one fair instance,
Has wrought a wondrous reformation in them,
I am resolv'd to marry; (*all laugh*) for 'tis odds
(Our joint endeavours lab'ring to that end)
That, in another century or two,
They may become endurable. What say you?
(*To the Duke.*)
Have I your free consent?

Duke. Most certainly.

Rol. Your's sir? (*To the Count.*)

Count. Most readily.

Rol. And your's? (*To Balthazar.*)

Balth. Most heartily.

Jaquez. He does not ask mine. (*Aside.*)

Rol. Add but your blessing, sir, and we are happy!
What think you of my page?
(*Zamora unveils, and kneels to Balthazar.*)

Vol. How!

Balth. Zamora! [feet—

Zam. Your daughter, sir: who, trembling at your

Balth. Come to my heart!
You knew how deeply you were rooted there,
Or scarce had ventur'd such a frolic.

Zam. That, sir,
Should have prevented me.

Balth. There: she is your's, sir;
If you are still determin'd.

Rol. Fix'd as fate!
Nor in so doing do I change my mind;
I swore to wed no woman—she's an angel.

Vol. Ay, so are all women before marriage; and that's the reason their husbands so soon wish them in heaven afterwards. [ample

Duke. Those who are tartly tongued: but our ex-
This truth shall manifest—A gentle wife
Is still the sterling comfort of man's life;
To fools a torment, but a lasting boon
To those who wisely keep the Honey-moon.

[*Exeunt.*

THE HYPOCRITE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.



Act V.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

SIR JOHN LAMBERT	DOCTOR CANTWELL	MAWWORM	OLD LADY LAMBERT	CHARLOTTE
COLONEL LAMBERT	DARNLEY	SEYWARD	LADY LAMBERT	BETTY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in Sir John Lambert's house. Enter* SIR JOHN LAMBERT, *followed by* COLONEL LAMBERT.

Col. Lamb. Pray consider, sir.

Sir. J. Lamb. So I do, sir, that I am her father, and will bestow her as I please.

Col. Lamb. I do not dispute your authority, sir; but as I am your son too, I think it my duty to be concerned for your honour. Have not you countenanced his addresses to my sister? Has not she received them? Mr. Darnley's birth and fortune are well known to you; and I dare swear, he may defy the world to lay a blemish on his character.

Sir J. Lamb. Why then, sir, since I am to be catechised, I must tell you, I do not like his character; he is a world-server, a libertine, and has no more religion than you have.

Col. Lamb. Sir, we neither of us think it proper to make a boast of our religion; but, if you will please to inquire, you will find that we go to church as orderly as the rest of our neighbours.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! you go to church; you go to church. Wonderful! wonderful! to bow, and grin, and cough, and sleep: a fine act of devotion, indeed!

Col. Lamb. Well, but dear sir—

Sir J. Lamb. Colonel, you are an atheist.

Col. Lamb. Pardon me, sir, I am none. It is a character I abhor; and next to that, I abhor the character of an enthusiast.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! you do so; an enthusiast! this is the fashionable phrase, the bye-word, the nick-name that our pleasure-loving generation give to those few who have a sense of true sanctity.

Col. Lamb. Say canting, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. I tell you what, son, as I have told you more than once, you will draw some heavy judgment on your head some day or other.

Col. Lamb. So says the charitable Doctor Cantwell; you have taken him into your house, and, in return, he gives over half your family to the devil.

Sir J. Lamb. Do not abuse the Doctor, Colonel; it is not the way to my favour. I know you cannot bear him, because he is not one of your mincing preachers: he holds up the glass to your enormities, shews you to yourselves in your genuine colours.

Col. Lamb. I always respect piety and virtue, sir; but there are pretenders to religion, as well as to courage; and as we never find the truly brave to be such as make much noise about their valour, so, I apprehend, the truly good seldom or never deal much in grimace.

Sir J. Lamb. Very well, sir; this is very well.

Col. Lamb. Besides, sir, I would be glad to know, by what authority the Doctor pretends to exercise the clerical function. It does not appear clearly to me that he ever was in orders.

Sir J. Lamb. That is no business of your's, sir. But I am better informed. However, he has the call of zeal.

Col. Lamb. Zeal!

Sir J. Lamb. Why, Colonel, you are in a passion.

Col. Lamb. I own, I cannot see with temper, sir, so many religious mountebanks impose on the unwary multitude; wretches, who make a trade of religion, and shew an uncommon concern for the next world, only to raise their fortunes with greater security in this.

Sir J. Lamb. Colonel, let me hear no more; I see you are too hardened to be converted now; but since you think it your duty, as a son, to be concerned for my errors, I think it as much mine, as a father, to be concerned for your's. If you think fit to amend them, so; if not, take the consequence.

Col. Lamb. Well, sir, may I ask you without offence, if the reasons you have given me are your only reasons for discountenancing Mr. Darnley's addresses to my sister?

Sir J. Lamb. Are they not flagrant? Would you have me marry my daughter to a pagan?

Col. Lamb. He intends this morning paying his respects to you, in hopes to obtain your final consent; and desired me to be present as a mediator of articles between you.

Sir J. Lamb. I am glad to hear it.

Col. Lamb. That's kind, indeed, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. May be not, sir; for I will not be at home when he comes; and because I will not tell a lie for the matter, I will go out this moment.

Col. Lamb. Nay, dear sir—

Sir J. Lamb. And, do you hear? because I will not deceive him, either tell him I would not have him lose his time in fooling after your sister,—in short, I have another man in my head for her. [*Exit.*

Col. Lamb. Another man! It would be worth one's while to know him. Pray, heaven, this canting hyprocrite has not got some beggarly rascal in his eye for her. I must rid the house of him at any rate, or all the settlement I can hope for, from my father, is a castle in the air. My sister may be ruined too. (*Charlotte sings without.*) Here she comes. If there be another man in the case, she, no doubt, can let me into the secret.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Sister, good morrow; I want to speak with you.

Charl. Prythee, then, dear brother, don't put on that wise, politic face, as if your regiment were going to be disbanded, or sent to the West Indies, and you obliged to follow it.

Col. Lamb. Come, come; a truce with your raillery; what I have to ask of you is serious; and I beg you would be so in your answer.

Charl. Well, then, provided it is not upon the subject of love, I will be so; but make haste too, for I have not had my tea yet.

Col. Lamb. Why, it is, and it is not, on that subject.

Charl. Oh, I love a riddle, dearly. Let's hear it.

Col. Lamb. Nay, psha! if you'll be serious, say so.

Charl. O lard, sir; I beg your pardon—there—there's my whole form and features totally disengaged and lifeless, at your service; now, put them in what posture of attention you may think fit. (*Leaning against him awkwardly.*)

Col. Lamb. Was there ever such a giddy devil! Pr'ythee, stand up. I have been talking with my father, and he declares, positively, you shall not receive any further addresses from Mr. Darnley.

Charl. Are you serious?

Col. Lamb. He said so this minute, and with some warmth.

Charl. I'm glad on't, with all my heart.

Col. Lamb. How! glad!

Charl. To a degree. Do you think a man has any more charms for me for my father's liking him? No, sir: if Mr. Darnley can make his way to me now, he is obliged to me, and to me only. Besides, now it may have the face of an amour indeed, now one has something to struggle for; there's difficulty, there's danger, there's the dear spirit of contradiction in it too. Oh, I like it mightily!

Col. Lamb. I am glad this does not make you think the worse of Darnley; but a father's consent might have clapt a pair of horses more to your coach, perhaps, and the want of it may pinch your fortune.

Charl. Burn fortune! Am not I a fine woman? and have not I twenty thousand pounds in my own hands?

Col. Lamb. Yes, sister, but with all your charms, you have had them in your possession almost these four years.

Charl. Psha! and have not I had the full swing of my own airs and humours these four years? But if I humour my father, I warrant he'll make it three or four thousand more, with some unlick'd lout; a comfortable equivalent, truly! No, no; let him light his pipe with his consent, if he please. Wilful against wise, for a wager.

Col. Lamb. But pray, sister, has my father ever proposed any other man to you?

Charl. Another man! let me know why you ask, and I'll tell you.

Col. Lamb. Why, the last words he said to me were, that he had another man in his head for you.

Charl. And who is it? who is it, dear brother?

Col. Lamb. Why you don't so much as seem surprised!

Charl. No, but I'm impatient, and that's as well.

Col. Lamb. Why, how now, sister?

Charl. Why, sure, brother, you know very little of female happiness, if you suppose the surprise of a new lover ought to shock a woman of my temper: don't you know that I'm a coquette?

Col. Lamb. If you are, you are the first that ever was sincere enough to own her being so.

Charl. To a lover, I grant you; but not to you; I make no more of you than a sister; I can say anything to you.

Col. Lamb. I should have been better pleased, if you had not owned it to me; it's a hateful character.

Charl. Ay, it's no matter for that; it's violently pleasant, and there's no law against it, that I know of.

Col. Lamb. Darnley's like to have a hopeful time with you.

Charl. Well, but don't you really know who it is my father intends me?

Col. Lamb. Not I really; but I imagined you might, and therefore thought to advise with you about it.

Charl. Nay, he has not opened his lips to me yet. Are you sure he's gone out?

Col. Lamb. You are very impatient to know, methinks; what have you to do to concern yourself about any man but Darnley?

Charl. O lud! O lud! Pr'ythee, brother, don't be so wise; if you had an empty house to let, would you be displeased to hear there were two people about it? Besides, to be a little serious, Darnley has a tincture of jealousy in his temper, which nothing but a substantial rival can cure.

Col. Lamb. Oh, your servant, madam! now you talk reason. I am glad you are concerned enough for Darnley's faults, to think them worth your mending—ha, ha!

Charl. Concerned! why did I say that? Look you, I'll deny it all to him; well, if I ever am serious with him again—

Col. Lamb. Here he comes; be as merry with him as you please.

Charl. Psha! (*Charlotte sits down, takes a book, and reads.*) *Enter* DARNLEY.

Darn. My dear Colonel, your servant.

Col. Lamb. I am glad you did not come sooner; for in the humour my father left me, 'twould not have been a proper time for you to have pressed your affair. I touched upon it, but, I'll tell you more presently; in the meantime, lose no ground with my sister.

Darn. I shall always think myself obliged to your friendship, let my success be what it will. Madam, your most obedient. What have you got there, pray?

Charl. (*Reading.*) *Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose;*
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those.

Darn. Pray, madam, what is it?

Charl. *Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;*

Darn. Nay, I will see.

Charl. *Oft she rejects, but never once offends.*

Col. Lamb. Have a care; she has dipt into her own character, and she'll never forgive you, if you don't let her go through with it.

Darn. I beg your pardon, madam. [*strike,*

Charl. *Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers*
And like the sun they shine on all alike. Um!—

Darn. That is something like, indeed.

Col. Lamb. You would say so, if you knew all.

Darn. All what? Pray what do you mean?

Col. Lamb. Have a little patience; I'll tell you immediately.

Charl. *If to her share some female errors fall,*
Look on her face, and you'll forget them all.

Is not that natural, Mr. Darnley?

Darn. For a woman to expect, it is indeed.

Charl. And can you blame her, when 'tis at the same time a proof of the poor man's passion, and her power?

Darn. So, then, you think the greatest compliment a lover can make his mistress is to give up his reason to her.

Charl. *(Rises.)* Certainly; for what have your lordly sex to boast of but your understanding? and till that's entirely surrendered to her discretion, while the least sentiment holds out against her, a woman must be downright vain to think her conquest completed.

Darn. There we differ, madam; for, in my opinion, nothing but the most excessive vanity could value or desire such a conquest.

Charl. Oh, d'ye hear him, brother? The creature reasons with me! Nay, has the effrontery to think me in the wrong too! O lud! he'd make a horrid tyrant: positively, I won't have him.

Darn. Well, my comfort is, no other man will easily know whether you'll have him or not.

Charl. Am not I a horrid vain, silly creature, Mr. Darnley.

Darn. A little bordering on the baby, I must own.

Charl. Lud! how can you love a body so then? but I don't think you love me though, do you?

Darn. Yes 'faith, I do; and so shamefully, that I'm in hopes you doubt it.

Charl. Poor man! he'd fain bring me to reason.

Darn. I would, indeed. Nay, were it but possible to make you serious only when you should be so, I should think you the most amiable—

Charl. O lud! he's civil—

Darn. Come, come, be generous, and swear at least you'll never marry another.

Charl. Ah, lud! now you have spoiled all again; besides, how can I be sure of that, before I have seen this other man my brother spoke to me of?

Darn. What riddle's this?

Col. Lamb. I told you, you did not know all. To be serious, my father went out but now, on purpose to avoid you. In short, he absolutely retracts his promises; says he would not have you fool away your time after my sister: and in plain terms told me, he had another man in his head for her.

Darn. Another man! who? what is he? did not he name him?

Col. Lamb. No; nor has he yet spoken of him to my sister.

Darn. This is unaccountable! what can have given him this sudden turn?

Col. Lamb. Some whim, our conscientious Doctor has put into his head, I'll lay my life.

Darn. He! He can't be such a villain; he professes a friendship for me.

Col. Lamb. So much the worse.

Darn. But on what pretence, what grounds, what reason? What interest can he have to oppose me?

Col. Lamb. Are you really now as unconcerned as you seem to be?

Charl. You are a strange dunce, brother; you know no more of love than I do of a regiment. You shall see now how I'll comfort him. Poor Darnley, ha, ha, ha!

Darn. I don't wonder at your good humour, madam, when you have so substantial an opportunity to make me uneasy for life.

Charl. O lud! how sententious he is! Well, his reproaches have that greatness of soul, the confusion they give is insupportable. Betty! is the tea ready? *Enter* BETTY.

Betty. Yes, madam.

Charl. Mr. Darnley, your servant.

[*Exeunt Charlotte and Betty.*

Col. Lamb. So; you have made a fine piece of work on't indeed!

Darn. Dear Tom, pardon me if I speak a little freely; I own, the levity of her behaviour, at this time, gives me harder thoughts than I once believed it possible to have of her.

Col. Lamb. Indeed, my friend, you mistake her.

Darn. Nay, nay: had she any real concern for me, the apprehension of a man's addresses, whom yet she never saw, must have alarmed her to some degree of seriousness.

Col. Lamb. Not at all; for let this man be whom he will, I take her levity as a proof of her resolution to have nothing to do with him.

Darn. And pray, sir, may I not as well suspect, that this artful delay of her good-nature to me now, is meant as a provisional defence against my reproaches, in case, when she has seen this man, she should think it convenient to prefer him.

Col. Lamb. No, no; she's giddy, but not capable of so studied a falsehood.

Darn. But still, what could she mean by going away so abruptly?

Col. Lamb. You grew too grave for her.

Darn. Why, who could bear such trifling?

Col. Lamb. You should have laughed at her.

Darn. I can't love at that easy rate.

Col. Lamb. No; if you could, the uneasiness would lie on her side.

Darn. Do you then really think she has anything in her heart for me?

Col. Lamb. Ay, marry, sir: ah! if you could but get her to own that seriously now; lud! how you could love her!

Darn. And so I could by heaven!

Col. Lamb. Well, well; I'll undertake for her; if my father don't stand in the way, we are well enough.

Darn. What says my lady? You don't think she's against us?

Col. Lamb. I dare say she is not. She's of so soft, so sweet a disposition.

Darn. Pray, how came so fine a woman to marry your father, with such a vast inequality of years?

Col. Lamb. Want of fortune, Frank: she was poor and beautiful; he rich and amorous: she made him happy, and he made her—

Darn. A lady.

Col. Lamb. And a jointure: now she's the only one in the family that has power with our precise Doctor; and, I dare engage, she'll use it with him to persuade my father from anything that is against your interest. By the way, you must know, I have some shrewd suspicion, that this sanctified rogue is in love with her.

Darn. In love!

Col. Lamb. You shall judge by the symptoms; but hush! here he comes, with my grandmother: step this way, and I'll tell you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL *and* OLD LADY LAMBERT, *followed by* SEYWARD.

Dr. Cant. Charles, step up into my study; bring down a dozen more of those manuals of devotion, with the last hymn I composed; and when he calls, give them to Mr. Mawworm: and, hark'ye, if any one enquires after me, say I am gone to Newgate and the Marshalsea, to distribute alms. [*Exit Seyward.*

Old Lady Lamb. Well, but worthy Doctor, why will you go to the prisons yourself? Cannot you send the money? Ugly distempers are often catched there; have a care of your health; let us keep one good man, at least, among us.

Dr. Cant. Alas! madam; I am not a good man; I am a guilty, wicked sinner, full of iniquity; the greatest villain that ever breathed; every instant of my life is clouded with stains; it is one continued series of crimes and defilements: you do not know what I am capable of: you indeed take me for a good man; but the truth is, I am a worthless creature.

Old Lady Lamb. Have you then stumbled? Alas! if it be so, who shall walk upright? What horrid crime have you been hurried into, that calls for this severe self-recrimination?

Dr. Cant. None, madam, that perhaps humanity may call very enormous; yet am I sure that

my thoughts never stray a moment from celestial contemplations? Do they not sometimes, before I am aware, turn to things of this earth? Am I not often hasty, and surprised into wrath? Nay, the instance is recent; for, last night, being snarled at and bit by Minxy, your daughter-in-law's lap-dog, I am conscious I struck the little beast with a degree of passion, for which I have never been able to forgive myself since.

Old Lady Lamb. O, worthy, humble soul! this is a slight offence, which your suffering and mortifications may well atone for.

Dr. Cant. No, madam, no; I want to suffer; I ought to be mortified; and I am obliged now to tell you, that, for my soul's sake, I must quit your good son's family: I am pampered too much here; live too much at my ease.

Old Lady Lamb. Good Doctor!

Dr. Cant. Alas, madam! it is not you that should shed tears; it is I that ought to weep; you are a pure woman.

Old Lady Lamb. I pure! Who? I! No, no; sinful, sinful; but do not talk of quitting our family; what will become of us? For friendship, for charity—

Dr. Cant. Enough; say no more, madam; I submit; while I can do good, it is my duty.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT *and* DARNLEY.

Col. Lamb. Your ladyship's most humble servant.

Old Lady Lamb. Grandson, how do you do?

Darn. Good day to you, Doctor!

Dr. Cant. Mr. Darnley, I am your most humble servant; I hope you and the good Colonel will stay and join in the private duties of the family.

Old Lady Lamb. No, Doctor, no; it is too early, the sun has not risen upon them; but I doubt not, the day will come.

Dr. Cant. I warrant they would go to a play now!

Old Lady Lamb. Would they? I am afraid they would.

Darn. Why, I hope it is no sin, madam; if I am not mistaken, I have seen your ladyship at a play.

Old Lady Lamb. Me, sir! see me at a play! You may have seen the prince of darkness, or some of his imps, in my likeness, perhaps.

Darn. Well, but, madam—

Old Lady Lamb. Mr. Darnley, do you think I would commit a murder?

Dr. Cant. No, sir, no; these are not the plants usually to be met with in that rank soil; the seeds of wickedness indeed sprout up everywhere too fast; but a play-house is the devil's hot-bed.

Col. Lamb. And yet, Doctor, I have known some of the leaders of your tribe, as scrupulous as they are, who have been willing to gather fruit there for the use of the brethren, as in case of a benefit.

Dr. Cant. The charity covereth the sin; and it may be lawful to turn the wages of abomination to the comfort of the righteous.

Col. Lamb. Ha, ha, ha!

Dr. Cant. Reprobate! reprobate!

Col. Lamb. What is that you mutter, sirrah?

Old Lady Lamb. Oh, heavens!

Darn. Let him go, Colonel.

Col. Lamb. A canting hypocrite!

Dr. Cant. Very well, sir; your father shall know my treatment. [*Exit.*

Old Lady Lamb. Let me run out of the house; I shall have it fall upon my head, if I stay among such wicked wretches. O! grandson, grandson! [*Exit.*

Darn. Was there ever so insolent a rascal!

Col. Lamb. The dog will one day provoke me to beat his brains out.

Darn. But what the devil is he? Whence comes he? What is his original? How has he so ingratiated himself with your father, as to get footing in the house?

Col. Lamb. O, sir, he is here in quality of chaplain; he was first introduced by the good old lady that's just gone out. You know, she has been a long time a frequenter of our modern conventicles, where, it seems, she got acquainted with this sanctified pastor. His disciples believe him a saint; and my poor father, who has been for some time tainted with their pernicious principles, has been led into the same snare.

Darn. Ha! here's your sister again.

Enter CHARLOTTE *and* DOCTOR CANTWELL.

Charl. You'll find, sir, I will not be used thus; nor shall your credit with my father protect your insolence to me.

Col. Lamb. What's the matter?

Charl. Nothing; pray, be quiet; I don't want you; stand out of the way. How durst you bolt with such authority into my chamber, without giving me notice?

Darn. Confusion!

Col. Lamb. Hold! if my father don't resent this, 'tis then time enough for me to do it.

Dr. Cant. Compose yourself, madam; I came by your father's desire, who being informed that you were entertaining Mr. Darnley, grew impatient, and gave his positive commands that you attend him instantly, or he himself, he says, will fetch you.

Darn. Ay, now the storm is rising.

Dr. Cant. So, for what I have done, madam, I had had his authority, and shall leave him to answer you.

Charl. 'Tis false. He gave you no authority to insult me; or if he had, did you suppose I would bear it from you? What is it you presume upon? your function? Does that exempt you from the manners of a gentleman? [lady?

Dr. Cant. Shall I have an answer to your father, *Charl.* I'll send him none by you.

Dr. Cant. I shall inform him so. [*Exit.*

Charl. A saucy puppy!

Col. Lamb. Pray, sister, what has the fellow done to you?

Charl. Nothing.

Darn. I beg you would tell us, madam.

Charl. Nay, no great matter; but I was sitting carelessly in my dressing-room, a—a fastening my garter, and this impudent cur comes bounce in upon me.

Darn. The rogue must be corrected.

Col. Lamb. Yet, egad! I cannot help laughing at the accident! what a ridiculous figure must she make! Ha, ha!

Charl. Ha! you're as impudent as he, I think.

Darn. Dear Tom, speak to her before she goes.

Charl. What does he say, brother?

Col. Lamb. Why, he wants to have me speak to you, and I would have him do it himself.

Charl. Ay; come, do, Darnley; I am in a good humour now.

Darn. Oh, Charlotte, my heart is bursting!

Charl. Well, well; out with it, then.

Darn. Your father now, I see, is bent on parting us; nay, what's worse, perhaps will give you to another: I cannot speak; imagine what I want from you.

Charl. Well, O lud! one looks so silly tho' when one is serious. O gad! in short, I cannot get it out.

Col. Lamb. I warrant you; try again.

Charl. O lud! well, if one must be teased, then why he must hope, I think.

Darn. Is it possible! thus—

Col. Lamb. Buz! not a syllable; she has done very well. I bar all heroics; if you press it too far, I'll hold six to four she's off again in a moment.

Darn. I'm silenced.

Charl. Now am I on tiptoe to know what odd fellow my father has found out for me.

Darn. I'd give something to know him.

Charl. He's in a terrible fuss at your being here, I find.

Col. Lamb. 'Sdeath! here he comes!

Charl. Now we are all in a fine pickle!

(Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT *hastily; looks sternly at Darnley; takes Charlotte under his arm, and carries her off. Colonel Lambert and Darnley exeunt.)*

ACT II.—SCENE I. *An Ante-Chamber in Sir John Lambert's house.*

Enter SEYWARD, *with a writing in his hand, from the folding doors.*

Seyw. 'Tis so: I have long suspected where his zeal would end—in the making of his private fortune. But, then, to found it on the ruin of his patron's children! I shudder at the villainy! What desperation may a son be driven to, so barbarously disinherited! Besides, his daughter, fair Charlotte, too, is wronged; wronged in the tenderest point: for so extravagant is this settlement, that it leaves her not a shilling unless she marries with the Doctor's consent, which is intended, by what I have heard, as an expedient to oblige her to marry the Doctor himself. Now, 'twere but an honest part, to let Charlotte know the snare that is laid for her. This deed's not signed, and may yet be prevented. It shall be so. Yes, charming creature, I adore you! And, though I am sensible my passion is without hope, I may indulge it thus far at least; I may have the merit of serving you, and perhaps the pleasure to know you think yourself obliged by me.

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT, LADY LAMBERT, *and* CHARLOTTE.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! Seyward, your uncle wants you to transcribe some hymns.

Seyw. Sir, I'll wait on him.

Charl. A pretty well-bred fellow, that.

Sir J. Lamb. Ay, ay; but he has better qualities than his good breeding.

Charl. He's always clean, too.

Sir J. Lamb. I wonder, daughter, when you will take notice of a man's real merit. Humph! well-bred and clean, forsooth! Would not one think, now, she was describing a coxcomb? When do you hear my wife talk at this rate? and yet she is as young as your fantastical ladyship.

Lady Lamb. Charlotte is of a cheerful temper, my dear; but I know you don't think she wants discretion.

Sir J. Lamb. I shall try that presently; and you, my dear, shall judge between us. In short, daughter, your course of life is but one continued round of playing the fool to no purpose; and therefore I am resolved to make you think seriously, and marry.

Charl. That I shall do before I marry, sir, you may depend upon it.

Sir J. Lamb. Umph! that I am not so sure of; but you may depend upon my having thought seriously, and that's as well: for the person I intend you is, of all the world, the only man who can make you truly happy.

Charl. And of all the world, sir, that's the only man I'll positively marry.

Lady Lamb. You have rare courage, Charlotte; if I had such a game to play, I should be frighted out of my wits.

Charl. Lud! madam, he'll make nothing of it, depend upon it.

Sir J. Lamb. Mind what I say to you. This wonderful man, I say, first, in his public character, is religious, zealous and charitable.

Charl. Very well, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. In his private character, sober.

Charl. I should hate a sot.

Sir J. Lamb. Chaste.

Charl. A-hem! *(Stifling a laugh.)*

Sir J Lamb. What is it you sneer at, madam? You want one of your fine gentlemen rakes, I suppose, that are snapping at every woman they meet with.

Charl. No, no, sir; I am very well satisfied. I, I should not care for such a sort of a man, no more than I should for one that every woman was ready to snap at.

Sir J. Lamb. No, you'll be secure from jealousy; he has experience, ripeness of years; he is almost forty-nine. Your sex's vanity will have no charms for him.

Charl. But all this while, sir, I don't find that he has charms for our sex's vanity. How does he look? Is he tall, well made? Does he dress, sing, talk, laugh, and dance well? Has he good hair, good teeth, fine eyes? Does he keep a chaise, coach, and vis-a-vis? Has he six prancing ponies? Does he wear the prince's uniform, and subscribe to Brookes's?

Sir J. Lamb. Was there ever so profligate a creature! What will this age come to?

Lady Lamb. Nay, Charlotte, here I must be against you. Now you are blind, indeed. A woman's happiness has little to do with the pleasure her husband takes in his own person.

Sir J. Lamb. Right.

Lady Lamb. It is not how he looks, but how he loves, is the point.

Sir J. Lamb. Good again.

Lady Lamb. And a wife is much more secure that has charms for her husband, than when the husband has only charms for her.

Sir J. Lamb. Admirable! go on, my dear.

Lady Lamb. Do you think a woman of five-and-twenty may not be much happier with an honest man of fifty, than the finest woman of fifty with a young fellow of five-and-twenty.

Sir J. Lamb. Mark that!

Charl. Ay; but when two five-and-twenties come together, dear papa, you must allow they've a chance to be fifty times as pleasant and frolicsome.

Sir J. Lamb. Frolicsome! Why, you sensual idiot, what have frolics to do with solid happiness? I am ashamed of you. Go; you talk worse than a girl at a boarding-school. Frolicsome! as if marriage was only a license for two people to play the fool according to law. Methinks, madam, you have a better example of happiness before your face. Here's one has ten times your understanding, and she, you find, has made a different choice.

Charl. Lud, sir, how you talk! you don't consider people's tempers. I don't say my lady is not in the right; but then, you know, papa, she's a prude, and I am a coquette; she becomes her character very well, I don't deny it; and I hope everything I do is as consistent with mine. Your wise people may talk what they will, but 'tis constitution governs us all; and be assured, you will no more be able to bring me to endure a man of forty-nine, than you can persuade my lady to dance in church to the organ.

Sir J. Lamb. Why, you wicked wretch! could any thing persuade you to do that?

Charl. Lud, sir! I won't answer for what I might do, if the whim were in my head; besides you know I always loved a little flirtation.

Sir J. Lamb. O horrible! flirtation! My poor sister has ruined her; leaving her fortune in her own hand has turned her brain. In short, Charlotte, your sentiments of life are shameful, and I am resolved upon your instant reformation; therefore, as an earnest of your obedience, I shall first insist that you never see young Darnley more; for, in one word, the good and pious Doctor Cantwell's the man that I have decreed for your husband.

Charl. Ho! ho! ho!

Sir J. Lamb. 'Tis very well; this laugh you think becomes you, but I shall spoil your mirth. No more; give me a serious answer.

Charl. I ask your pardon, sir: I should not have smiled, indeed, could I have supposed it possible that you were serious.

Sir J. Lamb. You'll find me so.

Charl. I'm sorry for it; but I have an objection to the Doctor, sir, that most fathers think a substantial one.

Sir J. Lamb. Name it.

Charl. Why, sir, we know nothing of his fortune: he's not worth a groat.

Sir J. Lamb. That's more than you know, madam; I am able to give him a better estate than I am afraid you'll deserve.

Charl. How!—sir!

Sir J. Lamb. I have told you what's my will, and shall leave you to think on't.

Enter SEYWARD.

Seyw. Sir, if you are at leisure, the Doctor desires to speak with you, upon business of importance.

Sir J. Lamb. I will come to him immediately. [*Exit Seyward.*] Daughter, I am called away, and therefore have only time to tell you, as my last resolution, Doctor Cantwell is your husband, or I'm no more your father. [*Exit.*

Charl. O madam! I am at my wits' end; not for the little fortune I may lose in disobeying my father, but it startles me to find what a dangerous influence this fellow has over all his actions.

Lady Lamb. Here's your brother.

Enter COLONEL LAMBERT.

Col. Lamb. Madam, your most obedient. Well, sister, is the secret out? Who is this pretty fellow my father has picked up for you?

Charl. Even our agreeable Doctor.

Col. Lamb. You are not serious?

Lady Lamb. He's the very man, I can assure you, sir.

Col. Lamb. Confusion! What! would the cormorant devour the whole family? Your ladyship knows he is secretly in love with you too.

Lady Lamb. Fie! fie! Colonel.

Col. Lamb. I ask your pardon, madam, if I speak too freely: but I am sure, by what I have seen, your ladyship must suspect something of it.

Lady Lamb. I am sorry anybody else has seen it: but I must own, his behaviour to me of late, both in private and before company, has been something warmer than I thought became him.

Col. Lamb. How are these opposites to be reconciled? Can the rascal have the assurance to think both points are to be carried?

Charl. Truly, one would not suspect the gentleman to be so termagant.

Col. Lamb. Especially while he pretends to be so shocked at all indecent amours. In the country, he used to make the maids lock up the turkey cocks every Saturday night, for fear they should gallant the hens on a Sunday.

Lady Lambert. Oh! ridiculous!

Col. Lamb. Upon my life, madam, my sister told me so.

Charl. I tell you so! You impudent---

Lady Lamb. Fie! Charlotte, he only jests with you.

Charl. How can you be such a monster to stay playing the fool here, when you have more reason to be frightened out of your wits? You don't know, perhaps, that my father declares he'll settle a fortune upon this fellow too.

Col. Lamb. What do you mean?

Lady Lamb. 'Tis too true; 'tis not three minutes since he said so.

Col. Lamb. Nay, then, it is time indeed his eyes were opened; and give me leave to say, madam, 'tis only in your power.

Lady Lamb. What is't you propose?

Col. Lamb. Why, if this fellow, which I'm sure of, is really in love with you, give him a fair opportunity to declare himself, and leave me to make my advantage of it.

Lady Lamb. I should be loth to do a wrong thing.

Charl. Dear madam, it is the only way in the world to expose him to my father.

Lady Lamb. I'll think of it.

Col. Lamb. Pray do, madam; but in the meantime I must leave you; poor Darnley stays for me at the Smyrna, and will sit upon thorns 'till I bring him an account of his new rival.

Charl. Wel., well, get you gone then; here is my grandmother. [*Exit Colonel.*

Enter OLD LADY LAMBERT.

Lady Lamb. This is kind, madam; I hope your ladyship's come to dine with us.

Old Lady Lamb. No; don't be afraid: only in my way from Tottenham Court, I just called to see whether any dreadful accident had happened to the family since I was here last.

Lady Lamb. Accident, did your ladyship say?

Old Lady Lamb. I shall be sorry, daughter, but not surprised, when I hear it; for there are goings on under this roof, that will bring temporal punishments along with them.

Lady Lamb. Indeed, madam, you astonish me!

Old Lady Lamb. We'll drop the subject; and I beg leave to address myself to you, Miss Charlotte; I see you have a bit of lace upon your neck; I desire to know what you wear it for.

Charl. Wear it for, madam? It's the fashion.

Old Lady Lamb. In short, I have been at my linen-draper's to-day, and have brought you some thick muslin, which I desire you will make handkerchiefs of, for I must tell you that slight covering is indecent, and gives much offence.

Lady Lamb. Indecent, did your ladyship say?

Old Lady Lamb. Yes, daughter-in-law. Doctor Cantwell complains to me that he cannot sit at table, the sight of her bare neck disturbs him so; and he's a good man, and knows what indecency is.

Charl. Yes, indeed; I believe he does, better than any one in this house. But you may tell the Doctor from me, madam, that he is an impudent coxcomb—a puppy—and deserves to have his bones broken.

Old Lady Lamb. Fie! Charlotte, fie! He speaks but for your good, and this is the grateful return you make.

Charl. Grateful return, madam! how can you be so partial to that hypocrite? The Doctor is one of those who start at a feather. Poor good man! yet he has his vices of a graver sort.

Old Lady Lamb. Come, come; I wish you would follow his precepts, whose practice is conformable to what he teaches. Virtuous man! Above all sensual regards, he considers the world merely as a collection of dirt and pebble-stones. How has he weaned me from temporal connexions! My heart is now set upon nothing sublunary; and, I thank heaven, I am so insensible to everything in this vain world, that I could see you, my son, my daughters, my brothers, my grand-children, all expire before me; and mind it no more than the going out of so many snuffs of candle.

Charl. Upon my word, madam, it is a very humane disposition you have been able to arrive at; and your family is much obliged to the Doctor for his instructions.

Old Lady Lamb. Well, child, I have nothing more to say to you at present; heaven mend you, that's all.

Lady Lamb. Pray, madam, stay and dine with us.

Old Lady Lamb. No, daughter; I have said it, and you know I never tell a lie; but here's my son, if you'll give me leave, I'll stay and speak to him.

Lady Lamb. Your ladyship's time is your own.

Charl. Ay, and here's that abominable Doctor. This fellow puts me beyond my patience.

[*Exeunt Lady Lambert and Charlotte.*

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT *and* DR. CANTWELL.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, madam, madam! I'm glad you're here to join me in solicitations to the Doctor. Here is my mother, friend, my mother; a pious woman; you will hear her, more worthy to advise you than I am.

Dr. Cant. Alas! the dear good lady, I will kiss her hand. But what advice can she give me? The riches of this world, sir, have no charms for me; I am not dazzled with their false glare; and were I, I repeat it, to accept of the trust you want to repose in me, heaven knows, it would only be lest the means should fall into wicked hands, who would

not lay it out as I should do, for the glory of heaven, and the good of my neighbour.

Old Lady Lamb. What is the matter, son?

Dr. Cant. Nothing, madam; nothing. But you were witness how the worthy Colonel treated me this morning. Not that I speak it on my own account; for to be reviled is my portion.

Sir J. Lamb. O the villain! the villain!

Dr. Cant. Indeed, I did not think he had so hard a nature.

Old Lady Lamb. Ah! your charitable heart knows not the rancour that is in his. His wicked sister, too, has been here this moment abusing this good man.

Dr. Cant. O! sir, 'tis plain, 'tis plain; your whole family are in a combination against me; your son and daughter hate me; they think I stand between them and your favour; and indeed it is not fit I should do so; for, fallen as they are, they are still your children, and I an alien, an intruder, who ought in conscience to retire and heal those unhappy breaches.

Old Lady Lamb. See, if the good man does not wipe his eyes!

Dr. Cant. Oh, heavens! the thought of their ingratitude wounds me to the quick, but I'll remove this eye-sore; here, Charles!

Enter SEYWARD.

Sir J. Lamb. For goodness' sake—

Dr. Cant. Bring me that writing I gave you to lay up this morning.

Sir J. Lamb. Make haste, good Charles; it shall be signed this moment. [*Exit Seyward.*

Dr. Cant. Not for the world, Sir John: every minute tends to corroborate my last intentions; I must not, will not take it, with the curses of your children.

Sir J. Lamb. But, consider, Doctor; shall my wicked son then be heir to my lands, before repentance has entitled him to favour. No, let him depend upon you, whom he has wronged; perhaps, in time he may reflect on his father's justice, and be reconciled to your rewarded virtues. If heaven should at last reclaim him, in you, I know, he still would find a fond, forgiving father.

Dr. Cant. The imagination of so blest an hour softens me to a tenderness I cannot support!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh! the dear good man.

Sir J. Lamb. With regard to my daughter, Doctor, you know she is not wronged by it; because, if she prove not obstinate, she may still be happy.

Old Lady Lamb. Yes, but the perverse wretch slights the blessing you propose for her.

Dr. Cant. We must allow, madam, female modesty a time, which often takes the likeness of distaste: the commands of your good son might too suddenly surprise her. Maids must be gently dealt with, and, might I humbly advise—

Sir J. Lamb. Anything you will; you shall govern me and her.

Dr. Cant. Then, sir, abate of your authority, and let the matter rest awile.

Sir J. Lamb. Suppose we were to get my wife to speak to her; women will often hear from their own sex what, sometimes, even from the man they like, will startle them.

Dr. Cant. Then, with your permission, sir, I will take an opportunity of talking to my lady.

Sir J. Lamb. She's now in her dressing-room; I'll go and prepare her for it. [*Exit.*

Dr. Cant. You are too good to me, sir; too bountiful. *Enter* SEYWARD.

Seyw. Sir, Mr. Mawworm is without, and would be glad to be permitted to speak with you.

Old Lady Lamb. Oh, pray, Doctor, admit him; I have not seen Mr. Mawworm this great while; he's a pious man, tho' in an humble estate; desire the worthy creature to walk in. [*Enter* MAWWORM.] How do you do, Mr. Mawworm?

Maw. Thank your ladyship's axing, I'm but deadly poorish, indeed; the world and I can't agree—I have got the books, Doctor, and Mrs. Grunt bid me give her service to you, and thanks you for the eighteen pence.

Dr. Cant. Hush! friend Mawworm! not a word more; you know I hate to have my little charities blazed about: a poor widow, madam, to whom I sent my mite.

Old Lady Lamb. Give her this. (*Offers a purse to Mawworm.*)

Dr. Cant. I'll take care it shall be given to her. (*Takes the purse.*)

Old Lady Lamb. But what is the matter with you, Mr. Mawworm?

Maw. I don't know what's the matter with me; I'm a breaking my heart: I think it's a sin to keep a shop.

Old Lady Lamb. Why, if you think it a sin, indeed; pray, what's your business?

Maw. We deals in grocery, tea, small-beer, charcoals, butter, brick-dust and the like.

Old Lady Lamb. Well; you must consult with your friendly director here.

Maw. I wants to go a-preaching.

Old Lady Lamb. Do you?

Maw. I'm almost sure I have had a call.

Old Lady Lamb. Ay!

Maw. I have made several sermons already. I does them extrumpery, because I can't write; and now the devils in our alley says as how my head's turned.

Old Lady Lamb. Ay, devils indeed; but don't you mind them.

Maw. No, I don't; I rebukes them, and preaches to them, whether they will or not. We lets our house in lodgings to single men, and, sometimes, I gets them together, with one or two of the neighbours, and makes them all cry.

Old Lady Lamb. Did you ever preach in public?

Maw. I got up on Kennington Common, the last review day; but the boys threw brick-bats at me, and pinned crackers to my tail; and I have been afraid to mount, your ladyship, ever since.

Old Lady Lamb. Do you hear this, Doctor! throw brick-bats at him, and pin crackers to his tail! Can these things be stood by?

Maw. I told them so; says I, I does nothing clandecently; I stand here contagious to his majesty's guards, and I charges you upon your apparels not to mislist me.

Old Lady Lamb. And it had no effect?

Maw. No more than if I spoke to so many postesses; but if he advises me to go a-preaching, and quit my shop, I'll make an excressance farther into the country.

Old Lady Lamb. An excursion, you would say.

Maw. I am but a sheep, but my bleatings shall be heard afar off, and that sheep shall become a shepherd; nay, if it be only, as it were, a shepherd's dog, to bark the stray lambs into the fold.

Old Lady Lamb. He wants method, Doctor.

Dr. Cant. Yes, madam, but there is matter; and I despise not the ignorant.

Maw. He's a saint.

Dr. Cant. Oh!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh!

Maw. If ever there was a saint, he's one. 'Till I went after him I was little better than the devil; my conscience was tanned with sin, like a piece of neat's leather, and had no more feeling than the sole of my shoe; always a roving after fantastical delights; I used to go, every Sunday evening, to the Three Hats, at Islington; it's a public house; mayhap your ladyship may know it: I was a great lover of skittles too, but now I can't bear them.

Old Lady Lamb. What a blessed reformation!

Maw. I believe, Doctor, you never know'd as how I was instigated one of the stewards of the

reforming society. I convicted a man of five oaths, as last Thursday was a se'nnight, at the Pewter-platter, in the Borough; and another of three, while he was playing trap-ball in St. George's Fields: I bought this waistcoat out of my share of the money.

Old Lady Lamb. But how do you mind your business?

Maw. We have lost almost all our customers; because I keeps extorting them whenever they come into the shop.

Old Lady Lamb. And how do you live?

Maw. Better than ever we did: while we were wordly-minded, my wife and I (for I am married to as likely a woman as you shall see in a thousand) could hardly make things do at all; but since this good man has brought us into the road of the righteous, we have always plenty of everything; and my wife goes as well dressed as a gentlewoman. We have had a child too.

Old Lady Lamb. Merciful!

Maw. And between you and me, Doctor, I believe, Susy's breeding again.

Dr. Cant. Thus it is, madam; I am constantly told, though I can hardly believe it, a blessing follows wherever I come.

Maw. And yet, if you would hear how the neighbours reviles my wife; saying as how she sets no store by me, because we have words now and then; but, as I says, if such was the case, would she ever have cut me down that there time as I was melancholy, and she found me hanging behind the door; I don't believe there's a wife in the parish would have done so by her husband.

Dr. Cant. I believe 'tis near dinner-time; and Sir John will require my attendance.

Maw. Oh! I am troublesome; nay, I only come to you, Doctor, with a message from Mrs. Grunt. I wish your ladyship heartily and heartily farewell; Doctor, a good day to you.

Old Lady Lamb. Mr. Mawworm, call on me some time this afternoon; I want to have a little private discourse with you; and pray, my service to your spouse.

Maw. I will, madam; you are a malefactor to all goodness; I'll wait upon your ladyship; I will, indeed. *(Going, returns.)* Oh! Doctor, that's true; Susy desired me to give her kind love and respects to you. [*Exit.*

Dr. Cant. Madam, if you please, I will lead you into the parlour.

Old Lady Lamb. No, Doctor, my coach waits at the door. *Enter* Seyward.

Dr. Cant. Charles, you may lay those papers by again, but in some place where you'll easily find them; for I believe we shall have occasion for them some time this afternoon.

Seyw. I'll take care, sir.

[*Exeunt Doctor and Old Lady Lambert.*

Occasion for them this afternoon! Then there's no time to be lost; the coast is clear, and this is her chamber. What's the matter with me? The thought of speaking to her throws me into a disorder. There's nobody within, I believe; I'll knock again. [*Enter* Betty.] Is your lady busy?

Betty. I believe she's only reading, sir.

Seyw. Will you do me the favour to let her know, if she's at leisure, I beg to speak with her upon some earnest business?

Enter Charlotte.

Charl. Who's that?

Betty. She's here. Mr. Seyward, madam, desires to speak with you.

Charl. Oh! your servant, Mr. Seyward. Here, take this odious Homer, and lay him up again; he tires me. [*Exit Betty.*] How could the blind wretch make such a horrid fuss about a fine woman, for so many volumes together, and give us no account of her amours? You have read him, I suppose, in the Greek, Mr. Seyward?

Seyw. Not lately, madam.

Charl. But do you so violently admire him now?

Seyw. The critics say he has his beauties, madam; but Ovid has been always my favourite.

Charl. Ovid! oh, he is ravishing!

Seyw. So art thou, to madness! *(Aside.)*

Charl. Lud! how could one do to learn Greek? Were you a great while about it?

Seyw. It has been half the business of my life, madam.

Charl. That's cruel now; then you think one could not be mistress of it in a month of two?

Seyw. Not easily, madam.

Charl. They tell me it has the softest tone for love of any language in the world. I fancy I could soon learn it. I know three words of it already.

Seyw. Pray, madam, what are they?

Charl. Stay, let me see, oh, ay! Zoe kai psuche.

Seyw. I hope you know the English of them, madam?

Charl. Oh, lud! I hope there is no harm in it. I'm sure I heard the Doctor say it to my lady. Pray, what is it?

Seyw. You must first imagine, madam, a tender lover, gazing on his mistress; and then indeed, they have a softness in them; as thus, Zoe kai psuche! my life! my soul!

Charl. Oh! the impudent young rogue! how his eyes spoke too! What the deuce can he want with me? It always run in my head that this fellow had something in him above his condition; I'll know immediately. Well, but your business with me, Mr. Seyward? You have something of love in your head, I'll lay my life on't.

Seyw. I never yet durst own it, madam.

Charl. Why, what's the matter?

Seyw. My story is too melancholy to entertain a mind so much at ease as your's.

Charl. Oh! I love melancholy stories, of all things. Pray, how long have you lived with your uncle, Mr. Seyward?

Seyw. With Doctor Cantwell, I suppose you mean, madam?

Charl. Ay.

Seyw. He's no uncle of mine, madam.

Charl. You surprise me! not your uncle?

Seyw. No, madam; but that's not the only character the Doctor assumes, to which he has no right.

Charl. Lud! I am concerned for you.

Seyw. So you would, madam, if you knew all.

Charl. I am already; but if there are any further particulars of your story, pray, let me hear them; and should any services be in my power, I am sure you may command them.

Seyw. You treat me with so kind, so gentle a hand, that I will unbosom myself to you. My father madam, was the younger branch of a genteel family in the north; his name, Trueman; but dying while I was yet in my infancy, I was left wholly dependant on my mother; a woman really pious and well-meaning, but—in short, madam, Doctor Cantwell fatally got acquainted with her, and as he is now your father's bosom counsellor, soon became her's. She died, madam, when I was but eight years old; and then I was, indeed, left an orphan.

Charl. Poor creature! Lud! I cannot bear it!

Seyw. She left Doctor Cantwell her sole heir and executor: but I must do her the justice to say, I believe it was in the confirmation that he would take care of, and do justice to me; and, indeed he has so far taken care of me, that he sent me to a seminary abroad, and for these three years last past has kept me with him.

Charl. A seminary! Oh! heavens! but why have you not striven to do yourself justice?

Seyw. Thrown so young into his power, as I was, unknown and friendless, to whom could I apply for succour? Nay, madam, I will confess, that, on my return to England, I was at first tainted

with his enthusiastic notions myself; and, for some time, as much imposed upon by him, as others; 'till, by degrees, as he found it necessary to make use of, or totally discard me, (which last he did not think prudent to do,) he was obliged to unveil himself to me in his proper colours; and I believe I can inform you of some parts of his private character, that may be the means of detecting one of the wickedest impostors that ever practised upon credulity.

Charl. But how has the wretch dared to treat you?

Seyw. In his ill and insolent humours, madam, he has sometimes the presumption to tell me, that I am the object of his charity; and I own, madam, that I am humbled in my opinion, by his having drawn me into a connivance at some actions, which I can't look back on without horror!

Charl. Indeed, you can't tell how I pity you; and depend upon it, if it be possible to serve you, by getting you out of the hands of this monster, I will.

Seyw. Once more, madam, let me assure you, that your generous inclination would be a consolation to me in the worst misfortunes; and, even in the last moment of painful death, would give my heart a joy.

Charl. Lud! the poor unfortunate boy loves me, too! What shall I do with him? Pray, Mr. Seyward, what paper is that you have in your hand? Is it relative to—

Seyw. Another instance of the conscience and gratitude which animates our worthy Doctor.

Charl. You frighten me! Pray what is the purport of it? Is it neither signed nor sealed?

Seyw. No, madam; therefore to prevent it, by this timely notice, was my business here with you. Your father gave it to the Doctor first, to show his counsel; who having approved it, I understand this evening it will be executed.

Charl. But what is it?

Seyw. It grants to Doctor Cantwell, in present, four hundred pounds per annum, of which this very house is part; and, at your father's death, invests him in the whole remainder of his freehold estate. For you, indeed, there is a charge of four thousand pounds upon it, provided you marry with the Doctor's consent; if not, 'tis added to my lady's jointure; but your brother, madam, is, without conditions, utterly disinherited.

Charl. I am confounded! What will become of us! My father now, I find, was serious. Oh! this insinuating hypocrite! Let me see,—ay, I will go this minute. Sir, dare you trust this in my hands for an hour only?

Seyw. Anything to serve you. *(Bell rings.)*

Charl. Hark! they ring to dinner: pray, sir, step in: say I am obliged to dine abroad; and whisper one of the footmen to get a chair immediately; then do you take a proper occasion to slip out after me to Mr. Double's chambers in the Temple; there I shall have time to talk further with you. [*Exeunt Charlotte and Seyward.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*A Dressing-room, with tables and chairs.*

Enter Charlotte *and* Betty.

Charl. Has any one been to speak with me, Betty?

Betty. Only Mr. Darnley, madam; he said he would call again, and bid his servant stay below, to give him notice when you came home.

Charl. You don't know what he wanted?

Betty. No, madam; he seemed very uneasy at your being abroad.

Charl. Well, go; I'll see him. [*Exit Betty.*] Ten to one but his wise head has found out something to be jealous of: if he lets me see it, I shall be sure to make him infinitely easy. Here he comes.

Enter Darnley.

Darn. Your humble servant, madam.

Charl. Your servant, sir.

Darn. You have been abroad, I hear?

Charl. Yes, and now I am come home, you see.

Darn. You seem to turn upon my words, madam! Is there any thing particular in them?

Charl. As much as there is in my being abroad, I believe.

Darn. Might I not say you have been abroad, without giving offence?

Charl. And might I not as well say, I was come home, without your being so grave upon it?

Darn. Do you know anything that should make me grave?

Charl. I know, if you are so, I am the worst person in the world you can possibly show it to.

Darn. Nay, I don't suppose you do anything you won't justify.

Charl. Oh! then I find I have done something you think I can't justify.

Darn. I don't say that neither. Perhaps I am wrong in what I have said; but I have so often used to ask pardon for your being in the wrong, that I am resolved henceforth never to rely on the insolent evidence of my own senses.

Charl. You don't know, now, perhaps, that I think this pretty smart speech of your's is very dull; but, since that's a fault you can't help, I will not take it ill. Come now, be as sincere on your side, and tell me seriously, is not what real business I had abroad, the very thing you want to be made easy in?

Darn. If I thought you would make me easy, I would own it.

Charl. Now do we come to the point. To-morrow morning, then, I give you my word, to let you know it all; 'till when, there is a necessity for it being a secret; and I insist upon your believing it.

Darn. But pray, madam, what am I to do with private imagination in the meantime? That is not in my power to confine; and sure, you won't be offended, if to avoid the tortures that may give me, I beg you'll trust me with the secret now.

Charl. Don't press me; for positively I will not.

Darn. Will not! Cannot had been a kinder term. Is my disquiet of so little moment to you?

Charl. Of none, while your disquiet dares not trust the assurances I have given you. If you expect I should confide in you for life, don't let me see you dare not take my word for a day; and if you are wise, you'll think so fair a trial a favour. Come, come, there's nothing shows so low a mind, as those grave and insolent jealousies.

Darn. However, madam, mine you won't find so low as you imagine; and since I see your tyranny arises from your mean opinion of me, 'tis time to be myself, and disavow your power. You use it now beyond my bearing; not only impose on me to disbelieve my senses, but do it with such an imperious air, as if my manly reason were your slave; and this despicable frame, that follows you, durst shew no signs of life but what you vouchsafe to give it.

Charl. You are in the right. Go on; suspect me still; believe the worst you can; 'tis all true; I don't justify myself. Why do you trouble me with your complaints? If you are master of that manly reason you have boasted, give a manly proof of it; at once resume your liberty; despise me; go off in triumph now, like a king in a tragedy.

Darn. Is this the end of all then? And are those tender protestations you have made me (for such I thought them) when, with a kind of reluctance, you gave me something more than hope—what all—oh, Charlotte! all come to this?

Charl. Oh, lud! I am growing silly; if I hear on, I shall tell him everything; 'tis but another struggle, and I shall conquer it. *(Aside.)* So you are not gone, I see.

Darn. Do you then wish me gone, madam

Charl. Your manly reason will direct you.

Darn. This is too much; my heart can bear no more! What! am I rooted here?

Enter Seyward.

Charl. At last I am relieved. Well, Mr. Seyward, is it done?

Seyw. I did not stir from the desk till it was entirely finished.

Charl. Where's the original?

Seyw. This is it, madam.

Charl. Very well; that, you know, you must keep; but come, we must lose no time; we will examine this in the next room. Now I feel for him. [*Exit.*

Darn. This is not to be borne. Pray, Mr. Charles, what private business have you with that lady?

Seyw. Sir!

Darn. I must know, young man.

Seyw. Not quite so young, but I can keep a secret, and a lady's too; you'll excuse me, sir! [*Exit.*

Darn. 'Sdeath! I shall be laughed at by everybody; I shall be distracted. This young fellow should repent his pertness, did not this house protect him. This is Charlotte's contrivance to distract me; but,—but what? Oh! I have love enough to bear this, and ten times as much.

Enter Colonel Lambert.

Col Lamb. What!—in raptures!

Darn. Pr'ythee—I am unfit to talk with you.

Col. Lamb. What! is Charlotte in her airs again?

Darn. I know not what she is.

Col. Lamb. Do you know where she is?

Darn. Retired this moment to her chamber with the young fellow there, the Doctor's nephew.

Col. Lamb. Why, you are not jealous of the Doctor, I hope?

Darn. Perhaps she'll be less reserved to you, and tell you wherein I have mistaken her.

Col. Lamb. Poor Frank! Every plot I lay upon my sister's inclination for you, you are sure to ruin by your own conduct.

Darn. I own I have too little temper, and too much real passion, for a modish lover.

Col. Lamb. Come, come; make yourself easy once more; I'll undertake for you. If you'll fetch a cool turn in the Park, upon Constitution Hill, in less than half an hour I'll come to you, and make you perfectly easy.

Darn. Dear Tom, you are a friend indeed! I have a thousand things,—but you shall find me there. [*Exit.*

Enter Charlotte *and* Seyward.

Col. Lamb. How now, sister; what have you done to Darnley? The poor fellow looks as if he had killed your parrot.

Charl. Psha! you know him well enough; I've only been setting him a love lesson; it a little puzzles him to get through it at first, but he'll know it all by to-morrow. You will be sure to be in the way, Mr. Seyward.

Seyw. Madam, you may depend upon me; I have my full instructions. [*Exit.*

Col. Lamb. O ho! here's the business then; and it seems that Darnley was not to be trusted with it. Ha! ha! and pr'ythee, what is the mighty secret that is transacted between Seyward and you?

Charl. That's what he would have known, indeed; but you must know, I don't think it proper to let you tell him either, for all your sly manner of asking.

Col. Lamb. Pray take your own time, dear madam; I am not in haste to know, I assure you.

Charl. Well, but hold; on second thoughts, you shall know part of this affair between Seyward and me; nay, I give you leave to tell Darnley too, on some conditions: 'tis true, I did design to have surprised you; but now my mind's altered, that's enough.

Col. Lamb. Ay, for any mortal's satisfaction, but here comes my lady.

Enter Lady Lambert.

Lady Lamb. Away, away, Colonel and Charlotte, both of you away this instant.

Charl. What's the matter, madam?

Lady Lamb. I am going to put the Doctor to his trial, that's all. I have considered the proposal you have made me to-day, Colonel, and am convinced it ought not to be delayed an instant: so just now, I told the Doctor in a half-whisper, that I should be glad to have a word in private with him here; and he said he would wait upon me presently; but must I play a traitorous part now, and instead of persuading you to the Doctor, persuade the Doctor against you?

Charl. Dear madam, why not? One moment's truce with the prude, I beg of you; don't startle at his first declaration, but let him go on, 'till he shows the very bottom of his ugly heart.

Lady Lamb. I warrant you, I'll give a good account of him; but, as I live, here he comes!

Charl. Come then, brother, you and I will be commode, and steal off. [*Exeunt Charl. and Col.*

Enter Doctor Cantwell. *The Col. listening.*

Dr. Cant. Here I am, madam, at your ladyship's command; how happy am I that you think me worthy.

Lady Lamb. Please to sit, sir. (*They sit.*)

Dr. Cant. Well, but, dear lady—Ha! you can't conceive the joyousness I feel at this so much desired interview. Ah! ah! I have a thousand friendly things to say to you. And how stands your precious health? Is your naughty cold abated yet? I have scarce closed my eyes these two nights with my concern for you.

Lady Lamb. Your charity is too far concerned for me.

Dr. Cant. Ah! don't say so: don't say so: you merit more than mortal man can do for you.

Lady Lamb. Indeed you overrate me.

Dr. Cant. I speak it from my heart: indeed, indeed, indeed, I do. (*Pressing her hand.*)

Lady Lamb. O dear! you hurt my hand, sir.

Dr. Cant. Impute it to my zeal, and want of words for expression: precious soul! I would not harm you for the world; no, it would be the whole business of my life——

Lady Lamb. But to the affair I would speak to you about.

Dr. Cant. Ah! thou heavenly woman! (*Placing his hand on her knee.*)

Lady Lamb. Your hand need not be there, sir.

Dr. Cant. I was admiring the softness of this silk. They are indeed come to prodigious perfection in all manufactures: how wonderful is human art! Here it disputes the prize with nature. That all this soft and gaudy lustre should be brought from the labours of a poor worm!

Lady Lamb. But our business, sir, is upon another subject. Sir John informs me, that he thinks himself under no obligations to Mr. Darnley, and therefore resolves to give his daughter to you.

Dr. Cant. Such a thing has been mentioned, madam; but, to deal sincerely with you, that is not the happiness I sigh after; there is a soft and serious excellence for me, very different from what your step-daughter possesses.

Lady Lamb. Well, sir, pray be sincere, and open your heart to me.

Dr. Cant. Open my heart! Can you then, sweet lady, be yet a stranger to it? Has no action of my life been able to inform you of my real thoughts?

Lady Lamb. Well, sir; I take all this, as I suppose you intend it, for my good, and spiritual welfare.

Dr. Cant. Indeed I mean you cordial service.

Lady Lamb. I dare say you do. You are above the low, momentary views of this world.

Dr. Cant. Why, I should be so: and yet, alas! I find this mortal clothing of my soul is made like

other men's, of sensual flesh and blood, and has its frailties.

Lady Lamb. We all have those; but your's are well corrected by your divine and virtuous contemplations.

Dr. Cant. Alas! madam; my heart is not of stone. I may resist; call all my prayers, my fastings, tears, and penance, to my aid; but yet I am not an angel. I am still but a man; and virtue may strive, but nature will be uppermost. I love you then, madam.

Lady Lamb. (*They rise.*) Hold, sir! Suppose I now should let my husband, your benefactor, know the favour you design him.

Dr. Cant. You cannot be so cruel!

Lady Lamb. Nor will, on this condition; that you instantly renounce all claim and title to Charlotte, and use your utmost interest with Sir John, to give her, with her full fortune, to Mr. Darnley.

COLONEL LAMBERT *advances between them.*

Col. Lamb. Villain! monster! perfidious and ungrateful traitor! Your hypocrisy, your false zeal is discovered; and I am sent here, by the hand of insulted heaven, to lay you open to my father, and expose you to the world.

Dr. Cant. Ha!

Lady Lamb. O! unthinking Colonel!

Col. Lamb. Well, sir, what have you to say for yourself?

Dr. Cant. I have nothing to say to you, Colonel, nor for you; but you shall have my prayers.

Col. Lamb. Why, you profligate hypocrite! Do you think to carry off your villainy with that sanctified air?

Dr. Cant. I know not what you mean, sir. I have been in discourse here with my good lady, by permission of your worthy father.

Col. Lamb. Dog! did my father desire you to talk of love to my lady?

Dr. Cant. Call me not dog, Colonel! I hope we are both brother Christians. Yes, I will own I did beg leave to talk to her of love; for, alas! I am but a man! yet if my passion for your dear sister, which I cannot control, be sinful—

Lady Lamb. (*Aside to the Colonel.*) Your noise, I perceive, is bringing up Sir John. Manage with him as you will, at present; I will withdraw; for I have an after-game to play, which may yet put this wretch effectually into our power. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JOHN LAMBERT.

Sir J. Lamb. What uproar is this?

Col. Lamb. Nothing, sir! nothing! only a little broil of the good Doctor's here. You are well rewarded for your kindness; and he would fain pay it back, with triple interest, to your wife: in short, sir, I took him here in the very fact of making a criminal declaration of love to my lady.

Dr. Cant. Why, why, Sir John, would you not let me leave your house? I knew some dreadful method would be taken to drive me hence.—O! be not angry, good Colonel: but indeed, and indeed, you use me cruelly.

Sir J. Lamb. Horrible, wicked creature!—Doctor, let me hear it from you.

Dr. Cant. Alas! sir, I am in the dark as much as you; but it should seem, for what purpose he best knows, your son hid himself somewhere hereabouts; and while I was talking to my lady, rushed in upon us. You know the subject, sir, on which I was to entertain her; and I might speak of my love to your daughter, with more warmth than perhaps I ought; which the Colonel overhearing, might possibly imagine I was addressing my lady herself; for I will not suspect, no, heaven forbid! I will not suspect that he would intentionally forge a falsehood to dishonour me.

Sir J. Lamb. Now, vile detractor of all virtue! is your outrageous malice confounded? What he tells you is true; he has been talking to my lady by my consent; and what he said, he said by my orders. Good man, be not concerned; for I see through their vile designs. Here, thou curse of my life, if thou art not lost to conscience, and all sense of honour, repair the injury you have attempted, by confessing your rancour, and throwing yourself at his feet.

Dr. Cant. Oh, Sir John!—for my sake—I will throw myself at the Colonel's feet; nay, if that will please him, he shall tread on my neck.

Sir J. Lamb. What! mute, defenceless, hardened in thy malice?

Col. Lamb. I scorn the imputation, sir; and with the same repeated honesty avow (however cunningly he may have devised this gloss) that you are deceived. What I tell you, sir, is true; these eyes, these ears, were witnesses of his audacious love, without the mention of my sister's name;—directly, plainly, grossly tending to abuse the honour of your bed.

Sir J. Lamb. Villain! this instant leave my sight, my house, my family, for ever!

Dr. Cant. Hold, good Sir John: I am now recovered from my surprise; let me then be an humble mediator. On my account, this must not be: I grant it possible, your son loves me not; but you must grant it too, as possible, he might mistake me; to accuse me then, was but the error of his virtue: you ought to love him, and thank him for his watchful care.

Sir J. Lamb. Hear this, perverse and reprobate! Could'st thou wrong such more than mortal virtue?

Col. Lamb. Wrong him! The hardened impudence of this painted charity—

Sir J. Lamb. Peace, graceless infidel!

Col. Lamb. No, sir; though I would hazard life to gain you from the clutches of that wretch, I could die to reconcile my duty to your favour; yet, on the terms his villainy offers, it is merit to refuse it:—but, sir, I'll trouble you no more; to-day is his, to-morrow may be mine. [*Exit.*

Sir J. Lamb. Come, my friend; we'll go this instant, and sign the settlement; for that wretch ought to be punished, who, I now see, is incorrigible, and given over to perdition.

Dr. Cant. And do you think I take your estate with such views? No, sir, I receive it, that I may have an opportunity to rouse his mind to virtue, by showing him an instance of the forgiveness of injuries; the return of good for evil!

Sir J. Lamb. O, my dear friend! my stay and my guide! I am impatient 'till the affair is concluded.

Dr. Cant. The will of heaven be done in all things.

Sir J. Lamb. Poor dear man! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Parlour in Sir John Lambert's house.*

Enter CHARLOTTE *and* SEYWARD.

Charl. You were a witness, then?

Seyw. I saw it signed, sealed, and delivered, madam.

Charl. And all passed without the least suspicion?

Seyw. Sir John signed it with such earnestness, and the Doctor received it with such seeming reluctance, that neither had the curiosity to examine a line of it.

Charl. Well, Mr. Seyward, whether it succeeds to our ends or not, we have still the same obligation to you. You saw with what friendly warmth my brother heard your story; and I don't in the least doubt his being able to do something for you.

Seyw. What I have done, my duty bound me to; but pray, madam, give me leave, without offence, to ask you one innocent question.

Charl. Freely.

Seyw. Have you never suspected, that in all this affair, I have had some secret, stronger motives than barely duty?

Charl. Yes. But have you been in no apprehension I should discover that motive?

Seyw. Pray pardon me; I see already I have gone too far.

Charl. Not at all; it loses you no merit with me; nor is it in my nature to use any one ill that loves me, unless I loved that one again; then, indeed, there might be danger. Come, don't look grave; my inclinations to another shall not hinder me paying every one what's due to their merit: I shall, therefore, always think myself obliged to treat your misfortunes and your modesty with the utmost tenderness.

Seyw. Your good opinion is all I aim at.

Charl. Ay, but the more I give it you, the better you'll think of me still; and then I must think the better of you again, and you the better of me upon that too; and so, at last, I shall think seriously, and you'll begin to think ill of me: but I hope, Mr. Seyward, your good sense will prevent all this.

Seyw. I see my folly, madam, and blush at my presumption. I humbly take my leave. [*Exit.*

Charl. Well, he's a pretty young fellow after all; and the very first, sure, that ever heard reason against himself with so good an understanding. Lud! how one may live and learn! I could not believe that modesty in a young fellow could have been so amiable; and though I own there is, I know not what, of dear delight in indulging one's vanity with them, yet, upon serious reflection, I must confess, that truth and sincerity have a thousand charms beyond it. I believe I had as good confess all this to Darnley, and e'en make up the bustle with him too; but then he will so tease one for instances of real inclination—O gad! I can't bear the thought on't; and yet we must come together too. Well, nature knows the way to be sure, and so I'll e'en trust to her for it.

Enter Lady Lambert.

Lady Lamb. Dear Charlotte, what will become of us?

Charl. Pray explain, madam.

Lady Lamb. In spite of all I could urge, he has consented that the Doctor shall this minute come, and be his own advocate with you.

Charl. I'm glad on't; for the beast must come like a bear to the stake. I'm sure he knows I shall bait him.

Lady Lamb. No matter for that; he presses it, to keep Sir John still blind to his wicked design upon me; therefore, I come to give you notice, that you might be prepared to receive him.

Charl. I'm obliged to your ladyship. Our meeting will be a tender scene, no doubt on't.

Lady Lamb. I think I hear the Doctor coming up stairs. My dear girl, at any rate, keep your temper. I shall expect you in my dressing-room, to tell me the particulars of your conduct. [*Exit.*

Charl. He must have a great deal of impudence, to come in this manner to me.

Enter Betty, *introducing* Dr. Cantwell.

Betty. Dr. Cantwell desires to be admitted, madam.

Charl. Let him come in.—Your servant, sir.—Give us chairs, Betty, and leave the room. [*Exit Betty.*]—Sir, there's a seat.—What can that ugly cur say to me? He seems a little puzzled. (*Aside.*)

Dr. Cant. (*They sit.*) Lookye, young lady! I am afraid, notwithstanding your good father's favour, I am not the man you would desire to be alone with upon this occasion.

Charl. Your modesty is pleased to be in the right.

Dr. Cant. I'm afraid, too, notwithstanding all my endeavours to the contrary, that you entertain a pretty bad opinion of me.

Charl. A worse, sir, of no mortal breathing.

Dr. Cant. Which opinion is immoveable?

Charl. No rock so firm!

Dr. Cant. I am afraid, then, it will be a vain pursuit, when I solicit you, in compliance with my worthy friend's desire, and my own inclinations, to become my partner in that blessed estate, in which we may be a comfort and support to each other.

Charl. I would die rather than consent to it.

Dr. Cant. In other words, you hate me.

Charl. Most transcendently!

Dr. Cant. Well, there is sincerity, at least, in your confession: you are not, I see, totally deprived of all virtue; though, I must say, I never could perceive in you but very little.

Charl. Oh, fie! you flatter me!

Dr. Cant. No; I speak it with sorrow, because you are the daughter of my best friend. But how are we to proceed, now? Are we to preserve temper?

Charl. Oh, never fear me, sir! I shall not fly out; being convinced that nothing gives so sharp a point to one's aversion as good breeding; as, on the contrary, ill manners often hide a secret inclination.

Dr. Cant. Well, then, young lady, be assured, so far am I from the unchristian disposition of returning injuries, that your antipathy to me causes no hatred in my soul towards you; on the contrary, I would willingly make you happy, if it may be done according to my conscience, with the interest of heaven in view.

Charl. Why, I can't see, sir, how heaven can be any way concerned in a transaction between you and me.

Dr. Cant. When you marry any other person, my consent is necessary.

Charl. So I hear, indeed!—But pray, Doctor, how could your modesty receive so insolent a power, without putting my poor father out of countenance with your blushes?

Dr. Cant. I sought it not; but he would crowd it in among other obligations. He is good-natured; and I foresaw it might serve to pious purposes.

Charl. I don't understand you.

Dr. Cant. I take it for granted, that you would marry Mr. Darnley. Am I right?

Charl. Once in your life, perhaps, you are.

Dr. Cant. Nay, let us be plain. Would you marry him?

Charl. You're mighty nice, methinks. Well, I would.

Dr. Cant. Then I will not consent.

Charl. You won't?

Dr. Cant. My conscience will not suffer me. I know you to be both luxurious and worldly-minded; and you would squander upon the vanities of the world, those treasures which ought to be better laid out.

Charl. Hum! I believe I begin to conceive you.

Dr. Cant. If you can think of any project to satisfy my conscience, I am tractable. You know there is a considerable moiety of your fortune which goes to my lady, in case of our disagreement.

Charl. That's enough, sir. You think we should have a fellow-feeling in it. At what sum do you rate your concurrence to my inclinations? That settled, I am willing to strike the bargain.

Dr. Cant. What do you think of half?

Charl. How! two thousand pounds! (*Rises.*)

Dr. Cant. Why, you know, you gain two thousand pounds; and really, the severity of the times for the poor, and my own stinted pittance, which cramps my charities, will not suffer me to require less. (*Rises.*)

Charl. But how is my father to be brought into this?

Dr. Cant. Leave that to my management.

Charl. And what security do you expect for the money?

Dr. Cant. Oh! Mr. Darnley is wealthy: when I deliver my consent in writing, he shall lay it down to me in bank-bills.

Charl. Pretty good security! On one proviso, though.

Dr. Cant. Name it.

Charl. That you immediately tell my father

that you are willing to give up your interest to Mr. Darnley.

Dr. Cant. Hum!—stay—I agree to it; but, in the meantime, let me warn you, child, not to expect to turn that, or what has now passed between us, to my confusion, by sinister construction, or evil representation to your father. I am satisfied of the piety of my own intentions, and care not what the wicked think of them: but force me not to take advantage of Sir John's good opinion of me, in order to shield myself from the consequences of your malice.

Charl. Oh! I shall not stand in my own light: I know your conscience and your power too well, dear Doctor!

Dr. Cant. Well, let your interest sway you. Thank heaven! I am actuated by more worthy motives!

Charl. No doubt on't.

Dr. Cant. Farewell, and think me your friend. [*Exit.*

Charl. What this fellow's original was I know not; but, by his conscience and cunning, he would make an admirable Jesuit.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, Mr. Darnley.

Charl. Desire him to walk in. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter Darnley.

Darn. To find you thus alone, madam, is a happiness I did not expect, from the temper of our last parting.

Charl. I should have been as well pleased, now, to have been thanked, as reproached, for my good nature; but you will be in the right, I find.

Darn. Indeed you take me wrong. I literally meant that I was afraid you would not so soon think I had deserved this favour.

Charl. Well, but were not you silly, now?

Darn. Come, you shall not be serious: you can't be more agreeable.

Charl. Oh! but I am serious.

Darn. Then I'll be so. Do you forgive me all?

Charl. What?

Darn. Are we friends, Charlotte?

Charl. O lud! but you have told me nothing of poor Seyward!

Darn. Must you needs know that, before you answer me?

Charl. Lud! you are never well 'till you have talked one out of countenance.

Darn. Come, I won't be too particular; you shall answer nothing. Give me but your hand only.

Charl. Psha! I won't pull off my glove, not I.

Darn. I'll take it as it is, then.

Charl. Lud! there, there; eat it, eat it.

Darn. And so I could, by heaven!

Charl. Oh, my glove! my glove! my glove! You are in a perfect storm! Lud! if you make such a rout with one's hand only, what would you do if you had one's heart?

Darn. That's impossible to tell. But you were asking me of Seyward, madam?

Charl. Oh, ay—that's true! Well, now you are very good again. Come, tell me all the affair, and then you shall see—how I will like you.

Darn. There is not much to tell; only this: we met the attorney-general, to whom he has given a very sensible account of himself, and the Doctor's proceedings. The attorney-general seems very clear in his opinion, that, as the Doctor, at the time of the death of Seyward's mother, was intrusted with her whole affairs, the court of equity will oblige him to be accountable.

Charl. If Seyward does not recover his fortune, you must absolutely get him a commission, and bring him into acquaintance.

Darn. Upon my word, I will.

Charl. And shew him to all the women of taste; and I'll have you call him my pretty fellow, too.

Darn. I will, indeed. But hear me.

Charl. You can't conceive how pretty he makes love.

Darn. Not so well as you make your defence, Charlotte.

Charl. Lud, I had forgot! he is to teach me Greek, too.

Darn. Trifling tyrant! how long, Charlotte, do you think you can find new evasions for what I say to you?

Charl. Lud! you are horrid silly; but since 'tis love that makes you such a dunce, poor Darnley! I forgive you.

The Colonel *enters, behind.*

Darn. That's kind, however. But, to complete my joy, be kinder yet, and—

Charl. Oh! I can't! I can't! Lud! did you ever ride a horse-match?

Darn. Was ever so wild a question?

Charl. Because, if you have, it runs in my head that you galloped a mile beyond the winning-post, to make sure on't.

Darn. Now I understand you. But since you will have me touch everything so very tenderly, Charlotte, how shall I find proper words to ask you the lover's last necessary question?

Charl. Oh! there are a thousand points to be adjusted before that's answered.

Col. Lamb. (*Advancing.*) Name them this moment; for, positively, this is the last time of asking.

Charl. Psha! who sent for you?

Col. Lamb. I only came to teach you to speak plain English, my dear.

Charl. Lud! mind your own business, can't you?

Col. Lamb. So I will; for I will make you do more of your's in two minutes, than you would have done without me in a twelvemonth. Why, how now! do you think the man's to dangle after your ridiculous airs for ever?

Charl. This is mighty pretty!

Col. Lamb. You'll say so on Thursday se'nnight; (for let affairs take what turn they will in the family) that's positively your wedding-day. (*Charl. attempts to go.*) Nay, you shan't stir.

Charl. Was ever such assurance?

Darn. Upon my life, madam, I'm out of countenance: I don't know how to behave myself.

Charl. No, no; let him go on only—this is beyond what ever was known, sure!

Col. Lamb. Ha, ha! if I were to leave you to yourselves, what a couple of pretty out-of-countenanced figures you would make! humming and ha'ing upon the vulgar points of jointure and pin-money! Come, come; I know what's proper on both sides; you shall leave it to me.

Darn. I had rather Charlotte would name her own terms to me.

Col. Lamb. Have you a mind to anything particular, madam?

Charl. Why, sure. What! do you think I'm only to be filled out as you please, and sweetened and sipped up like a dish of tea?

Col. Lamb. Why, pray, madam, when your tea's ready, what have you to do but to drink it? But you, I suppose, expect a lover's heart, like your lamp, should always be flaming at your elbow; and when it's ready to go out, you indolently supply it with the spirit of contradiction.

Charl. And so you suppose that your assurance has made an end of this matter?

Col. Lamb. Not 'till you have given him your hand upon it.

Charl. That, then, would complete it?

Col. Lamb. Perfectly.

Charl. Why, then, take it, Darnley. Now I presume you are in high triumph, sir. (*To the Col.*)

Col. Lamb. No, sister; now you are consistent with the good sense I always thought you mistress of.

Charl. And now I beg we may separate; for our being seen together, at this critical juncture,

may give that devil, the Doctor, suspicion of a confederacy, and make him set some engine to work that we are not aware of.

Col. Lamb. It's a very proper caution. Come along, Darnley:—nay, you must leave her now, whatever violence you do yourself.

Charl. Ay, ay, take him with you, brother;—or stay, Darnley; if you please, you may come along with me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *A Parlour in Sir John Lambert's house.*

Enter DARNLEY *and* CHARLOTTE.

Charl. But really, will you stand to the agreement though, that I have made with the Doctor?

Darn. Why not? You shall not break your word upon my account, though he might be a villain you gave it to. Suppose I should talk with Sir John myself? 'Tis true, he has slighted me of late.

Charl. No matter; here he comes. This may open another scene of action to that I believe my brother's preparing for.

Enter SIR JOHN *and* LADY LAMBERT.

Sir J. Lamb. Mr. Darnley, I am glad I have met you here.

Darn. I have endeavoured twice to-day, sir, to pay my respects to you.

Sir J. Lamb. Sir, I'll be plain with you; I went out to avoid you: but where the welfare of a child is concerned, you must not take it ill if we don't stand upon ceremony. However, since I have reason now to be more in temper than perhaps I was at that time, I shall be glad to talk with you.

Darn. I take it as a favour, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. You must allow, Mr. Darnley, that conscience is the rule which every honest man ought to walk by.

Darn. 'Tis granted, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. Then give me leave to tell you, sir, that giving you my daughter would be to act against that conscience I pretend to, whilst I thought you an ill lover; and consequently, the same tie obliges me to bestow her on a better man.

Darn. Well, but, sir, come to the point. Suppose the Doctor (whom I presume you intend her for) actually consents to give me up his interest?

Sir J. Lamb. But why do you suppose, sir, he will give up his interest?

Darn. I only judge from what your daughter tells me, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. My daughter!

Darn. I appeal to her.

Charl. And I appeal even to yourself, sir. Has not the Doctor, just now, in the garden, spoken in favour of Mr. Darnley to you? Nay, pray, sir, be plain; because more depends on that than you can easily imagine or believe.

Sir J. Lamb. What senseless insinuation have you got into your head now?

Charl. Be so kind, sir, first to answer me, that I may be better able to inform you.

Sir J. Lamb. Well, I own he has declined his interest in favour of Mr. Darnley; but I must tell you, madam, that he did it in so modest, so friendly, so good-natured, so conscientious a manner, that I now think myself more than ever bound in honour to espouse him.

Charl. But now, sir, (only for argument's sake) suppose I could prove that all this seeming virtue was artificial; that his regard for Mr. Darnley was neither founded upon modesty, friendship, good-nature, nor conscience; or, in short, that he has, like a villain, bartered, bargained, to give me to Mr. Darnley for half the four thousand pounds you valued his consent at; I say, sir, suppose this could be proved, where would be his virtue then?

Sir J. Lamb. It is impious to suppose it.

Charl. Then, sir, from what principle must you suppose that I accuse him?

Sir J. Lamb. From an obstinate prejudice to all that's good and virtuous.

Charl. That's too hard, sir. But the worst your opinion can provoke me to, is to marry Mr. Darnley, without either his consent or your's.

Sir J. Lamb. What! do you brave me, madam?

Charl. No, sir; but I scorn a lie; and will so far vindicate my integrity, as to insist on your believing me; if not, as a child you abandon, I have a right to throw myself into other arms for protection.

Darn. Dear Charlotte, how your spirit charms me!

Sir J. Lamb. I am confounded! These tears cannot be counterfeit,—nor can this be true.

Lady Lamb. Indeed, my dear, I fear it is. Give me leave to ask you one question. In all our mutual course of happiness, have I ever yet deceived you with a falsehood?

Sir J. Lamb. Never.

Lady Lamb. Would you then believe me, should I accuse him even of crimes which virtue blushes but to mention?

Sir J. Lamb. To what extravagance would you drive me?

Lady Lamb. I would before have undeceived you, when his late artifice turned the honest duty of your son into his own reproach and ruin; but knowing then your temper was inaccessible, I durst not offer it. But suppose I should be able to let you see his villainy, make him repeat his odious love to me in your own hearing; at once throw off the mask, and show the barefaced traitor?—

Sir J. Lamb. Is it possible?

Lady Lamb. But then, sir, I must prevail on you to descend to the poor shifts we are reduced to.

Sir J. Lamb. All; to anything, to ease me of my doubts; make me but witness of this fact, and I shall soon accuse myself, and own my folly equal to his baseness.

Lady Lamb. Behind that screen you may easily conceal yourself.

Sir J. Lamb. Be it so.

Lady Lamb. Mr. Darnley, shall we beg your leave; And you, Charlotte, take the least suspected way to send the Doctor to me directly.

Charl. I have a thought will do it, madam.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, Charlotte! Oh, Mr. Darnley!

Darn. Have but resolution, sir, and fear nothing. [*Exeunt Darnley and Charlotte.*

Lady Lamb. Now, sir, you are to consider what a desperate disease I have undertaken to cure; therefore, be sure to keep close and still; and when the proof is full, appear at your discretion.

Sir John Lamb. Fear not; I will conform myself. Yet be not angry, my love, if in a case like this, where I should not believe even him accusing you; be not angry, I say, if I have also charity enough to hope you may yet be deceived in what you charge him with, 'till the evidence of my own senses assure me to the contrary.

Lady Lamb. 'Tis just.

Sir J. Lamb. Hark! I think I hear him coming.

Lady Lamb. Now, my dear, remember your promise to have patience.

Sir J. Lamb. Rely upon't.

Lady Lamb. To your post, then. (*Sir John goes behind the screen.*)

Enter DOCTOR CANTWELL, *with a book.*

Dr. Cant. Madam, your woman tells me, that being here, and alone, you desired to speak with me.

Lady Lamb. I did, sir; but, that we may be sure that we are alone, pray shut the outward door; another surprise might ruin us; is all safe?

Dr. Cant. (*Fastens the door.*) I have taken care, madam.

Lady Lamb. But I am afraid I interrupt your meditations.

Dr. Cant. No, madam, no; I was only looking over some pious exhortations here, for the use of a society of chosen brethren.

Lady Lamb. Ah, Doctor, what have you done to me? The trouble of my mind, since our last unfortunate conference, is not to be expressed. You, indeed, discovered to me what, perhaps, for my own peace, 'twere better I had never been acquainted with; but I had not sufficient time to lay my heart open to you.

Dr. Cant. Whither, madam, would you lead me?

Lady Lamb. I have been uneasy, too, not knowing how far you might mistake my behaviour on the last accident that happened; but I was really so shocked, so terrified, I knew not what I was doing; only, had I joined in your defence against the Colonel, it would have been evident I was his enemy, and I have uses for his friendship. Silence, therefore, was my only prudent part; and I knew your credit with Sir John needed no support.

Dr. Cant. Let me presume then to hope, that what I did, you judge was self-defence, and pure necessity.

Lady Lamb. And perhaps, after all, the accident was lucky; for Sir John, in order to obviate any ill construction that may be put upon it, insists now that we should be more together, to let the world see his confidence in us both. This relieves us from restraint, and I now dare tell you,—but no—I won't—

Dr. Cant. But why, madam? let me beseech you—

Lady Lamb. No; besides, why need you ask me?

Dr. Cant. Ah! do not endeavour to decoy my foolish heart, too apt to flatter itself. You cannot, sure, think kindly of me?

Lady Lamb. Well, well; I would have you imagine so.

Dr. Cant. Besides, may I not with reason suspect, that this apparent goodness is but artifice, a shadow of compliance, meant only to persuade me from your daughter?

Lady Lamb. Methinks this doubt of me seems rather founded on your settled resolution not to resign her; I am convinced of it. I can assure you, sir, I should have saved you this trouble, had I known how deeply you were engaged to her. (*Weeps.*)

Dr. Cant. Tears! then I must believe you: but indeed you wrong me. To prove my innocence, it is not an hour since I pressed Sir John to give Charlotte to young Darnley.

Lady Lamb. Mere artifice! you knew that modest resignation would make Sir John warmer in your interest.

Dr. Cant. No, indeed, indeed. I had other motives, which you may hereafter be made acquainted with, and will convince you—

Lady Lamb. Well, sir; now I'll give you reason to guess why, at our last meeting, I pressed you so warmly to resign Charlotte.

Dr. Cant. Ah, dear! ah, dear!

Lady Lamb. You cannot blame me for having opposed your happiness, when my own, perhaps, depended upon it.

Dr. Cant. Spare me, spare me; you kill me with this kindness.

Lady Lamb. But, now that I have discovered my weakness, be secret; for the least imprudence—

Dr. Cant. It is a vain fear.

Lady Lamb. Call it not vain: my reputation is dearer to me than life.

Dr. Cant. Where can it find so sure a guard? The grave austerities of my life will dumbfound suspicion, and your's may defy detraction.

Lady Lamb. Well, Doctor, 'tis you must answer for my folly.

Dr. Cant. I take it all upon myself.

Lady Lamb. But there's one thing still to be afraid of.

Dr. Cant. Nothing, nothing.

Lady Lamb. My husband—Sir John.

Dr. Cant. Alas, poor man! I will answer for him. Between ourselves, madam, your husband is weak; I can lead him by the nose anywhere.

Sir John Lambert *advances between them.*

Sir J. Lamb. No, caitiff! I'm to be led no further.

Dr. Cant. Ah! woman!

Sir J. Lamb. Is this your sanctity? this your doctrine? these your meditations?

Dr. Cant. Is, then, my brother in a conspiracy against me?

Sir J. Lamb. Your brother! I have been your friend, indeed, to my shame; your dupe; but your spell has lost its hold: no more canting; it will not serve your turn any longer.

Lady Lamb. Now heaven be praised!

Dr. Cant. It seems you want an excuse to part with me.

Sir J. Lamb. Ungrateful wretch!—but why do I reproach you? Had I not been the weakest of mankind, you never could have proved so great a villain. Get out of my sight! leave my house! Of all my follies, which is it tells you, that if you stay much longer, I shall not be tempted to wrest you out of the hands of law, and punish you as you deserve?

Dr. Cant. Well; but first let me ask you, sir, who it is you menace? Consider your own condition, and where you are.

Sir J. Lamb. What would the villain drive at? Leave me; I forgive you; but once more I tell you, seek some other place, out of my house. This instant he gone, and see my shameful face no more.

Dr. Cant. Nay, then, 'tis my duty to exert myself, and let you know that I am master here. Turn you out, sir! This house is mine! and now, sir, at your peril, dare to insult me.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, heavens! 'tis true! whither shall I fly to hide me from the world?

Lady Lamb. Whither are you going, sir?

Sir J. Lamb. I know not; but here, it seems, I am a trespasser; the master of the house has warned me hence; and, since the right is now in him, 'tis just I should resign it.

Lady Lamb. You shall not stir. He dares not act with such abandoned insolence. No, sir; possession still is your's. If he pretends a right, let him by open course of law maintain it.

Dr. Cant. Ha!—Here! Seyward! [*Exit.*

Enter Mawworm.

Sir J. Lamb. Who is this fellow? What do you want, man?

Maw. My lady, come up.

Enter Old Lady Lambert.

Old Lady Lamb. How now!

Maw. He wants to know who I be!

Old Lady Lamb. The gentleman is a friend of mine, son. I was carrying him in a coach to attend a controversy that's to be held this evening, at the reverend Mr. Scruple's, about an affair of simony, and called to take up the Doctor. But what strange tales are these I hear below?

Sir J. Lamb. The Doctor is a villain, madam: I have detected him; detected him in the horrible design of seducing my wife.

Maw. It's unpossible!

Sir J. Lamb. What do you say, man?

Maw. I say, it's unpossible! He has been locked up with my wife for hours together, morning, noon, and night; and I never found her the worse for him.

Old Lady Lamb. Ah, son! son!

Sir J. Lamb. What is your ladyship going to say now?

Old Lady Lamb. The Doctor is not in fault.

Sir J. Lamb. 'Slife, madam!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh! he swears! he swears! Years in growing good, we become profligate in a moment. If you swear again, I won't stay in the house.

Maw. Nor I neither: aren't you ashamed of

yourself?—have no commensuration on your soul? Ah! poor wicked sinner! I pity you.

Sir J. Lamb. 'Sdeath and the devil!

Maw. If you swear any more, I'll inform against you.

Sir J. Lamb. Why would you bring this idiot, madam?

Maw. Ay, do despise me, I'm the prouder for it; I likes to be despised.

Enter Charlotte.

Charl. Oh! dear papa, I shall faint away; there's murder doing.

Sir J. Lamb. Who! where! what is it?

Charl. The Doctor, sir, and Seyward, were at high words just now in the garden; and, upon a sudden, there was a pistol fired between them. Oh! I'm afraid poor Seyward is killed.

Sir J. Lamb. How!

Charl. Oh! here he comes himself; he'll tell you more.

Enter Dr. Cantwell, Darnley, Seyward, *and Servants.*

Darn. (*Speaking as he enters.*) Here, bring in this ruffian; this is villainy beyond example.

Sir J. Lamb. What means this outrage?

Lady Lamb. I tremble.

Seyw. Don't be alarmed, madam; there is no mischief done; what was intended, the Doctor here can best inform you.

Sir J. Lamb. Mr. Darnley, I am ashamed to see you.

Maw. So you ought; but this good man is ashamed of nothing.

Dr. Cant. Alas! my enemies prevail.

Seyw. In short, gentlemen, the affair is circumstantially this: the Doctor called me out into the pavilion in the garden; appeared in great disorder; told me there was a sudden storm raised, which he was not sufficiently prepared to weather. He said, his dependance was upon me; and, at all events, I must be ready to swear, when he called upon me, I had seen him pay Sir John several large sums of money. He talked confusedly about giving value for an estate; but I boldly refused to perjure myself; and told him, on the contrary, I was satisfied he had fleeced Sir John of several large sums, under the pretence of charitable uses, which he secretly converted to his own. This stung him, and he fastened at my throat. Then, indeed, all temper left me; and, disengaging myself from his hold, with a home-blow I struck him down. At this, grown desperate, he ran with fury to some pistols that hung above the chimney; but, in the instant he reached one, I seized upon his wrist; and, as we grappled, the pistol firing to the ceiling, alarmed the family.

Old Lady Lamb. This is a lie, young man; I see the devil standing at your elbow.

Maw. So do I, with a great big pitchfork, pushing him on.

Dr. Cant. Well, what have you more against me?

Darn. More, sir, I hope is needless; but, if Sir John is yet unsatisfied—

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! I have seen too much.

Dr. Cant. I demand my liberty.

Sir J. Lamb. Let him go.

Enter Colonel Lambert *and Attendants.*

Col. Lamb. Hold, sir! not so fast; you can't pass.

Dr. Cant. Who, sir, shall dare to stop me?

Col. Lamb. Within, there!

Enter Tipstaff.

Tipstaff. Is your name Cantwell, sir?

Dr. Cant. What if it be, sir?

Tipstaff. Then, sir, I have my lord chief justice's warrant against you.

Dr. Cant. Against me?

Tipstaff. Yes, sir, for a cheat and impostor.

Old Lady Lamb. What does he say?

Sir J. Lamb. Dear son, what is this?

Col. Lamb. Only some actions of the Doctor's, sir, which I have affidavits in my hand here to prove, from more than one creditable witness; and I think it my duty to make the public acquainted with them: if he can acquit himself of them, so; if not, he must take the consequence.

Dr. Cant. Well, but stay; let the accusations against me be what they will, by virtue of this conveyance (*producing it*) I am still master here; and, if I am forced to leave the house myself, I will shut up the doors; nobody shall remain behind.

Sir J. Lamb. There! there indeed he stings me to the heart! for that rash act, reproach and endless shame will haunt me!

Charl. No, sir! be comforted. Even there, too, his wicked hopes must leave him; for know, the fatal deed, which you intended to sign, is here, even yet unsealed and innocent! (*Producing it.*)

Sir J. Lamb. What mean you?

Charl. I mean, sir, that this deed, by accident, falling into this gentleman's hands, his generous concern for our family discovered it to me; and that, in concert, we procured that other to be drawn exactly like it; which, in your impatience to execute, passed unsuspected for the original. Their only difference is, that wherever here you read the Doctor's name, there you'll find my brother's.

Dr. Cant. Come, sir, lead me where you please. [*Exit, guarded.*

Old Lady Lamb. I don't know what to make of all this.

Maw. They'll all go to the devil for what they are doing.—Come away, my lady, and let us see after the good, dear Doctor. Ay, do laugh; you'll go to the devil for all that.—Come, my lady, you go first. [*Exeunt Mawworm and Old Lady Lamb.*

Charl. Now, Darnley, I hope I have made some atonement for your jealousy.

Darn. You've banished it for ever! This was beyond yourself surprising.

Col. Lamb. Sister—

Charl. Come, no set speeches; if I deserve your thanks, return them in friendship to your first preserver.

Col. Lamb. The business of my life shall be to merit it.

Seyw. And mine to speak my sense of obligations.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, my child! for my deliverance I can only reward you here. (*Giving her hand to Darnley.*) For you, my son, whose filial virtue I have injured, this honest deed shall in every article be ratified. And, for the sake of that hypocritical villain, I declare, that from henceforward I renounce all pious folks; I will have an utter abhorrence for everything that bears the appearance—

Charl. Nay, now, my dear sir, I must take the liberty to tell you, you carry things too far, and go from one extreme to another. What! because a worthless wretch has imposed upon you under the fallacious show of austere grimace, will you needs have it, everybody is like him? confound the good with the bad, and conclude there are no truly religious in the world? Leave, my dear sir, such rash conclusions to fools and libertines. Let us be careful to distinguish between virtue and the appearance of it. Guard, if possible, against doing honour to hypocrisy; but, at the same time, let us allow there is no character in life, greater or more valuable than that of the truly devout; nor any thing more noble, or more beautiful, than the fervour of a sincere piety.

THE INCONSTANT;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY GEORGE FARQUHAR.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

OLD MIRABEL	DUGARD	ORIANA
YOUNG MIRABEL	PETIT	BISARRE
CAPTAIN DURETETE	BRAVOES	LAMORCE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter DUGARD, *and his man,* PETIT, *in riding habits.*

Dug. Sirrah, what's o'clock?

Petit. Turned of eleven, sir.

Dug. No more! We have rid a swingeing pace from Nemours, since two this morning. Petit, run to Rousseau's, and bespeak a dinner, at a louis d'or a head, to be ready by one.

Petit. How many will there be of you, sir?

Dug. Let me see—Mirabel one, Duretete two, myself three—

Petit. And I four.

Dug. How now, sir? at your old travelling familiarity! When abroad, you had some freedom, for want of better company; but among my friends, at Paris, pray remember your distance. Begone, sir. [*Exit Petit.*] This fellow's wit was necessary abroad, but he's too cunning for a domestic; I must dispose of him some way else. Who's here? Old Mirabel, and my sister!—my dearest sister!

Enter OLD MIRABEL *and* ORIANA.

Oriana. My brother! Welcome!

Dug. Monsieur Mirabel, I'm heartily glad to see you.

Old Mir. Honest Mr. Dugard, by the blood of the Mirabels! I'm your most humble servant.

Dug. Why, sir, you've cast your skin, sure; you're brisk and gay; lusty health about you; no sign of age, but your silver hairs.

Old Mir. Silver hairs! Then they are quicksilver hairs, sir. Whilst I have golden pockets, let my hairs be silver, an' they will. Adsbud! sir, I can dance, and sing, and drink, and—no, I can't wench. But Mr. Dugard, no news of my son Bob in all your travels?

Dug. Your son's come home, sir.

Old Mir. Come home? Bob come home? By the blood of the Mirabels! Mr. Dugard, what say you?

Oriana. Mr. Mirabel returned, sir?

Dug. He's certainly come, and you may see him within this hour or two.

Old Mir. Swear it, Mr. Dugard, presently swear it.

Dug. Sir, he came to town with me this morning. I left him at the baigneur's, being a little disordered after riding, and I shall see him again presently.

Old Mir. What! and he was ashamed to ask a blessing with his boots on! A nice dog! Well, and how fares the young rogue, eh?

Dug. A fine gentleman, sir; he'll be his own messenger.

Old Mir. A fine gentleman! But is the rogue like me still?

Dug. Why, yes, sir; he's very like his mother, and as like you, as most modern sons are to their fathers.

Old Mir. Why, sir, don't you think that I begat him?

Dug. Why, yes, sir; you married his mother, and he inherits your estate. He's very like you, upon my word.

Oriana. And pray, brother, what's become of his honest companion, Duretete?

Dug. Who, the Captain? The very same, he went abroad; he's the only Frenchman I ever knew, that could not change. Your son, Mr. Mirabel, is more obliged to nature for that fellow's composition, than for his own: for he's more happy in Duretete's folly than his own wit. In short, they are as inseparable as finger and thumb; but the

first instance in the world, I believe, of opposition in friendship. [think ye?

Old Mir. Very well: will he be home to dinner,

Dug. Sir, he has ordered me to bespeak a dinner for us at Rousseau's, at a louis d'or a head.

Old Mir. A louis d'or a head! Well said, Bob. By the blood of the Mirabels! Bob's improved. But, Mr. Dugard, was it so civil of Bob, to visit Monsieur Rousseau before his own natural father, eh? Harkye, Oriana, what think you now of a fellow that can eat and drink ye a whole louis d'or at a sitting? He must be as strong as Hercules; life and spirit in abundance. Before gad, I don't wonder at these men of quality, that their own wives can't serve them! A louis d'or a head! 'tis enough to stock the whole nation with bastards; 'tis, faith! Mr. Dugard, I leave you with your sister. [*Exit.*

Dug. Well, sister, I need not ask you how you do, your looks resolve me; fair, tall, well-shaped; you're almost grown out of my remembrance.

Oriana. Why, truly, brother, I look pretty well, thank nature, and my toilet; I eat three meals a day, am very merry when up, and sleep soundly when I'm down.

Dug. But, sister, you remember that upon my going abroad, you would choose this old gentleman for your guardian; he's no more related to our family than Prester-John, and I have no reason to think you mistrusted my management of your fortune; therefore, pray be so kind as to tell me, without reservation, the true cause of making such a choice.

Oriana. Lookye, brother; you were going a rambling, and 'twas proper, lest I should go a rambling too, that somebody should take care of me. Old Monsieur Mirabel is an honest gentleman, was our father's friend, and has a young lady in his house, whose company I like, and who has chosen him for her guardian as well as I.

Dug. Who, Mademoiselle Bisarre?

Oriana. The same; we live merrily together, without scandal or reproach; we make much of the old gentleman between us, and he takes care of us; all the week we dance and sing, and upon Sundays, go first to church, and then to the play. Now, brother, besides these motives for choosing this gentleman for my guardian, perhaps I had some private reasons.

Dug. Not so private as you imagine, sister; your love to young Mirabel is no secret, I can assure you; but so public, that all your friends are ashamed on't.

Oriana. O' my word, then, my friends are very bashful; though I'm afraid, sir, that those people are not ashamed enough at their own crimes, who have so many blushes to spare for the faults of their neighbours.

Dug. Ay, but, sister, the people say—

Oriana. Psha! hang the people! they'll talk treason and profane their Maker; must we, therefore, infer, that our king is a tyrant, and religion a cheat? Lookye, brother; their court of inquiry is a tavern, and their informer, claret: they think as they drink, and swallow reputations like loaches; a lady's health goes briskly round with the glass, but her honour is lost in the toast.

Dug. Ay, but sister, there is still something—

Oriana. If there be something, brother, 'tis none of the people's something: marriage is my thing, and I'll stick to't.

Dug. Marriage! young Mirabel marry! he'll build churches sooner. Take heed, sister, though your honour stood proof to his home-bred assaults, you must keep a stricter guard for the future: he has now got the foreign air, and the Italian softness; his wit's improved by converse, his behaviour finished by observation, and his assurance confirmed by success. Sister, I can assure you he has made his conquests; and 'tis a plague upon your sex, to be the soonest deceived by those very men that you know have been false to others. But then, sister, he's as fickle—

Oriana. For God's sake! brother, tell me no more of his faults, for if you do, I shall run mad for him: say no more, sir; let me but get him into the bands of matrimony, I'll spoil his wandering, I warrant him; I'll do his business that way, never fear.

Dug. Well, sister, I won't pretend to understand the engagements between you and your lover; I expect when you have need of my counsel or assistance, you will let me know more of your affairs. Mirabel is a gentleman, and as far as my honour and interest can reach, you may command me to the furtherance of your happiness: in the meantime, sister, I have a great mind to make you a present of another humble servant; a fellow that I took up at Lyons, who has served me honestly ever since.

Oriana. Then why will you part with him?

Dug. He has gained so insufferably on my good-humour, that he's grown too familiar; but the fellow's cunning, and may be serviceable to you in your affair with Mirabel. Here he comes.

Enter Petit.

Well, sir, have you been at Rousseau's?

Petit. Yes, sir; and who should I find there but Mr. Mirabel and the Captain, hatching as warmly over a tub of ice, as two hen-pheasants over a brood. They would not let me bespeak anything, for they had dined before I came.

Dug. Come, sir, you shall serve my sister; I shall still continue kind to you; and if your lady recommends your diligence upon trial, I'll use my interest to advance you. Wait on your lady home, Petit. [*Exit.*

Petit. A chair! a chair! a chair!

Oriana. No, no, I'll walk home; 'tis but next door. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Tavern.*

Young Mirabel *and* Duretete *discovered, rising from table.*

Y. Mir. Welcome to Paris once more, my dear Captain; we have eat heartily, drank roundly, paid plentifully, and let it go for once. I liked every thing but our women; they looked so lean and tawdry, poor creatures! 'Tis a sure sign the army is not paid. Give me the plump Venetian, brisk and sanguine, that smiles upon me like the glowing sun, and meets my lips like sparkling wine, her person shining as the glass, and spirit like the foaming liquor.

Dur. Ah, Mirabel, Italy, I grant you; but for our women here in France, they are such thin, brown, fallen jades, a man may as well make a bed-fellow of a cane-chair.

Y. Mir. France! A light, unseasoned country; nothing but feathers, foppery, and fashions. There's nothing on this side the Alps worth my humble service t'ye. Ha! Roma la Santa! Italy for my money! Their customs, gardens, buildings, paintings, music, policies, wine and women! the paradise of the world! not pestered with a parcel of precise, old, gouty fellows, that would debar their children every pleasure that they themselves are past the sense of: commend me to the Italian familiarity—"Here, son, there's fifty crowns; go pay your girl her week's allowance."

Dur. Ay, these are your fathers for you, that understand the necessities of young men; not like our musty dads, who, because they cannot fish themselves, would muddy the water, and spoil the sport of them that can. But now you talk of the plump, what d'ye think of a Dutch woman.

Y. Mir. A Dutch woman's too compact, nay, every thing among them is so; a Dutch man is thick, a Dutch woman is squab, a Dutch horse is

round, a Dutch dog is short, a Dutch ship is broad bottomed; and, in short, one would swear, that the whole product of the country were cast in the same mould with their cheeses.

Dur. Ay, but Mirabel, you have forgot the English ladies.

Y. Mir. The women of England were excellent, did they not take such insufferable pains to ruin, what nature has made so incomparably well; they would be delicate creatures, indeed, could they but thoroughly arrive at the French mien, or entirely let it alone; for they only spoil a very good air of their own, by an awkward imitation of ours. But, come, Duretete, let us mind the business in hand; mistresses we must have, and must take up with the manufacture of the place; and upon a competent diligence, we shall find those in Paris shall match the Italians from top to toe.

Dur. Ay, Mirabel, you will do well enough, but what will become of your friend? you know, I am so plaguy bashful; so naturally an ass upon these occasions, that—

Y. Mir. Psha! you must be bolder, man! Travel three years, and bring home such a baby as bashfulness! A great lusty fellow, and a soldier! fie upon it!

Dur. Lookye, sir, I can visit, and I can ogle a little, as thus, or thus, now. Then I can kiss abundantly; but if they chance to give me a forbidding look, as some women, you know, have a devilish cast with their eyes—or if they cry, "What do you mean? what d'ye take me for? Fie, sir, remember who I am, sir: a person of quality to be used at this rate!" 'Egad, I'm struck as flat as a frying-pan.

Y. Mir. Words of course! never mind them: turn you about upon your heel, with a *jantée* air; hum out the end of an old song; cut a cross caper, and at her again.

Dur. (*Imitates him.*) No, hang it! 'twill never do. Oons! what did my father mean, by sticking me up in an university, or to think that I should gain anything by my head, in a nation whose genius lies all in their heels! Well, if ever I come to have children of my own, they shall have the education of the country; they shall learn to dance before they can walk, and be taught to sing before they can speak.

Y. Mir. Come, come, throw off that childish humour; put on assurance, there's no avoiding it; stand all hazards; thou'rt a stout, lusty fellow, and hast a good estate; look bluff, hector, you have a good side-box face, a pretty impudent face; so, that's pretty well. This fellow went abroad like an ox, and is returned like an ass. (*Aside.*)

Dur. Let me see, now, how I look. (*Pulls out a pocket-glass, and looks on it.*) A side-box face, say you? 'Egad! I don't like it, Mirabel. Fie, sir, don't abuse your friends; I could not wear such a face for the best countess in Christendom.

Y. Mir. Why can't you, blockhead, as well as I?

Dur. Why, thou hast impudence to set a good face upon anything; I would change half my gold for half thy brass, with all my heart. Who comes here? Odso! Mirabel, your father.

Enter Old Mirabel.

Old Mir. Where's Bob? Dear Bob!

Y. Mir. Your blessing, sir!

Old Mir. My blessing? D—n ye, ye young rogue, why did not you come to see your father first, sirrah? My dear boy, I'm heartily glad to see thee, my dear child, 'faith! Captain Duretete, by the blood of the Mirabels, I'm your's! Well, my lads, ye look bravely, 'faith! Bob, hast got any money left?

Y. Mir. Not a farthing, sir.

Old Mir. Why, then, I won't give thee a sous.

Y. Mir. I did but jest, here's ten pistoles,

Old Mir. Why, then, here's ten more: I love to be charitable to those that don't want it. Well, and how do you like Italy, my boys?

Y. Mir. O, the garden of the world, sir! Rome, Naples, Venice, Milan, and a thousand others, all fine.

Old Mir. Ay! say you so? And they say, that Chiari is very fine too.

Dur. Indifferent, sir, very indifferent; a very scurvy air, the most unwholesome to a French constitution in the world.

Y. Mir. Psha! nothing on't: these rascally gazetteers have misinformed you.

Old Mir. Misinformed me? Oons, sir! were we not beaten there?

Y. Mir. Beaten, sir? we beaten?

Old Mir. Why how was it, pray, sweet sir?

Y. Mir. Sir, the Captain will tell you.

Dur. No, sir, your son will tell you.

Y. Mir. The Captain was in the action, sir.

Dur. Your son saw more than I, sir, for he was a looker-on.

Old Mir. Confound you both, for a brace of cowards! here are no Germans to overhear you. Why don't ye tell me how it was?

Y. Mir. Why, then, you must know, that we marched up a body of the finest, bravest, well-dressed fellows in the universe; our commanders at the head of us, all lace and feather, like so many beaux at a ball: I don't believe there was a man of them but could dance a charmer, morbleu!

Old Mir. Dance! very well, pretty fellows, 'faith!

Y. Mir. We capered up to their very trenches, there saw, peeping over, a parcel of scare-crow, olive-coloured, gunpowder fellows, as ugly as the devil.

Dur. Egad! I shall never forget the looks of them, while I have breath to fetch.

Y. Mir. They were so civil, indeed, as to welcome us with their cannon; but, for the rest, we found them such unmannerly, rude, unsociable dogs, that we grew tired of their company, and so we e'en danced back again.

Old Mir. And did ye all come back?

Y. Mir. No, two or three thousand of us staid behind.

Old Mir. Why, Bob, why?

Y. Mir. Psha! because they could not come that night.

Dur. No, sir, because they could not come that night.

Y. Mir. But, come, sir, we were talking of something else; pray, how does your lovely charge, the fair Oriana?

Old Mir. Ripe, sir, just ripe; you'll find it better engaging with her than with the Germans, let me tell you. And what would you say, my young Mars, if I had a Venus for thee too? Come, Bob, your apartment is ready, and pray let your friend be my guest too; you shall command the house between ye, and I'll be as merry as the best of you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*Old Mirabel's house.*

Oriana *and* Bisarre.

Bis. And you love this young rake, d'ye?

Oriana. Yes.

Bis. In spite of all his ill usage?

Oriana. I can't help it.

Bis. What's the matter wi' ye?

Oriana. Psha!

Bis. Um! Before that any young, lying, swearing, flattering, rakehelly fellow, should play such tricks with me,—O, the devil take all your Cassandras and Cleopatras for me. I warrant now, you'll play the fool when he comes, and say you love him: eh?

Oriana. Most certainly; I can't dissemble, Bisarre; besides, 'tis past that, we're contracted.

Bis. Contracted! alack-a-day, poor thing! What,

you have changed rings, or broken an old broad piece between you! I would make a fool of any fellow in France. Well, I must confess, I do love a little coquetting with all my heart. My business should be to break gold with my lover one hour, and crack my promise the next; he should find me one day with a prayer-book in my hand, and with a play-book another. He should have my consent to buy the wedding-ring, and the next moment would I ask him his name.

Oriana. O, my dear! were there no greater tie upon my heart, than there is upon my conscience, I would soon throw the contract out of doors; but the mischief on't is, I am so fond of being tied, that I'm forced to be just, and the strength of my passion keeps down the inclination of my sex.

Bis. But here's the old gentleman.

Enter Old Mirabel.

Old Mir. Where's my wenches? where's my two little girls? Eh! have a care—look to yourselves, 'faith, they're a coming; the travellers are a coming. Well, which of you two will be my daughter-in-law now? Bisarre, Bisarre, what say you, madcap? Mirabel is a pure wild fellow.

Bis. I like him the worse.

Old Mir. You lie, hussy, you like him the better, indeed you do. What say you, my t'other little filbert, eh?

Oriana. I suppose the gentleman will choose for himself, sir. [shall.

Old Mir. Why, that's discreetly said, and so he

Enter Mirabel *and* Duretete; *they salute the Ladies.*

Bob, harkye, you shall marry one of these girls, sirrah!

Y. Mir. Sir, I'll marry them both, if you please.

Bis. (*Aside.*) He'll find that one may serve his turn.

Old Mir. Both? why, you young dog, d'ye banter me? Come, sir, take your choice. Duretete, you shall have your choice too, but Robin shall choose first. Come, sir, begin. Well, which d'ye [like?

Y. Mir. Both.

Old Mir. But which will you marry?

Y. Mir. Neither.

Old Mir. Neither? Don't make me angry now, Bob; pray, don't make me angry. Lookye, sirrah, if I don't dance at your wedding to-morrow, I shall be very glad to cry at your grave.

Y. Mir. That's a bull, father.

Old Mir. A bull! Why, how now, ungrateful sir, did I make thee a man, that thou shouldst make me a beast? [expression.

Y. Mir. Your pardon, sir; I only meant your

Old Mir. Harkye, Bob, learn better manners to your father before strangers! I won't be angry this time: but, oons! if ever you do't again, you rascal! Remember what I say. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. Psha! what does the old fellow mean by mewing me up here with a couple of green girls? Come, Duretete, will you go?

Oriana. I hope, Mr. Mirabel, you ha'n't forgot—

Y. Mir. No, no, madam, I ha'n't forgot, I have brought you a thousand little Italian curiosities; I'll assure you, madam, as far as a hundred pistoles would reach, I ha'n't forgot the least circumstance.

Oriana. Sir, you misunderstand me.

Y. Mir. Odso! the relics, madam, from Rome. I do remember, now, you made a vow of chastity before my departure; a vow of chastity, or something like it—was it not, madam?

Oriana. O sir, I'm answered at present. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. She was coming full mouth upon me with her contract: 'would I might despatch t'other!

Dur. Mirabel, that lady there, observe her; she's wondrous pretty, 'faith! and seems to have but few words; I like her mainly: speak to her, man, pr'ythee, speak to her.

Y. Mir. Madam, here's a gentleman, who declares—

Dur. Madam, don't believe him: I declare nothing. What the devil do you mean, man?

Y. Mir. He says, madam, that you are as beautiful as an angel.

Dur. He tells a d—d lie, madam! I say no such thing. Are you mad, Mirabel? Why, I shall drop down with shame.

Y. Mir. And so, madam, not doubting but your ladyship may like him as well as he does you, I think it proper to leave you together. (*Going, Duretete holds him.*)

Dur. Hold, hold. Why, Mirabel, friend, sure you won't be so barbarous as to leave me alone! Pr'ythee, speak to her for yourself, as it were. Lord, Lord, that a Frenchman should want impudence!

Y. Mir. You look mighty demure, madam. She's deaf, Captain.

Dur. I had much rather have her dumb.

Y. Mir. The gravity of your air, madam, promises some extraordinary fruits from your study, which moves us with curiosity to inquire the subject of your ladyship's contemplation. Not a word!

Dur. I hope in the Lord she's speechless; if she be, she's mine this moment. Mirabel, d'ye think a woman's silence can be natural?

Bis. But the forms which logicians introduce, and which proceed from simple enumeration, are dubitable, and proceed only upon admittance.

Y. Mir. Hoyty toyty! what a plague have we here? Plato in petticoats!

Dur. Ay, ay, let her go on, man; she talks in my own mother tongue.

Bis. 'Tis exposed to invalidity, from a contradictory instance; looks only upon common operations, and is infinite in its termination.

Y. Mir. Rare pedantry!

Dur. Axioms! axioms! self-evident principles!

Bis. Then the ideas wherewith the mind is preoccupate,—O, gentlemen, I hope you'll pardon my cogitation; I was involved in a profound point of philosophy, but I shall discuss it somewhere else, being satisfied, that the subject is not agreeable to you sparks, that profess the vanity of the times. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. Go thy way, good wife Bias. Do you hear, Duretete? Dost hear this starched piece of austerity?

Dur. She's mine, man, she's mine; my own talent to a T. I'll match her in dialectics, 'faith; I was seven years at the university, man, nursed up with Barbaro, Celarunt, Darii, Ferio, Baralipton. Did you ever know, man, that 'twas metaphysics made me an ass? It was, 'faith! Had she talked a word of singing, dancing, plays, fashions, or the like, I had foundered at the first step; but as she is—Mirabel, wish me joy!

Y. Mir. You don't mean marriage, I hope.

Dur. No, no, I am a man of more honour.

Y. Mir. Bravely resolved, Captain! now for thy credit: warm me this frozen snowball; 'twill be a conquest above the Alps!

Dur. But will you promise to be always near me?

Y. Mir. Upon all occasions, never fear.

Dur. Why, then, you shall see me in two moments make an induction from my love to her hand, from her hand to her mouth, from her mouth to her heart, and so conclude in her bed, categorematice.

Y. Mir. Now the game begins, and my fool is entered. But here comes one to spoil my sport; now shall I be teased to death, with this old-fashioned contract! I should love her too, if I might do it my own way, but she'll do nothing without witnesses, forsooth: I wonder women can be so immodest!

Enter Oriana.

Well, madam, why d'ye follow me?

Oriana. Well, sir, why do you shun me?

Y. Mir. 'Tis my humour, madam; and I'm naturally swayed by incliuation.

Oriana. Have you forgot our contract, sir?

Y. Mir. All I remember of that contract is, that it was made some three years ago; and that's enough, in conscience, to forget the rest on't.

Oriana. 'Tis sufficient, sir, to recollect the passing of it; for, in that circumstance, I presume, lies the force of the obligation.

Y. Mir. Obligations, madam, that are forced upon the will, are no tie upon the conscience; I was a slave to my passion, when I passed the instrument, but the recovery of my freedom makes the contract void.

Oriana. Come, Mr. Mirabel, these expressions I expected from the raillery of your humour, but I hope for very different sentiments from your honour and generosity.

Y. Mir. Lookye, madam, as for my generosity, 'tis at your service, with all my heart: I'll keep you a coach and six horses, if you please, only permit me to keep my honour to myself. Consider, madam, you have no such thing among ye, and 'tis a main point of policy to keep no faith with reprobates: thou art a pretty little reprobate, and so get thee about thy business.

Oriana. Well, sir, even all this I will allow to the gaiety of your temper; your travels have improved your talent of talking, but they are not of force, I hope, to impair your morals.

Y. Mir. Morals! why, there 'tis again now! I tell thee, child, there is not the least occasion for morals, in any business between you and I. Don't you know that, of all commerce in the world, there is no such cozenage and deceit, as in the traffic between man and woman? We study all our lives long, how to put tricks upon one another. No fowler lays abroad more nets for his game, nor a hunter for his prey, than you do, to catch poor innocent men. Why do you sit three or four hours at your toilet in a morning? only with a villanous design to make some poor fellow a fool before night. What d'ye sigh for? What d'ye weep for? What d'ye pray for? why, for a husband: that is, you implore Providence to assist you, in the just and pious design, of making the wisest of his creatures a fool, and the head of the creation a slave.

Oriana. Sir, I am proud of my power, and am resolved to use it.

Y. Mir. Hold, hold, madam, not so fast: as you have variety of vanities to make coxcombs of us, so we have vows, oaths, and protestations, of all sorts and sizes, to make fools of you; and this, in short, my dear creature, is our present condition. I have sworn and lied briskly, to gain my ends of you; your ladyship has patched and painted violently, to gain your ends of me; but, since we are both disappointed, let us make a drawn battle, and part clear on both sides.

Oriana. With all my heart, sir; give me up my contract, and I'll never see your face again.

Y. Mir. Indeed, I wou't, child.

Oriana. What, sir! neither do one nor t'other?

Y. Mir. No, you shall die a maid; unless you please to be otherwise, upon my terms.

Oriana. What do you intend by this, sir?

Y. Mir. Why, to starve you into compliance: lookye, you shall never marry any man; and you had as good let me do you a kindness as a stranger.

Oriana. Sir, you're a—

Y. Mir. What am I, ma'am?

Oriana. A villain, sir.

Y. Mir. I'm glad on't; I never knew an honest fellow in my life, but was a villain upon these occasions. Ha'n't you drawn yourself, now, into a very pretty dilemma? ha, ha, ha! the poor lady has made a vow of virginity, when she thought of making a vow to the contrary. Was ever poor woman so cheated into chastity?

Oriana. Sir, my fortune is equal to yours, my friends as powerful; and both shall be put to the test, to do me justice.

Y. Mir. What! you'll force me to marry you, will ye?

Oriana. Sir, the law shall.

Y. Mir. But the law can't force me to do any thing else, can it?

Oriana. Psha! I despise thee, monster!

Y. Mir. Kiss, and be friends, then: don't cry, child, and you shall have your sugar-plumb. Come, madam, d'ye think I could be so unreasonable as to make you fast all your life long? No, I did but jest, you shall have your liberty; here, take your contract, and give me mine.

Oriana. No, I won't.

Y. Mir. Eh! what, is the girl a fool?

Oriana. No, sir, you shall find me cunning enough to do myself justice; and, since I must not depend upon your love, I'll be revenged, and force you to marry me, out of spite.

Y. Mir. Then I'll beat thee out of spite, and make a most confounded husband.

Oriana. O, Sir, I shall match ye! A good husband makes a good wife at any time.

Y. Mir. I'll rattle down your china about your ears.

Oriana. And I'll rattle about the city, to run you in debt for more.

Y. Mir. I'll tear the furbelow off your clothes, and, when you swoon for vexation, you shan't have a penny to buy a bottle of hartshorn.

Oriana. And you, sir, shall have hartshorn in abundance.

Y. Mir. I'll keep as many mistresses as I have coach horses.

Oriana. And I'll keep as many gallants as you have grooms.

Y. Mir. But, sweet madam, there is such a thing as a divorce.

Oriana. But, sweet sir, there is such a thing as alimony! so divorce on, and spare not. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. Ay, that separate maintenance is the devil! there's their refuge! O' my conscience, one would take cuckoldom for a meritorious action, because the women are so handsomely rewarded for it. [*Exit.*

Enter Duretete *and* Petit.

Dur. And she's mighty peevish, you say?

Petit. O sir, she has a tongue as long as my leg, and talks so crabbedly, you would think she always spoke Welsh. [philosophy.

Dur. That's an odd language, methinks, for her

Petit. But sometimes she will sit you half a day without speaking a word, and talk oracles all the while by the wrinkles of her forehead, and the motions of her eyebrows.

Dur. Nay, I shall match her in philosophical ogles, faith; that's my talent: I can talk best, you must know, when I say nothing.

Petit. But d'ye ever laugh, sir?

Dur. Laugh? Won't she endure laughing?

Petit. Why, she's a critic, sir; she hates a jest, for fear it should please her; and nothing keeps her in humour, but what gives her the spleen. And then, for logic, and all that, you know—

Dur. Ay, ay, I'm prepared; I have been practising hard words, and no sense, this hour, to entertain her.

Petit. Then place yourself behind this screen, that you may have a view of her behaviour before you begin. [lesson.

Dur. I long to engage her, lest I should forget my

Petit. Here she comes, sir; I must fly.

[*Exit Petit, and Duretete stands peeping behind the curtain.*

Enter Bisarre *and Maid.*

Bis. (*With a book.*) Psha! hang books! they sour our temper, spoil our eyes, and ruin our complexions. (*Throws away the book.*)

Dur. Eh? the devil such a word is there in all Aristotle!

Bis. Come, wench, let's be free; call in the fiddle, there's nobody near us.

Dur. 'Would to the Lord there was not!

Bis. Here, friend, a minuet. (*Music.*) Quicker time! ha! 'would we had a man or two!

Dur. (*Stealing away.*) You shall have the devil sooner, my dear, dancing philosopher!

Bis. Ud's my life! Here's one! (*Runs to Duretete, and hales him back.*)

Dur. Is all my learned preparation come to this?

Bis. Come, sir, don't be so ashamed, that's my good boy; you're very welcome, we wanted such a one: Come, strike up. (*Dance.*) I know you dance well, sir; you're finely shaped for't. Come, come, sir; quick! quick! you miss the time else.

Dur. But, madam, I come to talk with you.

Bis. Ay, ay; talk as you dance, talk as you dance. Come!—

Dur. But we were talking of dialectics.

Bis. Hang dialectics! (*Music.*) Mind the time! quicker, sirrah! Come!—and how d'ye find yourself now, sir?

Dur. In a fine breathing sweat, doctor.

Bis. All the better, patient, all the better. Come, sir, sing now, sing; I know you sing well: I see you have a singing face; a heavy, dull, sonata face.

Dur. Who, I sing?

Bis. O, you're modest, sir; but come, sit down closer—closer. Here, a bottle of wine! [*Exit Maid, and returns with wine.*] Come, sir—sing, sir.

Dur. But, madam, I came to talk with you.

Bis. O sir, you shall drink first. Come, fill me a bumper; here, sir, bless the king!

Dur. 'Would I were out of his dominions! By this light, she'll make me drunk too!

Bis. O, pardon me, sir, you shall do me right; fill it higher. Now, sir, can you drink a health under your leg?

Dur. Rare philosophy that, 'faith!

Bis. Come, off with it to the bottom? Now, how d'ye like me, sir?

Dur. O, mighty well, madam!

Bis. You see how a woman's fancy varies! sometimes, splenetic and heavy, then, gay and frolicksome. And how d'ye like the humour?

Dur. Good madam, let me sit down to answer you, for I am heartily tired.

Bis. Fie upon it! a young man, and tired! up, for shame, and walk about. Action becomes us;—a little faster, sir. What d'ye think now of my Lady La Pale, and Lady Coquet, the duke's fair daughter? Ha! Are they not brisk lasses? Then there is black Mrs. Bellair, and brown Mrs. Bellface!

Dur. They are all strangers to me, madam.

Bis. But let me tell you, sir, that brown is not always despicable. O lard, sir, if young Mrs. Bagatelle had kept herself single till this time o'day, what a beauty there had been! And then, you know, the charming Mrs. Monkeylove, the fair gem of St. Germain's!

Dur. Upon my soul, I don't!

Bis. And then, you must have heard of the English beau, Spleenamore, how unlike a gentleman—

Dur. Hey! not a syllable on't, as I hope to be saved, madam!

Bis. No! Why, then, play me a jig. (*Music.*) Come, sir.

Dur. By this light, I cannot! 'faith, madam, I have sprained my leg!

Bis. Then sit you down, sir; and now tell me, what's your business with me? What's your errand? Quick, quick, despatch! Odso, may be, you are some gentleman's servant, that has brought me a letter, or a haunch of venison?

Dur. 'Sdeath, madam! do I look like a carrier?

Bis. O, cry you mercy! I saw you just now, I mistook you, upon my word! you are one of the travelling gentlemen: and pray, sir, how do all our impudent friends in Italy?

Dur. Madam, I came to wait on you with a more serious intention than your entertainment has answered.

Bis. Sir, your intention of waiting on me was the greatest affront imaginable, however your expressions may turn it to a compliment: your visit, sir, was intended as a prologue to a very scurvy play, of which, Mr. Mirabel and you so handsomely laid the plot. "Marry! No, no, I am a man of more honour." Where's your honour? Where's your courage, now? Ads my life, sir, I have a great mind to kick you! Go, go to your fellow-rake now, rail at my sex, and get drunk for vexation, and write a lampoon. But I must have you to know, sir, that my reputation is above the scandal of a libel, my virtue is sufficiently approved to those whose opinion is my interest; and, for the rest, let them talk what they will: for, when I please, I'll be what I please, in spite of you and all mankind; and so, my dear man of honour, if you be tired, con over this lesson, and sit there till I come to you. (*Runs off.*)

Dur. Tum ti dum. (*Sings.*) Ha, ha, ha! "Ad's my life, I have a great mind to kick you!" Oons and confusion! (*Starts up.*) Was ever man so abused! Ay, Mirabel set me on.

Enter Petit.

Petit. Well, sir, how d'ye find yourself?

Dur. You son of a nine-eyed whore! d'ye come to abuse me? I'll kick you with a vengeance, you dog! (*Petit runs off, and Duretete after him.*)

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Old Mirabel's House.*

Enter Old *and* Young Mirabel, *meeting.*

Old Mir. Bob, come hither, Bob.

Y. Mir. Your pleasure, sir?

Old Mir. Are not you a great rogue, sirrah?

Y. Mir. That's a little out of my comprehension sir; for I've heard say, that I resemble my father.

Old Mir. Your father is your very humble slave. I tell thee what, child, thou art a very pretty fellow, and I love thee heartily; and a very great villain, and I hate thee mortally.

Y. Mir. Villain, sir! Then I must be a very impudent one; for I can't recollect any passage of my life that I'm ashamed of.

Old Mir. Come hither, my dear friend; dost see this picture? (*Shews him a little picture.*)

Y. Mir. Oriana's? Psha!

Old Mir. What, sir, won't you look upon't? Bob, dear Bob, pr'ythee come hither, now. Dost want any money, child?

Y. Mir. No, sir.

Old Mir. Why then, here's some for thee: come here now. How canst thou be so hard-hearted an unnatural, unmannerly rascal, (don't mistake me, child, I a'n't angry) as to abuse this tender, lovely, good-natured, dear rogue? Why, she sighs for thee, and cries for thee, pouts for thee, and snubs for thee; the poor little heart of it is like to burst. Come, my dear boy, be good-natured, like your own father; be now; and then, see here, read this;—the effigies of the lovely Oriana, with thirty thousand pounds to her portion!—thirty thousand pounds, you dog!—thirty thousand pounds, you rogue! how dare you refuse a lady with thirty thousand pounds, you impudent rascal?

Y. Mir. Will you hear me speak, sir?

Old Mir. Hear you speak, sir! If you had thirty thousand tongues, you could not out-talk thirty thousand pounds, sir.

Y. Mir. Nay, sir, if you won't hear me, I'll be-gone, sir: I'll take post for Italy, this moment.

Old Mir. Ah, the fellow knows I won't part with him! Well, sir, what have you to say?

Y. Mir. The universal reception, sir, that marriage has had in the world, is enough to fix it for a public good, and to draw every body into the common cause; but there are some constitutions, like some instruments, so peculiarly singular, that they make tolerable music by themselves, but never do well in a concert.

Old. Mir. Why, this is reason, I must confess; but yet it is nonsense, too; for, though you should reason like an angel, if you argue yourself out of a good estate, you talk like a fool.

Y. Mir. But, sir, if you bribe me into bondage with the riches of Crœsus, you leave me but a beggar, for want of my liberty.

Old Mir. Was ever such a perverse fool heard? 'Sdeath, sir! why did I give you education? was it to dispute me out of my senses? Of what colour, now, is the head of this cane? You'll say, 'tis white, and, ten to one, make me believe it too. I thought that young fellows studied to get money.

Y. Mir. No, sir, I have studied to despise it; my reading was not to make me rich, but happy, sir.

Old Mir. There he has me again, now! But, sir, did not I marry to oblige you?

Y. Mir. To oblige me, sir! in what respect, pray?

Old Mir. Why, to bring you into the world, sir; wa'n't that an obligation?

Y. Mir. And, because I would have it still an obligation, I avoid marriage.

Old Mir. How is that, sir?

Y. Mir. Because I would not curse the hour I was born.

Old Mir. Lookye, friend, you may persuade me out of my designs, but I'll command you out of yours; and, though you may convince my reason that you are in the right, yet there is an old attendant of sixty-three, called positiveness, which you, nor all the wits in Italy, shall ever be able to shake: so, sir, you're a wit, and I'm a father: you may talk, but I'll be obeyed.

Y. Mir. This it is to have the son a finer gentleman than the father; they first give us breeding, that they don't understand; then they turn us out of doors, because we are wiser than themselves. But I'm a little before hand with the old gentleman. (*Aside.*) Sir, you have been pleased to settle a thousand pounds sterling a year upon me; in return for which, I have a very great honour for you and your family, and shall take care that your only and beloved son shall do nothing to make him hate his father, or to hang himself. So, dear sir, I'm your very humble servant. (*Runs off.*)

Old Mir. Here, sirrah! rogue! Bob! villain!

Enter DUGARD.

Dug. Ah, sir! 'tis but what he deserves.

Old Mir. 'Tis false, sir! he don't deserve it: what have you to say against my boy, sir?

Dug. I shall only repeat your own words.

Old Mir. What have you to do with my words? I have swallowed my words already; I have eaten them up. I say, that Bob's an honest fellow, and who dares deny it?

Enter BISARRE.

Bis. That dare I, sir: I say, that your son is a wild, foppish, whimsical, impertinent coxcomb; and, were I abused, as this gentleman's sister is, I would make it an Italian quarrel, and poison the whole family.

Dug. Come, sir, 'tis no time for trifling: my sister is abused; you are made sensible of the affront, and your honour is concerned to see her redressed.

Old Mir. Lookye, Mr. Dugard, good words go farthest. I will do your sister justice, but it must be after my own rate; nobody must abuse my son but myself; for, although Robin be a sad dog, yet he's nobody's puppy but my own.

Bis. Ay, that's my sweet-natured, kind, old gentleman. (*Wheedling him.*) We will be good, then, if you'll join with us in the plot.

Old Mir. Ah, you coaxing young baggage, what plot can you have to wheedle a fellow of sixty-three?

Bis. A plot that sixty-three is only good for; to bring other people together, sir. You must act the Spaniard, because your son will least suspect you; and, if he should, your authority protects you from a quarrel, to which Oriana is unwilling to expose her brother.

Old Mir. And what part will you act in the business, madam?

Bis. Myself, sir; my friend is grown a perfect changeling: these foolish hearts of ours spoil our heads presently; the fellows no sooner turn knaves, but we turn fools; but I am still myself, and he may expect the most severe usage from me, because I neither love him nor hate him. [*Exit.*

Old. Mir. Well said, Mrs. Paradox! but, sir, who must open the matter to him?

Dug. Petit, sir; who is our engineer general; and here he comes.

Enter PETIT.

Petit. O, sir, more discoveries! are all friends about us?

Dug. Ay, ay, speak freely.

Petit. You must know, sir,—odd's my life, I'm out of breath! you must know, sir,—you must know—

Old Mir. What the devil must we know, sir?

Petit. That I have (*pants and blows.*) bribed, sir, bribed—your son's secretary of state.

Old Mir. Secretary of state! who's that, for heaven's sake?

Petit. His valet de chambre, sir? You must know, sir, that the intrigue lay folded up in his master's clothes; and, when he went to dust the embroidered suit, the secret flew out of the right pocket of his coat, in a whole swarm of your crambo songs, short-footed odes, and long-legged pindarics.

Old Mir. Impossible!

Petit. Ah, sir, he has loved her all along; there was Oriana in every line, but he hates marriage. Now, sir, this plot will stir up his jealousy, and we shall know, by the strength of that, how to proceed farther. Come, sir, let's about it with speed:

'Tis expedition gives our king the sway;
For expedition to the French give way;
Swift to attack, or swift—to run away [*Exeunt.*

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL *and* BISARRE, *passing carelessly by one another.*

Bis. (*Aside.*) I wonder what she can see in this fellow to like him?

Y. Mir. (*Aside.*) I wonder what my friend can see in this girl, to admire her?

Bis. (*Aside.*) A wild, foppish, extravagant, rake-hell!

Y. Mir. (*Aside.*) A light, whimsical, impertinent madcap!

Bis. Whom do you mean, sir?

Y. Mir. Whom do you mean, madam?

Bis. A fellow that has nothing left to re-establish him for a human creature, but a prudent resolution to hang himself!

Y. Mir. There is a way, madam, to force me to that resolution.

Bis. I'll do it, with all my heart.

Y. Mir. Then you must marry me.

Bis. Lookye, sir, don't think your ill manners to me shall excuse your ill usage of my friend; nor, by fixing a quarrel here, to divert my zeal for the absent; for I'm resolved, nay, I come prepared, to make you a panegyric, that shall mortify your pride, like any modern dedication.

Y. Mir. And I, madam, like a true modern patron, shall hardly give you thanks for your trouble.

Bis. Come, sir, to let you see what little foundation you have for your dear sufficiency, I'll take you to pieces.

Y. Mir. And what piece will you chuse?

Bis. Your heart, to be sure; because I should get presently rid on't: your courage I would give to a Hector, your wit to a lewd playmaker, your honour to an attorney, your body to the physicians, and your soul to its master.

Y. Mir. I had the oddest dream last night of the Duchess of Burgundy; methought the furbelows of her gown were pinned up so high behind, that I could not see her head for her tail.

Bis. The creature don't mind me! do you think, sir, that your humorous impertinence can divert me?—No, sir, I'm above any pleasure that you can give, but that of seeing you miserable. And mark me, sir; my friend, my injured friend, shall yet be doubly happy, and you shall be a husband, as much as the rites of marriage, and the breach of them, can make you. (*Here Mirabel pulls out a Virgil, and reads to himself, while she speaks.*)

Y. Mir. (*Reading.*) *At Regina dolos, (quis fallere possit amantem?)*

Dissimulare etiam sperásti, perfide tantum—

Very true.

Posse nefas.

By your favour, friend Virgil, 'twas but a rascally trick of your hero, to forsake poor pug so inhumanly.

Bis. I don't know what to say to him. The devil—what's Virgil to us, sir?

Y. Mir. Very much, madam; the most apropos in the world; for, what should I chop upon, but the very place where the perjured rogue of a lover, and the forsaken lady, are battling it tooth and nail. Come, madam, spend your spirits no longer; we'll take an easier method; I'll be Æneas now, and you shall be Dido, and we'll rail by book. Now for you, Madam Dido:

Nec te noster amor, nec te data dextera quondam,
Nec meritura tenet crudeli funere Dido—

Ah, poor Dido! (*Looking at her.*)

Bis. Rudeness! affronts! impatience! I could almost start out, even to manhood, and want but a weapon, as long as his, to fight him upon the spot. What shall I say?

Y. Mir. Now she rants.

Quæ quibus ante feram? jam jam nec maxima Juno.

Bis. A man! No, the woman's birth was spirited away.

Y. Mir. Right, right, madam, the very words.

Bis. And some pernicious elf left in the cradle, with human shape, to palliate growing mischief. (*Both speak together, and raise their voices by degrees.*)

Y. Mir. Perfide, sed duris genuit te cautibus horrens
Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admorunt ubera tigres.

Bis. Go, sir, fly to your midnight revels—

Y. Mir. Excellent!

I sequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas,
Spero equidem mediis, si quid pia numina possunt.

(*Together again.*)

Bis. Converse with imps of darkness of your make; your nature starts at justice, and shivers at the touch of virtue. Now, the devil take his impudence! He vexes me so, I don't know whether to cry or laugh at him.

Y. Mir. Bravely performed, my dear Libyan! I'll write the tragedy of Dido, and you shall act the part; but you do nothing at all, unless you fret yourself into a fit; for here the poor lady is stifled with vapours, drops into the arms of her maids, and the cruel, barbarous, deceitful, wanderer, is in the very next line, called pious Æneas.—There's authority for ye.

Sorry indeed Æneas stood,
To see her in a pout;
But Jove himself, who ne'er thought good
To stay a second bout,
Commands him off, with all his crew,
And leaves poor Dy, as I leave you. [*Runs off.*

Bis. Go thy ways, for a dear, mad, deceitful, agreeable fellow! O' my conscience, I must excuse Oriana.

That lover soon his angry fair disarms,
Whose slighting pleases, and whose faults are charms.
[*Exit.*

Enter Petit; *runs about to every door, and knocks.*

Petit. Mr. Mirabel! Sir! where are you? no where to be found?

Enter Young Mirabel.

Y. Mir. What's the matter, Petit?

Petit. Most critically met! Ah, sir, that one who has followed the game so long, and brought the poor hare just under his paws, should let a mongrel cur chop in, and run away with the puss.

Y. Mir. If your worship can get out of your allegories, be pleased to tell me, in three words, what you mean.

Petit. Plain, plain, sir! Your mistress and mine is going to be married!

Y. Mir. I believe you lie, sir.

Petit. Your humble servant, sir. (*Going.*)

Y. Mir. Come hither, Petit. Married, say you?

Petit. No, sir, 'tis no matter; I only thought to do you a service; but I shall take care how I confer my favours for the future.

Y. Mir. Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons. (*Bowing low.*)

Petit. 'Tis enough, sir. I come to tell you, sir, that Oriana is this moment to be sacrificed; married past redemption!

Y. Mir. I understand her; she'll take a husband, out of spite to me, and then, out of love to me, she will make him a cuckold. But who is the hap-

Petit. A lord, sir. [py man?

Y. Mir. I'm her ladyship's most humble servant. Now must I be a constant attender at my lord's levee, to work my way to my lady's couchee—A countess, I presume, sir.

Petit. A Spanish count, sir, that Mr. Dugard knew abroad, is come to Paris, saw your mistress yesterday, marries her to-day, and whips her into Spain to-morrow.

Y. Mir. Ay, is it so? and must I follow my cuckold over the Pyrenees? Had she married within the precincts of a billet-doux, I would be the man to lead her to church; but, as it happens, I'll forbid the bans. Where is this mighty Don?

Petit. Have a care, sir; he's a rough cross-grained piece, and there's no tampering with him. Would you apply to Mr. Dugard, or the lady herself, something might be done, for it is in despite to you, that the business is carried so hastily. Odso, sir, here he comes! I must be gone. [*Exit.*

Enter Old Mirabel, *dressed in a Spanish habit, leading* Oriana.

Oriana. Good my lord, a nobler choice had better suited your lordship's merit. My person, rank, and circumstance, expose me as the public theme

of raillery, and subject me so to injurious usage, my lord, that I can lay no claim to any part of your regard, except your pity.

Old Mir. Breathes he vital air, that dares presume,
With rude behaviour, to profane such excellence? Shew me the man—
And you shall see how my sudden revenge Shall fall upon the head of such presumption. Is this thing one? (*Strutting up to Y. Mir.*)

Y. Mir. Sir!

Oriana. Good my lord,——

Old Mir. If he, or any he,——

Oriana. Pray, my lord, the gentleman's a stranger.

Old Mir. O, your pardon, sir, but if you had—remember, sir, the lady now is mine, her injuries are mine; therefore, sir, you understand me.—Come, madam.

[*Leads Oriana to the door; she goes off; Young Mirabel runs to his father, and pulls him by the sleeve.*

Y. Mir. Ecoutez, Monsieur le Count.

Old Mir. Your business, sir?

Y. Mir. Boh!

Old Mir. Boh! what language is that, sir?

Y. Mir. Spanish, my lord.

Old Mir. What d'ye mean?

Y. Mir. This, sir. (*Trips up his heels.*)

Old Mir. A very concise quarrel, truly—I'll bully him.—*Trinidade Seigneur*, give me fair play. (*Offering to rise.*)

Y. Mir. By all means, sir. (*Takes away his sword.*) Now, seigneur, where's that bombast look, and fustian face, your countship wore just now? (*Strikes him.*)

Old Mir. The rogue quarrels well, very well; my own son right! But hold, sirrah, no more jesting; I'm your father, sir! your father!

Y. Mir. My father! Then, by this light, I could find in my heart to pay thee. (*Aside.*) Is the fellow mad? Why, sure, sir, I ha'n't frighted you out of your senses?

Old Mir. But you have, sir!

Y. Mir. Then I'll beat them into you again. (*Offers to strike him.*)

Old Mir. Why, rogue!—Bob, dear Bob! don't you know me, child?

Y. Mir. Ha, ha, ha! the fellow's downright distracted! Thou miracle of impudence! wouldst thou make me believe, that such a grave gentleman as my father would go a masquerading thus? That a person of threescore and three would run about, in a fool's coat, to disgrace himself and family? why, you impudent villain, do you think I will suffer such an affront to pass upon my honoured father, my worthy father, my dear father? 'Sdeath, sir! mention my father but once again, and I'll send your soul to thy grandfather this minute! (*Offering to stab him.*)

Old Mir. Well, well, I am not your father.

Y. Mir. Why, then, sir, you are the saucy, hectoring Spaniard, and I'll use you accordingly.

Enter Dugard, Oriana, *Maid, and* Petit. *Dugard runs to Young Mirabel, the rest to Old Mirabel.*

Dug. Fie, fie, Mirabel! murder your father!

Y. Mir. My father? What, is the whole family mad? Give me way, sir; I won't be held.

Old Mir. No, nor I neither; let me begone, pray. (*Offering to go.*)

Y. Mir. My father!

Old Mir. Ay, you dog's face! I am your father, for I have borne as much for thee, as your mother ever did.

Y. Mir. O ho! then this was a trick, it seems, a design, a contrivance, a stratagem! Oh, how my bones ache!

Old Mir. Your bones, sirrah! why yours?

Y. Mir. Why sir, ha'n't I been beating my own flesh and blood all this while? O, madam, (*To Oriana.*) I wish your ladyship joy of your new dignity. Here was a contrivance indeed!

Oriana. Pray, sir, don't insult the misfortunes of your own creating.

Dug. My prudence will be counted cowardice, if I stand tamely now. (*Comes up between Young Mirabel and his sister.*) Well, sir.

Y. Mir. Well, sir! Do you take me for one of your tenants, sir, that you put on your landlord's face at me?

Dug. On what presumption, sir, dare you assume thus? (*Draws.*)

Old Mir. What's that to you, sir? (*Draws.*)

Petit. Help! help! the lady faints! (*Oriana falls into her maid's arms.*)

Y. Mir. Vapours! vapours! she'll come to herself. If it be angry fit, a dram of assafœtida; if jealousy, hartshorn in water; if the mother, burnt feathers; if grief, ratafia; if it be strait stays, or corns, there's nothing like a dram of plain brandy. [*Exit.*

Oriana. Hold off, give me air.—O, my brother, would you preserve my life, endanger not your own; would you defend my reputation, leave it to itself; 'tis a dear vindication that's purchased by the sword; for, though our champion proves victorious, yet our honour is wounded.

Old Mir. Ay, and your lover may be wounded, that's another thing. But I think you are pretty brisk again, my child.

Oriana. Ay, sir, my indisposition was only a pretence to divert the quarrel; the capricious taste of your sex, excuses this artifice in ours. [*Exit.*

Petit. Come, Mr. Dugard, take courage; there is a way still left to fetch him again.

Old Mir. Sir, I'll have no plot that has any relation to Spain.

Dug. I scorn all artifice whatsoever; my sword shall do her justice.

Petit. Pretty justice, truly! Suppose you run him through the body, you run her through the heart at the same time.

Old Mir. And me through the head—rot your sword, sir, we'll have plots. Come, Petit, let's hear.

Petit. What if she pretended to go into a nunnery, and so bring him about to declare himself?

Dug. That, I must confess, has a face.

Old Mir. A face! a face like an angel, sir! Ad's my life, sir, 'tis the most beautiful plot in christendom. We'll about it immediately. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*Old Mirabel's House.*

Enter Old Mirabel *and* Dugard.

Dug. The lady abbess is my relation, and privy to the plot.

Old Mir. Ay, ay, this nunnery will bring him about, I warrant ye.

Enter Duretete.

Dur. Here, where are ye all? O, Mr. Mirabel! you have done fine things for your posterity. And you, Mr. Dugard, may come to answer this; I come to demand my friend at your hands; restore him, sir, or—(*To Old Mirabel.*)

Old Mir. Restore him! what, d'ye think I have got him in my trunk, or my pocket?

Dur. Sir, he's mad, and you are the cause on't.

Old Mir. That may be; for I was as mad as he when I begot him.

Dug. Mad, sir! What d'ye mean?

Dur. What do you mean, sir, by shutting up your sister, yonder, to talk like a parrot through a

cage, or a decoy-duck, to draw others into the snare? Your son, sir, because she has deserted him, he has forsaken the world; and in three words, has—

Old Mir. Hanged himself!

Dur. The very same—turned friar!

Old Mir. You lie, sir! 'tis ten times worse. Bob turned friar!—Why should the fellow shave his foolish crown, when the same razor may cut his throat?

Dur. If you have any command, or you any interest over him, lose not a minute: he has thrown himself into the next monastery, and has ordered me to pay off his servants, and discharge his equipage.

Old Mir. Let me alone to ferret him out; I'll sacrifice the abbot if he receives him; I'll try whether the spiritual or the natural father has the most right to the child. But, dear Captain, what has he done with his estate?

Dur. Settled it upon the church, sir.

Old Mir. The church! Nay, then the devil won't get him out of their clutches—Ten thousand livres a year upon the church! 'Tis downright sacrilege. Come, gentlemen, all hands to work; for half that sum, one of these monasteries shall protect you a traitor from the law, a rebellious wife from her husband, and a disobedient son from his own father.

[*Exit.*

Dug. But will ye persuade me that he's gone to a monastery?

Dur. Is your sister gone to the Filles Repenties? I tell you, sir, she's not fit for the society of repenting maids.

Dug. Why so, sir?

Dur. Because she's neither one nor t'other; she's too old to be a maid, and too young to repent.

[*Exit; Dugard after him.*

SCENE II.—*The Inside of a monastery.*

Enter ORIANA, *in a nun's habit*, and BISARRE.

Oriana. I hope, Bisarre, there is no harm in jesting with this religious habit.

Bis. To me, the greatest jest in the habit, is taking it in earnest.

Oriana. But I'm reconciled, methinks, to the mortification of a nunnery; because I fancy the habit becomes me.

Bis. A well-contrived mortification, truly, that makes a woman look ten times handsomer than she did before. Ay, my dear, were there any religion in becoming dress, our sex's devotion were rightly placed; for our toilets would do the work of the altar; we should all be canonized.

Oriana. But don't you think there is a great deal of merit in dedicating a beautiful face and person to the service of religion?

Bis. Not half so much as devoting them to a pretty fellow. Come, come, mind your business. Mirabel loves you, 'tis now plain, and hold him to't: give fresh orders that he sha'n't see you. We get more by hiding our faces, sometimes, than by exposing them: a very mask, you see, whets desire; but a pair of keen eyes, through an iron grate, fire double upon them, with view and disguise. But I must begone upon my affairs; I have brought my captain about again.

Oriana. But why will you trouble yourself with that coxcomb?

Bis. Because he is a coxcomb. Had I not better have a lover like him, that I can make an ass of, than a lover like your's, to make a fool of me. (*Knocking below.*) A message from Mirabel, I'll lay my life! (*She runs to the door.*) Come hither! run, thou charming nun! come hither.

Oriana. What's the news? (*Runs to her.*)

Bis. Don't you see who's below?

Oriana. I see nobody but a friar.

Bis. Ah! thou poor blind Cupid. A friar! Don't you see a villanous genteel mien, under that cloak of hypocrisy?

Oriana. As I live, Mirabel turned friar! I hope, in heaven he's not in earnest.

Bis. In earnest! Ha, ha, ha! Are you in earnest? Remember what I say, if you would yield to advantage, and hold out the attack—to draw him on, keep him off, to be sure.

The cunning gamesters never gain too fast;
But lose at first, to win the more at last. [*Exit.*

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL, *in a friar's habit.*

Y. Mir. 'Save you, sister! Your brother, young lady, having a regard for your soul's health, has sent me to prepare you for the sacred habit, by confession.

Oriana. My brother's care I own; and to you, sacred sir, I confess, that the great crying sin, which I have long indulged, and now prepare to expiate, was love: my morning thoughts, my evening prayers, my daily musings, nightly cares, was love!

Y. Mir. She's downright stark mad in earnest. Death and confusion! I have lost her. (*Aside.*) You confess your fault, madam, in such moving terms, that I could almost be in love with the sin.

Oriana. Take care, sir; crimes, like virtues, are their own rewards. My chief delight became my only grief: he, in whose breast I thought my heart secure, turned robber, and despoiled the treasure that he kept.

Y. Mir. Perhaps that treasure he esteemed so much, that, like the miser, though afraid to use it, he reserves it safe.

Oriana. No, holy father! who can be miser in another's wealth, that's prodigal of his own? His heart was open, shared to all he knew; and what, alas! must then become of mine. But the same eyes that drew this passion in, shall send it out in tears; to which now hear my vow—

Y. Mir. (*Discovering himself.*) No, my fair angel! here, on my knees, behold the criminal that vows repentance his. (*Kneels.*) Ah! no concern upon her!

Enter OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Where, where's this counterfeit nun?

Oriana. Madness! confusion! I'm ruined!

Y. Mir. What do I hear? (*Puts on his hood.*) What did you say, sir?

Old Mir. I say she's a counterfeit; and you may be another, for aught I know, sir: I have lost my child by these tricks, sir.

Y. Mir. What tricks, sir?

Old Mir. By a pretended trick, sir; a contrivance to bring my son to reason, and it has made him stark mad: I have lost him, and a thousand pounds a year.

Y. Mir. (*Discovering himself.*) My dear father, I'm your most humble servant.

Old Mir. My dear boy! (*Runs and kisses him.*) Welcome, *ex inferis*, my dear boy! 'Tis all a trick; she's no more a nun than I am.

Y. Mir. No!

Old Mir. The devil a bit.

Y. Mir. Then kiss me again, my dear dad, for the most happy news. And now, most venerable, holy sister! (*Kneels.*)

Your mercy and your pardon I implore,
For the offence of asking it before.

Lookye, my dear, counterfeiting nun! take my advice; be a nun in good earnest. Women make the best nuns always, when they can't do otherwise.

Oriana. O, sir! how unhappily have you destroyed what was so near perfection: he is the counterfeit that has deceived you.

Old Mir. Ha! Lookye, sir, I recant; she is a nun.

Y. Mir. Sir, your humble servant; then I'm a friar this moment.

Old Mir. Was ever an old fool so bantered by a brace of young ones! Hang you both! you're both counterfeits; and my plot's spoiled, that's all.

Oriana. Shame and confusion—love, anger, and disappointment—will work my brain to madness!

[*Takes off her habit; then exit.*

Y. Mir. Ay, ay, throw by the rags; they have served a turn for us both, and they shall e'en go off together.

[*Takes off his habit; then exit, throwing away the habit.*

SCENE III.—*Old Mirabel's House.*

Enter DURETETE, *with a letter.*

Dur. (Reads.) "*My rudeness was only a proof of your humour, which I have found so agreeable, that I own myself penitent, and willing to make any reparation upon your first appearance to*—BISARRE." Mirabel swears she loves me, and this confirms it: then farewell gallantry, and welcome revenge! 'Tis my turn now to be upon the sublime; I'll take her off, I warrant her!

Enter BISARRE.

Well, mistress, do you love me?

Bis. I hope, sir, you will pardon the modesty of—

Dur. Of what? of a dancing devil!—Do you love me, I say?

Bis. Perhaps I—

Dur. What?

Bis. Perhaps I do not.

Dur. Ha! abused again! Death, woman, I'll—

Bis. Hold, hold, sir! I do, do!

Dur. Confirm it, then, by your obedience; stand there, and ogle me now, as if your heart, blood, and soul, were like to fly out at your eyes—First, the direct surprise. (*She looks full upon him.*) Right; next, the *deux yeux par oblique.* (*She gives him the side glance.*) Right; now depart, and languish. (*She turns from him, and looks over her shoulder.*) Very well; now sigh. (*She sighs.*) Now drop your fan on purpose. (*She drops her fan.*) Now take it up again. Come, now, confess your faults; are you not a proud—say after me.

Bis. Proud.

Dur. Impertinent—

Bis. Impertinent.

Dur. Ridiculous—

Bis. Ridiculous.

Dur. Flirt?

Bis. Puppy!

Dur. Zoons! Woman, don't provoke me; we are alone, and you don't know but the devil may tempt me to do you a mischief; ask my pardon immediately.

Bis. I do, sir; I only mistook the word.

Dur. Cry, then. Have you got e'er a handkerchief?

Bis. Yes, sir.

Dur. Cry, then, handsomely; cry like a queen in a tragedy. (*She pretending to cry, bursts out a laughing.*)

Enter Two Ladies, laughing.

Bis. Ha, ha, ha!

Both Ladies. Ha, ha, ha!

Dur. Hell broke loose upon me, and all the furies fluttered about my ears! Betrayed again?

Bis. That you are, upon my word, my dear Captain; ha, ha, ha!

Dur. The Lord deliver me!

1 *Lady.* What! is this the mighty man, with the bull-face, that comes to frighten ladies?

Dur. Ah, madam, I'm the best natured fellow in the world.

Bis. A man! we're mistaken; a man has manners: the awkward creature is some tinker's trull, in a periwig. Come, ladies, let us examine him. (*They lay hold on him.*)

Dur. Examine! the devil you will!

Bis. I'll lay my life, some great dairy maid in man's clothes!

Dur. They will do't;—lookye, dear Christian women! pray hear me.

Bis. Will you ever attempt a lady's honour again?

Dur. If you please to let me get away with my honour, I'll do anything in the world.

Bis. Will you persuade your friend to marry mine?

Dur. O yes, to be sure.

Bis. And will you do the same by me?

Dur. Burn me if I do, if the coast be clear. (*Runs out.*)

Bis. Ha, ha, ha! The visit, ladies, was critical for our diversions: we'll go make an end of our tea.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL *and* OLD MIRABEL.

Y. Mir. Your patience, sir. I tell you, I won't marry; and, though you send all the bishops in France to persuade me, I shall never believe their doctrine against their practice. You would compel me to that state, which I have heard you curse yourself, when my mother and you have battled it for a whole week together.

Old Mir. Never but once, you rogue, and that was when she longed for six Flanders mares: ay, sir, then she was breeding of you, which shewed what an expensive dog I should have of you.

Enter PETIT.

Well, Petit, how does she now?

Petit. Mad, sir, *con pompos*—Ay, Mr. Mirabel, you'll believe that I speak truth, now, when I confess that I have told you hitherto nothing but lies: our jesting is come to a sad earnest; she's downright distracted!

Enter BISARRE.

Bis. Where is this mighty victor!—The great exploit is done. O, sir, (*to the old Gentleman*) your wretched ward has found a tender guardian of you, where her young innocence expected protection, here has she found her ruin.

Old Mir. Ay, the fault is mine; for I believe that rogue won't marry, for fear of begetting such another disobedient son as his father did. I have done all I can, madam, and now can do no more than run mad for company. (*Cries.*)

Enter DUGARD, *with his sword drawn.*

Dug. Away! Revenge! Revenge!

Old Mir. Patience! Patience, sir! (*Old Mirabel holds him.*) Bob, draw. (*Aside.*)

Dug. Patience! the coward's virtue, and the brave man's failing, when thus provoked—Villain!

Y. Mir. Your sister's phrensy shall excuse your madness; and, to shew my concern for what she suffers, I'll bear the villain from her brother.—Put up your anger with your sword; I have a heart like yours, that swells at an affront received, but melts at an injury given; and, if the lovely Oriana's grief be such a moving scene, 'twill find a part within this breast, perhaps as tender as a brother's.

Dug. To prove that soft compassion for her grief, endeavour to remove it.—There, there, behold an object that's infective; I cannot view her but I am as mad as she!

Enter ORIANA, *held by Two Maids, who put her in a chair.*

A sister, that my dying parents left, with their last

words and blessing, to my care. Sister, dearest sister! (*Goes to her.*) [me?

Old Mir. Ay, poor child, poor child, d'ye know

Oriana. You! you are Amadis de Gaul, sir.—Oh! oh, my heart! Were you never in love, fair lady? And do you never dream of flowers and gardens?—I dream of walking fires, and tall gigantic sights. Take heed, it comes now—What's that? Pray stand away: I have seen that face, sure.—How light my head is!

Y. Mir. What piercing charms has beauty, even in madness!

Oriana. I cannot; for I must be up to go to church, and I must dress me, put on my new gown, and be so fine, to meet my love. Heigho!—Will not you tell me where my heart lies buried?

Y. Mir. My very soul is touched—Your hand, my fair!

Oriana. How soft and gentle you feel! I'll tell you your fortune, friend.

Y. Mir. How she stares upon me!

Oriana. You have a flattering face; but 'tis a fine one. I warrant you have five hundred mistresses: ay, to be sure, a mistress for every guinea in his pocket—will you pray for me? I shall die to-morrow—and will you ring my passing bell?

Y. Mir. Do you know me, injured creature?

Oriana. No; but you shall be my intimate acquaintance—in the grave. (*Weeps.*)

Y. Mir. Oh, tears! I must believe you; sure there's a kind of sympathy in madness; for even I, obdurate as I am, do feel my soul so tossed with storms of passion, that I could cry for help as well as she. (*Wipes his eyes.*)

Oriana. What, have you lost your lover? No, you mock me; I'll go home and pray.

Y. Mir. Stay, my fair innocence, and hear me own my love so loud, that I may call your senses to their place, restore them to their charming happy functions, and reinstate myself into your favour.

Bis. Let her alone, sir; 'tis all too late: she trembles; hold her, her fits grow stronger by her talking; don't trouble her; she don't know you, sir.

Old Mir. Not know him? What then? She loves to see him, for all that.

Enter Duretete.

Dur. Where are you all? What the devil! Melancholy, and I here? Are ye sad, and such a ridiculous subject, such a very good jest among you as I am?

Y. Mir. Away with this impertinence; this is no place for bagatelle; I have murdered my honour, destroyed a lady, and my desire of reparation is come at length too late. See there!

Dur. What ails her?

Y. Mir. Alas, she's mad!

Dur. Mad? dost wonder at that? By this light! they're all so; they're cozening mad; they're brawling mad; they're proud mad: I just now came from a whole world of mad women, that had almost—What, is she dead?

Y. Mir. Dead? Heavens forbid!

Dur. Heavens further it! for, till they be as cold as a key, there's no trusting them; you're never sure that a woman's in earnest, till she is nailed in her coffin. Shall I talk to her? Are you mad, mistress?

Bis. What's that to you, sir?

Dur. Oons, madam! are you there?

Y. Mir. Away, thou wild buffoon! How poor and mean this humour now appears? His follies and my own I here disclaim; this lady's phrensy has restored my senses, and were she perfect now, as once she was, (before you all I speak it) she should be mine; and, as she is, my tears and prayers shall wed her.

Dug. How happy had this declaration been some hours ago!

Bis. Sir, she beckons to you, and waves us to go off: come, come, let's leave them.

[*Exeunt all but Young Mirabel and Oriana.*

Oriana. Oh, sir!

Y. Mir. Speak, my charming angel! if your dear senses have regained their order; speak, fair, and bless me with the news.

Oriana. First, let me bless the cunning of my sex, that happy counterfeited phrenzy that has restored to my poor labouring breast the dearest, best beloved of men.

Y. Mir. Tune all, ye spheres, your instruments of joy, and carry round your spacious orbs the happy sound of Oriana's health; her soul, whose harmony was next to your's, is now in tune again; the counterfeiting fair has played the fool!

She was so mad, to counterfeit for me;
I was so mad, to pawn my liberty:
But now we both are well, and both are free.

Oriana. How, sir? Free?

Y. Mir. As air, my dear Bedlamite! What, marry a lunatic! Lookye, my dear, you have counterfeited madness so very well this bout, that you'll be apt to play the fool all your life long. Here, gentlemen!

Oriana. Monster! you won't disgrace me?

Y. Mir. O' my faith, but I will! Here, come in gentlemen. A miracle! a miracle! the woman's dispossessed! the devil's vanished!

Enter Old Mirabel *and* Dugard.

Old Mir. Bless us! was she possessed?

Y. Mir. With the worst of demons, sir; a marriage devil! a horrid devil! Mr. Dugard, don't be surprised. I promised my endeavours to cure your sister; no mad-doctor in Christendom could have done it more effectually. Take her into your charge; and have a care she don't relapse. If she should, employ me not again, for I am no more infallible than others of the faculty; I do cure sometimes.

Oriana. Your remedy, most barbarous man, will prove the greatest poison to my health; for, though my former phrensy was but counterfeit, I now shall run into a real madness.

[*Exit; Old Mirabel after.*

Y. Mir. What a dangerous precipice have I escaped! Was not I just now upon the brink of destruction?

Enter Duretete.

Oh, my friend! let me run into thy bosom. No lark escaped from the devouring pounces of a hawk, quakes with more dismal apprehension.

Dur. The matter, man?

Y. Mir. Marriage! hanging! I was just at the gallows-foot, the running-noose about my neck, and the cart wheeling from me. Oh! I sha'n't be myself this month again.

Dur. Did not I tell you so? They are all alike, saints or devils.

Y. Mir. Ay, ay: there's no living here with security; this house is so full of stratagem and design, that I must abroad again.

Dur. With all my heart; I'll bear thee company, my lad: I'll meet you at the play; and we'll set out for Italy to-morrow morning.

Y. Mir. A match; I'll go pay my compliment of leave to my father presently.

Dur. I'm afraid he'll stop you.

Y. Mir. What! pretend a command over me, after his settlement of a thousand pounds a year upon me! No, no; he has passed away his authority with the conveyance; the will of the living father is chiefly obeyed for the sake of the dying one.

Dependence, ev'n a father's sway secures,
For, though the son rebels, the heir is your's.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Street before the playhouse.*

MIRABEL *and* DURETETE, *as coming from the play.*

Dur. How d'ye like this play?

Y. Mir. I liked the company; the lady, the rich beauty, in the front box, had my attention. These impudent poets bring the ladies together to support them, and to kill every body else.

For deaths upon the stage, the ladies cry;
But ne'er mind us, that in the audience die:
The poet's hero should not move their pain,
But they should weep for those their eyes have slain.

Dur. Hoyty, toyty! Did Phillis inspire you with all this?

Y. Mir. Ten times more; the playhouse is the element of poetry, because the region of beauty; the ladies, methinks, have a more inspiring, triumphant air in the boxes than anywhere else; they sit, commanding on their thrones, with all their subject slaves about them; their best clothes, best looks, shining jewels, sparkling eyes; the treasure of the world in a ring. I could wish that my whole life long, were the first night of a new play.

Dug. The fellow has quite forgot this journey: have you bespoke post-horses?

Y. Mir. Grant me but three days, dear Captain; one to discover the lady, one to unfold myself, and one to make me happy; and then I'm your's to the world's end.

Dur. Hast thou the impudence to promise thyself a lady of her figure and quality in so short a time?

Y. Mir. Yes, sir; I have a confident address, no disagreeable person, and five hundred louis d'ors in my pocket.

Dur. Five hundred Louis-d'ors! You an't mad?

Y. Mir. I tell you, she's worth five thousand; one of her black, brilliant eyes, is worth a diamond as big as her head.

Dur. But you have owned to me, that, abating Oriana's pretensions to marriage, you loved her passionately; then how can you wander at this rate?

Y. Mir. I longed for a partridge t'other day, off the king's plate, but d'ye think, because I could not have it, I must eat nothing?

Enter ORIANA, *in boy's clothes, with a letter.*

Oriana. Is your name Mirabel, sir?

Y. Mir. Yes, sir.

Oriana. A letter from your uncle, in Picardy. (*Gives the letter.*)

Y. Mir. "*The bearer is the son of a Protestant gentleman, who, flying for his religion, left me the charge of this youth.*"—A pretty boy! "*He's fond of some handsome service, that may afford him opportunity of improvement: your care of him will oblige, your's.*" Hast a mind to travel, child?

Oriana. 'Tis my desire, sir: I should be pleased to serve a traveller in any capacity.

Y. Mir. A hopeful inclination; you shall along with me into Italy, as my page.

Dur. (*Noise without.*) Too handsome—the play's done, and some of the ladies come this way. (*Lamorce without, with her train borne up by a page.*)

Y. Mir. Duretete, the very dear, identical she!

Dur. And what then?

Y. Mir. Why, 'tis she!

Dur. And what then, sir?

Y. Mir. Then! Why, lookye, sirrah, the first piece of service I put upon you, is to follow that lady's coach, and bring me word where she lives. (*To Oriana.*)

Oriana. I don't know the town, sir, and am afraid of losing myself.

Y. Mir. Psha!

Enter LAMORCE *and* PAGE.

Lam. Page, what's become of all my people?

Page. I can't tell, madam; I can see no sign of your ladyship's coach.

Lam. That fellow has got into his old pranks, and fallen drunk somewhere; none of the footmen [there?

Page. Not one, madam.

Lam. These servants are the plague of our lives; what shall I do?

Y. Mir. By all my hopes, Fortune pimps for me! now, Duretete, for a piece of gallantry!

Dur. Why, you won't, sure?

Y. Mir. Won't, brute! Let not your servants' neglect, madam, put your ladyship to any inconvenience; for you can't be disappointed of an equipage, whilst mine waits below: and, would you honour the master so far, he would be proud to pay his attendance.

Dur. Ay, to be sure! (*Aside.*)

Lam. Sir, I won't presume to be troublesome, for my habitation is a great way off.

Dur. Very true, madam, and he's a little engaged; besides, madam, a hackney coach will do as well, madam.

Y. Mir. Rude beast, be quiet! (*To Duretete.*) The farther from home, madam, the more occasion you have for a guard; pray, madam—

Lam. Lard, sir——(*He seems to press, she to decline it, in dumb show.*)

Dur. Ah! the devil's in his impudence! now he wheedles, she smiles; he flatters, she simpers; he swears, she believes; he's a rogue, and she's a w—— in a moment.

Y. Mir. Without there! my coach! Duretete, wish me joy! (*Hands the lady out.*)

Dur. Wish you a——! Here, you little Picard, go follow your master, and he'll lead you—

Oriana. Whither, sir?

Dur. To the Academy, child; 'tis the fashion with men of quality, to teach their pages their exercises—go.

Oriana. Won't you go with him too, sir? That woman may do him some harm; I don't like her.

Dur. Why, how now, Mr. Page, do you start up, to give laws of a sudden? Do you pretend to rise at court, and disapprove the pleasure of your betters? Lookye, sirrah, if ever you would rise by a great man, be sure to be with him in his little actions; and, as a step to your advancement, follow your master immediately, and make it your hope, that he goes to a bagnio.

Oriana. Heavens forbid! [*Exit.*

Dur. Now would I sooner take a cart in company of the hangman, than a coach with that woman. What a strange antipathy have I taken against these creatures! a woman to me, is aversion upon aversion! a cheese, a cat, a breast of mutton, the squalling of children, the grinding of knives, and the snuff of a candle.

SCENE II.—*Lamorce's Lodgings.*

Enter MIRABEL *and* LAMORCE.

Lam. To convince me, sir, that your service was something more than good breeding, please to lay out an hour of your company upon my desire, as you have already upon my necessity.

Y. Mir. Your desire, madam, has only prevented my request. My hours! Make them your's, madam, eleven, twelve, one, two, three, and all that belong to those happy minutes.

Lam. But I must trouble you, sir, to dismiss your retinue, because an equipage at my door, at this time of night, will not be consistent with my reputation.

Y. Mir. By all means, madam, all but one little boy. Here, page!

Enter ORIANA.

Order my coach and servants home, and do you stay; 'tis a foolish country boy, that knows nothing but innocence.

Lam. Innocence, sir! I should be sorry if you made any sinister constructions of my freedom.

Y. Mir. O, madam, I must not pretend to remark upon any body's freedom, having so entirely forfeited my own.

Lam. Well, sir, 'twere convenient towards our easy correspondence, that we entered into a free confidence of each other, by a mutual declaration of what we are, and what we think of one another. Now, sir, what are you?

Y. Mir. In three words, madam—I am a gentleman, and have five hundred pounds in my pocket.

Lam. And your name is—

Y. Mir. Mustapha. Now, madam, the inventory of your fortunes?

Lam. My name is Lamorce; my birth, noble; I was married young, to a proud, rude, sullen, impetuous fellow; the husband spoiled the gentleman; crying ruined my face, till at last, I took heart, leaped out of a window, got away to my friends, sued my tyrant, and recovered my fortune. I lived from fifteen to twenty, to please a husband; from twenty to forty, I'm resolved to please myself, and from thence, upwards, I'll humour the world.

Y. Mir. Ha, ha, ha! I rejoice in your good fortune, with all my heart!

Lam. O, now I think on't, Mr. Mustapha, you have got the finest ring there, I could scarcely believe it right; pray let me see it.

Y. Mir. Hum! Yes, madam, 'tis—'tis right; but—but—but—but—but it was given me by my mother, an old family ring, madam; an old-fashioned, family ring.

Lam. Ay, sir! If you can entertain yourself for a moment, I'll wait on you immediately.

Y. Mir. Certainly the stars have been in a strange, intriguing humour, when I was born. Ay, this night should I have had a bride in my arms, and that I should like well enough! But what should I have to-morrow night? The same. And what next night? The same. And what next night? The very same: Soup for breakfast, soup for dinner, soup for supper, and soup for breakfast again. But here's variety.

I love the fair, who freely gives her heart,
That's mine by ties of nature, not of art;
Who boldly owns whate'er her thoughts indite,
And is too modest for a hypocrite.

(*Lamorce appears at the door; as he runs towards her, four Bravoes step in before her. He starts back.*) She comes, she comes. Hum, hum! Bitch! murdered, murdered, to be sure! The cursed strumpet! To make me send away my servants. Nobody near me! These cut-throats always make sure work.—What shall I do? I have but one way. Are these gentlemen your relations, madam?

Lam. Yes, sir.

Y. Mir. Gentlemen, your most humble servant; sir, your most faithful; your's, sir, with all my heart; your most obedient; come, gentlemen, (*Salutes all round*) please to sit; no ceremony; next the lady, pray, sir.

Lam. Well, sir, and how d'ye like my friends? (*They all sit.*)

Y. Mir. O, madam, the most finished gentlemen! I was never more happy in good company in my life; I suppose, sir, you have travelled?

1 *Bra.* Yes, sir.

Y. Mir. Which way, may I presume?

1 *Bra.* In a western barge, sir.

Y. Mir. Ha, ha, ha! very pretty! facetious pretty gentleman!

Lam. Ha, ha, ha! sir, you have got the prettiest ring upon your finger there—

Y. Mir. Ah! madam, 'tis at your service, with all my heart! (*Offering the ring.*)

Lam. By no means, sir, a family ring. (*Takes it.*)

Y. Mir. No matter, madam.—Seven hundred pound, by this light! (*Aside.*)

2 *Bra.* Pray, sir, what's o'clock?

Y. Mir. Hum! Sir, I have left my watch at home.

2 *Bra.* I thought I saw the string of it, just now.

Y. Mir. Ods my life, sir, I beg your pardon, here it is! but it don't go. (*Putting it up.*)

Lam. O dear sir, an English watch! Tompion's I presume?

Y. Mir. D'ye like it, madam? No ceremony; 'tis at your service with all my heart and soul! Tompion's! Hang ye! (*Aside.*)

1 *Bra.* But, sir, above all things, I admire the fashion and make of your sword hilt!

Y. Mir. I'm mighty glad you like it, sir!

1 *Bra.* Will you part with it, sir?

Y. Mir. Sir, I won't sell it.

1 *Bra.* Not sell it, sir!

Y. Mir. No, gentlemen, but I'll bestow it with all my heart! (*Offering it.*)

1 *Bra.* O, sir, we shall rob you!

Y. Mir. That you do, I'll be sworn! (*Aside.*) I have another at home; pray, sir—Gentlemen, you're too modest; have I anything else that you fancy? Sir, will you do me a favour? (*To the first Bravo.*) I am extremely in love with that hat which you wear, will you do me the favour to change with me?

1 *Bra.* Lookye, sir, this is a family hat, and I would not part with it, but if you like it—(*They change hats.*) I want but a handsome pretence to quarrel with him. Some wine! Sir, your good health. (*Pulls Mirabel by the nose.*)

Y. Mir. Oh, sir, your most humble servant! a pleasant frolic enough, to drink a man's health, and pull him by the nose! Ha, ha, ha! the pleasantest, pretty-humoured gentleman— [*drinks.*)

Lam. Help the gentleman to a glass. (*Mirabel*

1 *Bra.* How d'ye like the wine, sir?

Y. Mir. Very good o'the kind, sir: but I tell ye what, I find we're all inclined to be frolicsome, and 'egad, for my own part, I was never more disposed to be merry; let's make a night on't, ha! This wine is pretty, but I have such burgundy at home! Lookye, gentlemen, let me send for half a dozen flasks of my burgundy, I defy France to match it; 'twill make us all life, all air: pray gentlemen.

2 *Bra.* Eh? Shall us have his burgundy?

1 *Bra.* Yes, 'faith, we'll have all we can; here, call up the gentleman's servant. [*Exit Footman.*] What think you, Lamorce?

Lam. Yes, yes. Your servant is a foolish country boy, sir, he understands nothing but innocence.

Y. Mir. Ay, ay, madam. Here, page—

Enter ORIANA.

Take this key, and go to my butler, order him to send half a dozen flasks of the red burgundy, marked a thousand; and be sure you make haste, I long to entertain my friends here; my very good *Omnes.* Ah, dear sir! [friends.

1 *Bra.* Here, child, take a glass of wine. Your master and I have changed hats, honey, in a frolic. Where had you this pretty boy, honest Mustapha?

Oriana. Mustapha!

Y. Mir. Out of Picardy; this is the first errand he has made for me, and if he does it right, I will encourage him.

Oriana. The red burgundy, sir?

Y. Mir. The red, marked a thousand, and be sure you make haste.

Oriana. I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

1 *Bra.* Sir, you were pleased to like my hat, have you any fancy for my coat? Lookye, sir, it has served a great many honest gentlemen very faithfully.

Y. Mir. The insolence of these dogs is beyond their cruelty. (*Aside.*)

Lam. You're melancholy, sir.

Y. Mir. Only concerned, madam, that I should

have no servant here but this little boy; he'll make some confounded blunder, I'll lay my life on't; I would not be disappointed of my wine for the universe.

Lam. He'll do well enough, sir; but supper's ready; will you please to eat a bit, sir?

Y. Mir. O, madam, I never had a better stomach in my life.

Lam. Come, then, we have nothing but a plate of soup.

Y. Mir. Ah! the marriage soup I could dispense with now. [*Aside—Exit, handing the Lady.*

2 *Bra.* Shall we despatch him?

3 *Bra.* To be sure; I think he knows me.

1 *Bra.* Ay, ay, dead men tell no tales; I han't the confidence to look a man in the face, after I have done him an injury, therefore we'll murder him. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*Old Mirabel's House.*

Enter Duretete.

Dur. My friend has forsaken me, I have abandoned my mistress, my time lies heavy upon my hands, and my money burns in my pocket. But now I think on't, my myrmidons are upon duty to-night; I'll fairly stroll down to the guard, and nod away the night with my honest lieutenant, over a flask of wine, a story, and a pipe of tobacco.—(*Going off, Bisarre meets him.*)

Bis. Who comes there? stand!

Dur. Heyday, now she's turned dragoon!

Bis. Lookye, sir, I'm told you intend to travel again. I design to wait on you as far as Italy.

Dur. Then I'll travel into Wales.

Bis. Wales! What country's that?

Dur. The land of mountains, child; where you're never out of the way, 'cause there's no such thing as a high road.

Bis. Rather, always in a high road, because you travel all upon hills; but be't as it will, I'll jog along with you.

Dur. But we intend to sail to the East Indies.

Bis. East, or West, 'tis all one to me; I'm tight and light, and the fitter for sailing.

Dur. But suppose we take through Germany, and drink hard?

Bis. Suppose I take through Germany and drink harder than you?

Dur. Suppose I go to a bawdy house?

Bis. Suppose I show you the way?

Dur. 'Sdeath, woman! will you go to the guard with me, and smoke a pipe?

Bis. Allons donc! [myself?

Dur. The devil's in the woman! Suppose I hang

Bis. There I'll leave you. [come.

Dur. And a happy riddance: the gallows is wel-

Bis. Hold, hold, sir, (*Catches him by the arm, going*) one word before we part.

Dur. Let me go, madam, or I shall think that you're a man, and, perhaps, may examine you.

Bis. Stir if you dare; I have still spirits to attend me, and can raise such a muster of fairies, as shall punish you to death. Come, sir, stand there now, and ogle me: (*He frowns upon her.*) Now a languishing sigh; (*He groans.*) Now run, and take my fan, faster. (*He runs, and takes it up.*) Now play with it handsomely.

Dur. Ay, ay. (*He tears it all in pieces.*)

Bis. Hold, hold, dear humorous coxcomb! Captain, spare my fan, and I'll—Why, you rude, inhuman monster! don't you expect to pay for this?

Dur. Yes, madam, there's twelve pence; for that is the price on't.

Bis. Sir, it cost a guinea.

Dur. Well, madam, you shall have the sticks again. [*Throws them to her, and exit.*

Bis. Ha, ha, ha! ridiculous, below my concern! I must follow him, however, to know if he can give me any news of Oriana. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*Lamorce's Lodgings.*

Enter Young Mirabel.

Y. Mir. Bloody hell-hounds! I overheard you: Was not I two hours ago, the happy, gay, rejoicing Mirabel? How did I plume my hopes in a fair, coming prospect, of a long scene of years! Life courted me with all the charms of vigour, youth, and fortune; and to be torn away from all my promised joys, is more than death; the manner too!—by villains! O my Oriana, this very moment might have blessed me in thy arms! and my poor boy! the innocent boy! Confusion! But hush, they come. I must dissemble still. No news of my wine, gentlemen?

Enter the Four Bravoes.

1 *Bra.* No, sir, I believe your country booby has lost himself, and we can wait no longer for't: True, sir, you're a pleasant gentleman, but, I suppose you understand our business?

Y. Mir. Sir, I may go near to guess at your employments; you, sir, are a lawyer, I presume; you a physician, you a scrivener, and you a stock-jobber. All cut-throats, egad! (*Aside.*)

4 *Bra.* Sir, I am a broken officer; I was cashiered at the head of the army, for a coward, so I took up the trade of murder, to retrieve the reputation of my courage.

3 *Bra.* I am a soldier too, and would serve my king; but I don't like the quarrel, and I have more honour than to fight in a bad cause.

2 *Bra.* I was bred a gentleman, and have no estate; but I must have my whore and my bottle, through the prejudice of education.

1 *Bra.* I am a ruffian too; by the prejudice of education, I was born a butcher. In short, sir, if your wine had come, we might have trifled a little longer. Come, sir, which sword will you fall by? mine, sir?

2 *Bra.* Or mine? (*Draws.*)

3 *Bra.* Or mine? (*Draws.*)

4 *Bra.* Or mine? (*Draws.*)

Y. Mir. I scorn to beg my life; but to be butchered thus! (*knocking*) O, there's the wine! this moment for my life or death.

Enter Oriana.

Lost! for ever lost! Where's the wine, child? (*Faintly.*)

Oriana. Coming up, sir. (*Stamps.*)

Enter Duretete *with his sword drawn, and six of the grand Musqueteers, with their pieces presented; the ruffians drop their swords. Oriana goes off.*

Y. Mir. The wine, the wine, the wine! Youth, pleasure, fortune, days and years, are now my own again! Ah, my dear friends! did not I tell you, this wine would make me merry? Dear Captain, these gentlemen are the best-natured, facetious, witty creatures, that ever you knew.

Enter Lamorce.

Lam. Is the wine come, sir?

Y. Mir. O yes, madam, the wine is come; see there! (*Pointing to the soldiers.*) Your ladyship has got a very fine ring upon your finger.

Lam. Sir, 'tis at your service.

Y. Mir. O ho! is it so? Thou dear seven hundred pounds, thou'rt welcome home again, with all my heart! Ad's my life, madam! you have got the finest built watch there. Tompion's, I presume?

Lam. Sir, you may wear it.

Y. Mir. O madam, by no means; 'tis too much. Rob you of all! (*Taking it from her.*) Good, dear time, thou'rt a precious thing; I'm glad I have retrieved thee. (*Putting it up.*) What, my friends neglected all this while! Gentlemen, you'll pardon my complaisance to the lady. How now? is it

civil to be so out of humour at my entertainment, and I so pleased with your's? Captain, you're surprised at all this; but we're in our frolics, you must know. Some wine here!

Enter Servant, with wine.

Come, Captain, this worthy gentleman's health. (*Tweaks the first Bravo by the nose; he roars.*) But now, where—where's my dear deliverer; my boy, my charming boy?

1 *Bra.* I hope some of our crew below stairs have despatched him.

Y. Mir. Villain, what say'st thou? Dispatched! I'll have ye all tortured, racked, torn to pieces, alive, if you have touched my boy. Here, page! page! page! (*Runs out.*)

Dur. Here, gentlemen, he sure you secure those fellows.

1 *Bra.* Yes, sir, we know you, and your guard will be very civil to us.

Dur. Take them to justice. (*The guards carry off the bravoes.*) Now for you, madam: he, he, he! I'm so pleased to think that I shall be revenged of one woman before I die. Well, Mrs. Snap-dragon, which of these honourable gentlemen is so happy to call you wife?

1 *Bra.* Sir, she should have been mine to-night, 'cause Sampre, here, had her last night. Sir, she's very true to us all four.

Enter Old Mirabel, Dugard, *and* Bisarre.

Old Mir. Robin, Robin! Where's Bob? where's my boy! What, is this the lady? a pretty creature, 'faith! Harkye, child, because my son was so civil as to oblige you with a coach, I'll treat you with a cart, indeed I will.

Dug. Ay, madam, and you shall have a swingeing equipage, three or four thousand footmen at your heels, at least.

Dur. No less becomes her quality.

Bis. Faugh! the monster!

Dur. Monster! ay, you're all a little monstrous, let me tell you.

Enter Young Mirabel.

Old Mir. Ah, my dear Bob! art thou safe, man?

Y. Mir. No, no, sir, I am ruined: the saver of my life is lost!

Old Mir. No, he came and brought us the news.

Y. Mir. But where is he?

Enter Oriana.

Ha! (*Runs and embraces her.*) My dear preserver, what shall I do to recompense your trust? Father, friends, gentlemen, behold the youth, that has relieved me from the most ignominious death!—Command me, child; before you all—before my late, so kind, indulgent stars, I swear to grant whate'er you ask.

Oriana. To the same stars, indulgent now to me, I will appeal as to the justice of my claim: I shall demand but what was mine before—the just performance of your contract to Oriana. (*Discovering herself.*)

Omnes. Oriana!

Oriana. In this disguise I resolved to follow you abroad, counterfeited that letter, that brought me into your service; and so, by this strange turn of fate, I became the instrument of your preservation; few common servants would have had such cunning; my love inspired me with the meaning of your message, because my concern for your safety made me suspect your company.

Dur. Mirabel, you're caught.

Y. Mir. Caught! I scorn the thought of imposition.—Caught! no, 'tis my voluntary act; this was no human stratagem, but by my providential stars, designed to shew the dangers wandering youth incurs, by the pursuit of an unlawful love; to plunge me headlong in the snares of vice, and then to free me by the hands of virtue; here, on my knees, I humbly beg my fair preserver's pardon; my thanks are needless, for myself I owe.—And now, for ever, do protest me yours.

Old Mir. Tall, all di dall! (*Sings.*) Kiss me, daughter—no, you shall kiss me first, (*to Lamorce.*) for you're the cause on't. Well, Bisarre, what say you to the captain?

Bis. I like the beast well enough, but I don't understand his paces so well as to venture him in a strange road.

Old Mir. But marriage is so beaten a path, that you can't go wrong.

Bis. Ay, 'tis so beaten that the way is spoiled.

Dur. There is but one thing should make me thy husband—I could marry thee to-day, for the privilege of beating thee to-morrow.

Old Mir. Come, come, you may agree for all this. Mr. Dugard, are not you pleased with this?

Dug. So pleased, that, if I thought it might secure your son's affection to my sister, I would double her fortune.

Y. Mir. Fortune! has she not given me mine? my life—estate—my all? and what is more, her virtuous self? Behold the foil (*pointing to Lamorce.*) that sets this brightness off! (*To Oriana.*) Here view the pride, and scandal of the sex?

What liberty can be so tempting there,
(To Lamorce.)
As a soft, virtuous, am'rous bondage here?
(To Oriana.)

THE JEALOUS WIFE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY GEORGE COLMAN.



Act IV.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

LORD TRINKET	CHARLES	LADY FREELOVE
SIR HARRY BEAGLE	CAPTAIN O'CUTTER	MRS. OAKLY
MAJOR OAKLY	RUSSET	HARRIOT
OAKLY	PARIS	SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Oakly's house.—Noise heard within.*

Mrs. O. (*Within.*) Don't tell me: I know it is so: it's monstrous, and I will not bear it.

Oak. (*Within.*) But, my dear!—

Mrs. O. Nay, nay.—(*Squabbling within.*)

Enter MRS. OAKLY, *with a letter, followed by* OAKLY.

Mrs. O. Say what you will, Mr. Oakly, you shall never persuade me but this is some filthy intrigue of your's.

Oak. I can assure you, my love—

Mrs. O. Your love! Don't I know your—Tell me, I say, this instant, every circumstance relating to this letter.

Oak. How can I tell you, when you will not so much as let me see it?

Mrs. O. Lookye, Mr. Oakly, this usage is not to be borne. You take a pleasure in abusing my tenderness and soft disposition. To be perpetually running over the whole town, nay, the whole kingdom, too, in pursuit of your amours! Did not I discover that you was great with mademoiselle, my own woman? Did not you contract a shameful familiarity with Mrs. Freeman? Did not I detect your intrigue with Lady Wealthy? Was not you—

Oak. Oons! madam, the Grand Turk himself has not half so many mistresses. You throw me out of all patience! Do I know anybody but our common friends? Am I visited by anybody that does not visit you? Do I ever go out, unless you go with me? And am I not as constantly by your side, as if I were tied to your apron-strings?

Mrs. O. Go, go! you are a false man. Have not I found you out a thousand times? And have not I this moment a letter in my hand, which convinces me of yonr baseness? Let me know the whole affair, or I will—

Oak. Let you know! Let me know what you would have of me? You stop my letter before it comes to my hands, and then expect that I should know the contents of it!

Mrs. O. Heaven be praised! I stopped it. I suspected some of these doings for some time past! But the letter informs me who she is, and I'll be revenged on her sufficiently. Oh! you base man, you!

Oak. I beg, my dear, that you would moderate your passion. Shew me the letter, and I'll convince you of my innocence.

Mrs. O. Innocence! abominable. Innocence! But I am not to be made such a fool;—I am convinced of your perfidy, and very sure that—

Oak. 'Sdeath and fire! your passion hurries you out of your senses. Will you hear me?

Mrs. O. No; you are a base man; and I will not hear you.

Oak. Why, then, my dear, since you will neither talk reasonably yourself, nor listen to reason from me, I shall take my leave till you are in a better humour. So, your servant! (*Going.*)

Mrs. O. Ay, go, you cruel man! Go to your mistresses, and leave your poor wife to her miseries.

How unfortunate a woman am I! I could die with vexation. (*Throwing herself into a chair.*)

Oak. There it is! Now dare not I stir a step further: if I offer to go, she is in one of her fits in an instant. Never sure was a woman at once of so violent and so delicate a constitution! What shall I say to sooth her? (*Aside.*) Nay, never make thyself so uneasy, my dear. Come, come, you know I love you.

Mrs. O. I know you hate me; and that your unkindness and barbarity will be the death of me. (*Whining.*)

Oak. Do not vex yourself at this rate; I love you most passionately—indeed I do. This must be some mistake.

Mrs. O. Oh! I am an unhappy woman.

Oak. Dry up thy tears, my love, and be comforted. You will find that I am not to blame in this matter. Come, let me see this letter; nay, you shall not deny me. (*Takes the letter.*)

Mrs. O. There! take it; you know the hand, I am sure.

Oak. (*Reads.*) *To Charles Oakly, Esq.*—Hand! 'Tis a clerk-like hand, a good round text; and was certainly never penned by a fair lady.

Mrs. O. Ay, laugh at me, do!

Oak. Forgive me, my love, I did not mean to laugh at thee. But what says the letter? (*Reads.*) "*Daughter eloped—you must be privy to it—scandalous—dishonourable—satisfaction—revenge*—um, um, um,—*injured father*, Henry Russet."

Mrs. O. (*Rising.*) Well, sir, you see I have detected you; tell me this instant where she is concealed.

Oak. So—so—so—This hurts me: I'm shocked. (*To himself.*)

Mrs. O. What! are you confounded with your guilt? Have I caught you at last?

Oak. O! that wicked Charles; to decoy a young lady from her parents in the country! The profligacy of the young fellows of this age is abominable. (*To himself.*)

Mrs. O. (*Half aside, and musing.*) Charles!—Let me see. Charles!—No; impossible! This is all a trick.

Oak. He has certainly ruined this poor lady. (*To himself.*)

Mrs. O. Art, art; all art! There's a sudden turn now! You have ready wit for an intrigue, I find.

Oak. Such an abandoned action! I wish I had never had the care of him.

Mrs. O. Mighty fine, Mr. Oakly! Go on, sir, go on! I see what you mean. Your assurance provokes me beyond your very falsehood itself. So, you imagine, sir, that this affected concern, this flimsy pretence about Charles, is to bring you off. Matchless confidence! but I am armed against every thing—I am prepared for all your dark schemes—I am aware of all your low stratagems.

Oak. See there now! Was ever anything so provoking? To persevere in your ridiculous—For heaven's sake! my dear, don't distract me. When you see my mind thus agitated and uneasy, that a young fellow, whom his dying father, my own brother, committed to my care, should be guilty of such enormous wickedness; I say, when you are witness of my distress on this occasion, how can you be weak enough and cruel enough to—

Mrs. O. Prodigiously well, sir! You do it very well. Nay, keep it up, carry it on! there's nothing like going through with it. O, you artful creature! But, sir, I am not to be so easily satisfied. I do not believe a syllable of all this. Give me the letter—(*Snatches the letter.*)—You shall sorely repent this vile business, for I am resolved that I will know the bottom of it. [*Exit.*

Oak. This is beyond all patience. Provoking woman! Her absurd suspicions interpret every thing the wrong way. But this ungracious boy! in how many troubles will he involve his own and this lady's family! I never imagined that he was of such abandoned principles.

Enter Major Oakly *and* Charles.

Charles. Good-morrow, sir!

Maj. O. Good-morrow, brother, good-morrow. What! you have been at the old work, I find. I heard you—ding, dong! i'faith, she has rung a noble peal in your ears. But how now? Why sure you've had a remarkable warm bout on't: you seem more ruffled than usual.

Oak. I am, indeed, brother! thanks to that young gentleman there. Have a care, Charles! you may be called to a severe account for this. The honour of a family, sir, is no such light matter.

Charles. Sir!

Maj. O. Heyday! What, has a curtain lecture produced a lecture of morality? What is all this?

Oak. To a profligate mind, perhaps, these things may appear agreeable in the beginning; but don't you tremble at the consequences?

Charles. I see, sir, that you are displeased with me; but I am quite at a loss to guess at the occasion. [set?

Oak. Tell me, sir!—where is Miss Harriot Rus-

Charles. Miss Harriot Russet!—Sir, explain.

Oak. Have not you decoyed her from her father?

Charles. I!—Decoyed her—decoyed my Harriot! I would sooner die than do her the least injury. What can this mean?

Maj. O. I believe the young dog has been at her, after all.

Oak. I was in hopes, Charles, you had better principles. But there's a letter just come from her father—

Charles. A letter!—What letter? Dear sir, give it me. Some intelligence of my Harriot, Major? The letter, sir, the letter this moment, for heaven's sake!

Oak. If this warmth, Charles, tends to prove your innocence—

Charles. Dear sir, excuse me; I'll prove anything: let me but see this letter, and I'll—

Oak. Let you see it! I could hardly get a sight of it myself. Mrs. Oakly has it.

Charles. Has she got it? Major, I'll be with you again directly. [*Exit hastily.*

Maj. O. Heyday! The devil's in the boy! What a fiery set of people! By my truth, I think the whole family is made of nothing but combustibles.

Oak. I like this emotion; it looks well: it may serve, too, to convince my wife of the folly of her suspicions. Would to heaven I could quiet them for ever!

Maj. O. Why, pray now, my dear naughty brother, what heinous offence have you committed this morning? what new cause of suspicion? You have been asking one of the maids to mend your ruffle, I suppose; or have been hanging your head out at the window, when a pretty young woman has passed by; or—

Oak. How can you trifle with my distresses, Major? Did not I tell you it was about a letter?

Maj. O. A letter!—hum—A suspicious circumstance to be sure! What! and the seal a true lover's knot now, eh? or a heart transfixed with darts; or possibly the wax bore the industrious impression of a thimble; or perhaps the folds were lovingly connected by a wafer, pricked with a pin, and the direction written in a vile scrawl, and not a word spelt as it should be! Ha, ha, ha!

Oak. Pooh! brother—Whatever it was, the letter, you find, was for Charles, not for me. This outrageous jealousy is the devil.

Maj. O. Mere matrimonial blessings and domestic comfort, brother! Jealousy is a certain sign of love.

Oak. Love! it is this very love that hath made

us both so miserable. Her love for me has confined me to my house, like a state prisoner, without the liberty of seeing my friends, or the use of pen, ink, and paper; while my love for her has made such a fool of me, that I have never had the spirit to contradict her.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, there you've hit it; Mrs. Oakly would make an excellent wife, if you did but know how to manage her.

Oak. You are a rare fellow indeed to talk of managing a wife. A debauched bachelor; a rattle-brained, rioting fellow—who have picked up your commonplace notions of women in hagnios, taverns, and the camp; whose most refined commerce with the sex has been in order to delude country girls at your quarters, or to besiege the virtue of abigails, milliners, or mantua-makers' apprentices.

Maj. O. So much the better!—so much the better! Women are all alike in the main, brother; high or low, married or single, quality or no quality. I have found them so, from a duchess down to a milk-maid; every woman is a tyrant at the bottom. But they could never make a fool of me. No, no; no woman should ever domineer over me, let her be mistress or wife.

Oak. Single men can be no judges in these cases. They must happen in all families. But when things are driven to extremities; to see a woman in uneasiness—a woman one loves too—one's wife, who can withstand it? You neither speak nor think like a man that has loved and been married, Major.

Maj. O. I wish I could hear a married man speak my language. I'm a bachelor, it's true; but I am no bad judge of your case for all that. I know your's and Mrs. Oakly's disposition to a hair. She is all impetuosity and fire—a very magazine of touchwood and gunpowder. You are hot enough, too, upon occasion; but then it's over in an instant. In comes love and conjugal affection, as you call it; that is, mere folly and weakness—and you draw off your forces, just when you should pursue the attack, and follow your advantage. Have at her with spirit, and the day's your own, brother.

Oak. Why, what would you have me do?

Maj. O. Do as you please for one month, whether she likes it or not; and I'll answer for it, she will consent you shall do as you please all her life after. In short, do but shew yourself a man of spirit, leave off whining about love and tenderness, and nonsense, and the business is done, brother.

Oak. I believe you are in the right, Major! I see you are in the right. I'll do it—I'll certainly do it. But then it hurts me to the soul, to think what uneasiness I shall give her. The first opening of my design will throw her into fits; and the pursuit of it, perhaps, may be fatal.

Maj. O. Fits! ha, ha, ha! I'll engage to cure her of her fits. Nobody understands hysterical cases better than I do; besides, my sister's symptoms are not very dangerous. Did you ever hear of her falling into a fit when you was not by? Was she ever found in convulsions in her closet? No, no; these fits, the more care you take of them, the more you will increase the distemper; let them alone, and they will wear themselves out, I warrant you.

Oak. True, very true; you are certainly in the right; I'll follow your advice. Where do you dine to-day? I'll order the coach, and go with you.

Maj. O. O brave! keep up this spirit, and you are made for ever.

Oak. You shall see now, Major! Who's there?

Enter Servant.

Order the coach directly. I shall dine out to-day.

Serv. The coach, sir? Now, sir?

Oak. Ay, now, immediately.

Serv. Now, sir?—the—the—coach, sir?—that is—my mistress—

Maj. O. Sirrah! do as you are bid. Bid them put to this instant.

Serv. Yes—yes, sir—yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Oak. Well, where shall we dine?

Maj. O. At the St. Alban's, or where you will. This is excellent, if you will but hold it.

Oak. I will have my own way, I am determined.

Maj. O. That's right.

Oak. I am steel.

Maj. O. Bravo!

Oak. Adamant.

Maj. O. Bravissimo!

Oak. Just what you'd have me. [it?

Maj. O. Why that's well said. But will you do

Oak. I will.

Maj. O. You won't.

Oak. I will. I'll be a fool to her no longer. But harkye! Major, my hat and gloves lie in my study. I'll go and steal them out, while she is busy talking with Charles.

Maj. O. Steal them! for shame! Pr'ythee take them boldly; call for them; make them bring them to you here; and go out with spirit, in the face of your whole family.

Oak. No, no;—you are wrong;—let her rave after I am gone; and when I return, you know, I shall exert myself with more propriety, after this open affront to her authority.

Maj. O. Well, take your own way.

Oak. Ay, ay; let me manage it, let me manage it. [*Exit.*

Maj. O. Manage it! ay, to be sure, you are a rare manager! It is dangerous, they say, to meddle between man and wife. I am no great favourite of Mrs. Oakly's already; and, in a week's time, I expect to have the door shut in my teeth.

Enter Charles.

How now, Charles, what news?

Charles. Ruined and undone! She's gone, uncle; my Harriot's lost for ever!

Maj. O. Gone off with a man? I thought so; they are all alike.

Charles. Oh, no! Fled to avoid that hateful match with Sir Harry Beagle.

Maj. O. 'Faith, a girl of spirit: but whence comes all this intelligence?

Charles. In an angry letter from her father. How miserable I am! If I had not offended my Harriot, much offended her, by that foolish riot and drinking at your house in the country, she would certainly, at such a time, have taken refuge in my arms.

Maj. O. A very agreeable refuge for a young lady, to be sure; and extremely decent!

Charles. What a heap of extravagancies was I guilty of!

Maj. O. Extravagancies with a witness! Ah! you silly, young dog, you would ruin yourself with her father, in spite of all I could do. There you sat, as drunk as a lord, telling the old gentleman the whole affair, and swearing you would drive Sir Harry Beagle out of the country, though I kept winking and nodding, pulling you by the sleeve, and kicking your shins under the table, in hopes of stopping you; but all to no purpose.

Charles. What distress may she be in at this instant! Alone and defenceless! Where, where can she be?

Maj. O. What relations or friends has she in town?

Charles. Relations! let me see—Faith, I have it! If she is in town, ten to one but she is at her aunt's, Lady Freelove's. I'll go thither immediately.

Maj. O. Lady Freelove's! Hold, hold, Charles! Do you know her ladyship?

Charles. Not much; but I'll break through all, to get to my Harriot.

Maj. O. I do know her ladyship.

Charles. Well, and what do you know of her?

Maj. O. O, nothing! her ladyship is a woman of the world, that's all.

Charles. What do you mean?

Maj. O. That Lady Freelove is an arrant—By-the-by, did not she, last summer, make formal proposals to Harriot's father from Lord Trinket?

Charles. Yes; but they were received with the utmost contempt. The old gentleman, it seems, hates a lord, and he told her so in plain terms.

Maj. O. Such an aversion to the nobility may not run in the blood: the girl, I warrant you, has no objection. However, if she's there, watch her narrowly, Charles. Lady Freelove is as mischievous as a monkey, and as cunning too. Have a care of her, I say, have a care of her!

Charles. If she's there, I'll have her out of the house within this half hour, or set fire to it.

Maj. O. Nay, now you are too violent; stay a moment, and we'll consider what's best to be done.

Enter OAKLY,

Oak. Come, is the coach ready? Let us be gone. Does Charles go with us?

Charles. I go with you!—What can I do? I am so vexed and distracted, and so many thoughts crowd in upon me, I don't know which way to turn myself.

Mrs. O. (*Within.*) The coach!—dines out!—Where is your master?

Oak. Zounds! brother, here she is.

Re-enter MRS. OAKLY.

Mrs. O. Pray, Mr. Oakly, what is the matter that you cannot dine at home to-day?

Oak. Don't be uneasy, my dear!—I have a little business to settle with my brother; so I am only just going to dinner with him and Charles, to the tavern.

Mrs. O. Why cannot you settle your business here, as well as at a tavern? But it is some of your ladies' business, I suppose, and so you must get rid of my company. This is chiefly your fault, Major Oakly.

Maj. O. Lord! sister, what signifies it, whether a man dines at home or abroad?

Mrs. O. It signifies a great deal, sir! and I don't choose—

Maj. O. Phoo! let him go, my dear sister, let him go; he will be ten times better company when he comes back. I tell you what, sister—you sit at home till you are quite tired of one another, and then you grow cross, and fall out: if you would but part a little now and then, you might meet again in humour.

Mrs. O. I beg, Major Oakly, that you would trouble yourself about your own affairs; and let me tell you, sir, that I—

Oak. Nay, do not put thyself into a passion with the Major, my dear!—it is not his fault; and I shall come back to thee very soon.

Mrs. O. Come back! why need you go out? I know well enough when you mean to deceive me; for then there is always a pretence of dining with Sir John, or my lord, or somebody; but when you tell me that you are going to a tavern, it's such a bare-faced affront—

Oak. This is so strange now! Why, my dear, I shall only just—

Mrs. O. Only just go after the lady in the letter, I suppose.

Oak. Well, well, I won't go then. Will that convince you? I'll stay with you, my dear. Will that satisfy you?

Maj. O. For shame! hold out, if you are a man. (*Apart.*)

Oak. She has been so much vexed this morning already, I must humour her a little now. (*Apart.*)

Maj. O. Fie, fie! go out, or you are undone. (*Apart.*)

Oak. You see it's impossible. I'll dine at home with thee, my love. (*Apart to Mrs. Oakly.*)

Mrs. O. Ay, ay, pray do, sir. Dine at a tavern, indeed! (*Going.*)

Oak. (*Returning.*) You may depend on me another time, Major.

Maj. O. Steel and adamant! Ah!

Mrs. O. (*Returning.*) Mr. Oakly!

Oak. O, my dear! [*Exit with Mrs. Oakly.*

Maj. O. Ha, ha, ha! there's a picture of resolution! there goes a philosopher for you! Ha, Charles!

Charles. O, uncle! I have no spirits to laugh now.

Maj. O. So! I have a fine time on't between you and my brother. Will you meet me to dinner at the St. Alban's by four? We'll drink her health, and think of this affair.

Charles. Don't depend on me. I shall be running all over the town, in pursuit of my Harriot; at all events, I'll go directly to Lady Freelove's: if I find her not there, which way I shall direct myself, heaven knows!

Maj. O. Harkye, Charles! If you meet with her, you may be at a loss. Bring her to my house; I have a snug room, and—

Charles. Phoo! Pr'ythee, uncle, don't trifle with me now.

Maj. O. Well, seriously, then, my house is at your service.

Charles. I thank you; but I must be gone.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, bring her to my house, and we'll settle the whole affair for you. You shall clap her into a post-chaise, take the chaplain of our regiment along with you, wheel her down to Scotland, and when you come back, send to settle her fortune with her father; that's the modern art of making love, Charles! [*Exeunt.*

ACT. II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Bull and Gate Inn.*

Enter SIR HARRY BEAGLE *and* TOM.

Sir. H. Ten guineas a mare, and a crown the man? eh, Tom.

Tom. Yes, your honour.

Sir. H. And are you sure, Tom, that there is no flaw in his blood?

Tom. He's a good thing, sir, and as little beholden to the ground, as any horse that ever went over the turf upon four legs. Why, here's his whole pedigree, your honour.

Sir H. Is it attested?

Tom. Very well attested; it is signed by Jack Spur and my Lord Startall. (*Giving the pedigree.*)

Sir H. Let me see. (*Reads,*) "*Tom-come-tickle-me was out of the famous Tantivy mare, by Sir Aaron Driver's chesnut horse, White Stockings. White Stockings, his dam, was got by Lord Hedge's South Barb, full sister to the Proserpine Filly, and his sire Tom Jones; his grandam was the Irish Duchess, and his grandsire 'Squire Sportley's Trajan; his great and great great grandam were Newmarket Peggy and Black Moll; and his great grandsire and great great grandsire, were Sir Ralph Whip's Regulus, and the famous Prince Anamaboo.*

JOHN ⋈ SPUR.
his mark.
STARTALL."

Tom. All fine horses, and won every thing! A foal out of your honour's bald-faced Venus, by this horse, would beat the world.

Sir H. Well, then, we'll think on't. But plague on't, Tom, I have certainly knocked up my little roan gelding in this d——d wild-goose chase of threescore miles an end.

Tom. He's deadly blown, to be sure, your ho-

nour; and I am afraid we are upon a wrong scent after all. Madam Harriot certainly took across the country, instead of coming on to London.

Sir H. No, no; we traced her all the way up. But, d'ye hear? Tom, look out among the stables and repositories here in town, for a smart, road nag, and a strong horse to carry a portmanteau.

Tom. Sir Roger Turf's horses are to be sold: I'll see if there's ever a tight thing there. But I suppose, sir, you would have one somewhat stronger than Snip: I don't think he's quite enough of a horse for your honour.

Sir H. Not enough of a horse! Snip's a powerful gelding; master of two stone more than my weight. If Snip stands sound, I would not take a hundred guineas for him. Poor Snip! go into the stable, Tom, see they give him a warm mash, and look at his heels and his eyes. But where's Mr. Russet all this while?

Tom. I left the 'squire at breakfast on a cold pigeon-pie; and inquiring after madam Harriot, in the kitchen. I'll let him know your honour would be glad to see him here.

Sir H. Ay, do; but, harkye! Tom be sure you take care of Snip.

Tom. I'll warrant your honour.

Sir H. I'll be down in the stables myself by-and-by. [*Exit Tom.*] Let me see—out of the famous Tantivy by White Stockings. White Stockings, his dam, full sister to the Proserpine Filly; and his sire—plague on't! how unlucky it is that this d——d accident should happen in the Newmarket week! Ten to one I lose my match with Lord Chokejade, by not riding myself; and I shall have no opportunity to hedge my bets neither. What a d——d piece of work have I made on't!—I have knocked up poor Snip, shall lose my match; and as to Harriot, why the odds are that I lose my match there too: a skittish young tit! If I once get her tight in hand, I'll make her wince for it. Her estate, joined to my own, I would have the finest stud and the noblest kennel in the whole country. But here comes her father, puffing and blowing, like a broken-winded horse up hill.

Enter RUSSET.

Rus. Well, Sir Harry, have you heard anything of her?

Sir H. Yes, I have been asking Tom about her, and he says you may have her for five hundred guineas.

Rus. Five hundred guineas: how d'ye mean? Where is she? which way did she take?

Sir H. Why first she went to Epsom, then to Lincoln, then to Nottingham, and now she is at York.

Rus. Impossible! she could not go over half the ground in the time. What the devil are you talking of?

Sir H. Of the mare you was just now saying you wanted to buy.

Rus. The devil take the mare! who would think of her, when I am mad about an affair of so much more consequence?

Sir H. You seemed mad about her a little while ago: She's a fine mare, and a thing of shape and blood.

Rus. D—— her blood! Harriot! my dear, provoking Harriot! Where can she be? Have you got any intelligence of her?

Sir H. No, faith, not I: we seem to be quite thrown out here; but, however, I have ordered Tom to try if he can hear anything of her among the ostlers.

Rus. Why don't you inquire after her yourself? why don't you run up and down the whole town after her? T'other young rascal knows where she is, I warrant you. What a plague it is to have a daughter! When one loves her to distraction, and has toiled and laboured to make her happy, the ungrateful slut will sooner go to hell her own way. But she shall have him—I will make her happy, if I break her heart for it.—A provoking gipsy! to run away, and torment her poor father, that dotes on her! I'll never see her face again. Sir Harry, how can we get any intelligence of her? Why don't you speak! why don't you tell me? Zounds! you seem as indifferent as if you did not care a farthing about her.

Sir H. Indifferent! you may well call me indifferent!—this d——d chase after her will cost me a thousand. If it had not been for her, I would not have been off the course this week to have saved the lives of my whole family. I'll hold you six to two that—

Rus. Zounds! hold your tongue, or talk more to the purpose. I swear she is too good for you—you don't deserve such a wife—a fine, dear, sweet, lovely, charming girl! She'll break my heart. How shall I find her out?—Do, pr'ythee, Sir Harry; my dear honest friend! consider how we may discover where she is fled to.

Sir H. Suppose you put an advertisement into the newspapers, describing her marks, her age, her height, and where she strayed from. I recovered a bay mare once by that method.

Rus. Advertise her!—What! describe my daughter, and expose her, in the public papers, with a reward for bringing her home, like horses stolen or strayed! Recovered a bay mare!—the devil's in the fellow!—he thinks of nothing but racers, and bay mares, and stallions. 'Sdeath, I wish your—

Sir H. I wish Harriot was fairly pounded; it would save us both a deal of trouble.

Rus. Which way shall I turn myself? I am half distracted. If I go to that young dog's house, he has certainly conveyed her somewhere out of my reach: if she does not send to me to-day, I'll give her up for ever: perhaps, though, she may have met with some accident, and has nobody to assist her. No, she is certainly with that young rascal. I wish she was dead, and I was dead. I'll blow young Oakly's brains out.

Re-enter TOM.

Sir H. Well, Tom, how is poor Snip?

Tom. A little better, sir, after his warm mash; but Lady, the pointing-bitch, that followed you all the way, is deadly foot-sore.

Rus. D—n Snip and Lady! Have you heard anything of Harriot?

Tom. Why, I came on purpose to let my master and your honour know, that John Ostler says as how, just such a lady as I told him Madam Harriot was, came here in a four-wheel chaise, and was fetched away soon after by a fine lady in a chariot.

Rus. Did she come alone? [honour.

Tom. Quite alone; only a servant maid, please your

Rus. And what part of the town did they go to?

Tom. John Ostler says as how they bid the coachman drive to Grosvenor-square.

Sir H. Soho! puss. Yoics!

Rus. She is certainly gone to that young rogue: he has got his aunt to fetch her from hence; or else she is with her own aunt, Lady Freelove; they both live in that part of the town. I'll go to the house; and, in the meanwhile, Sir Harry, you shall step to Lady Freelove's. We'll find her, I warrant you. I'll teach my young mistress to be gadding. She shall marry you to-night. Come along, Sir Harry, come along; we won't lose a minute. Come along.

Sir H. Soho! hark forward! wind 'em and cross 'em! hark forward! Yoics! Yoics! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Oakly's House.*

Enter MRS. OAKLY.

Mrs. O. After all, that letter was certainly in-

tended for my husband. I see plain enough they are all in a plot against me. My husband intriguing, the Major working him up to affront me, Charles owning his letters, and so playing into each other's hands. They think me a fool, I find; but I'll be too much for them yet. I have desired to speak with Mr. Oakly, and expect him here immediately. His temper is naturally open; and if he thinks my anger abated and my suspicions laid asleep, he will certainly betray himself by his behaviour. I'll assume an air of good humour, pretend to believe the fine story they have trumped up, throw him off his guard, and so draw the secret out of him. Here he comes. How hard it is to dissemble one's anger! Oh! I could rate him soundly; but I'll keep down my indignation at present, though it chokes me.

Enter OAKLY.

O, my dear! I am very glad to see you. Pray sit down. (*They sit.*) I longed to see you. It seemed an age till I had an opportunity of talking over the silly affair that happened this morning. (*Mildly.*)

Oak. Why, really, my dear—

Mrs. O. Nay, don't look so grave now. Come, it's all over. Charles and you have cleared up matters. I am satisfied.

Oak. Indeed! I rejoice to hear it! You make me happy beyond my expectation. This disposition will ensure our felicity. Do but lay aside your cruel, unjust suspicion, and we should never have the least difference.

Mrs. O. Indeed I begin to think so. I'll endeavour to get the better of it. And, really, sometimes it is very ridiculous. My uneasiness this morning, for instance; ha, ha, ha! To be so much alarmed about the idle letter, which turned out quite another thing at last. Was not I very angry with you? ha, ha, ha! (*Affecting a laugh.*)

Oak. Don't mention it. Let us both forget it. Your present cheerfulness makes amends for every thing.

Mrs. O. I am apt to be too violent; I love you too well to be quite easy about you. (*Fondly.*) Well! no matter: what is become of Charles?

Oak. Poor fellow! he is on the wing, rambling all over the town, in pursuit of this young lady.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone, pray?

Oak. First of all, I believe, to some of her relations. [they live?

Mrs. O. Relations! Who are they? Where do

Oak. There is an aunt of her's lives just in the neighbourhood; Lady Freelove.

Mrs. O. Lady Freelove! Oho! gone to Lady Freelove's is he? And do you think he will hear anything of her. [soul.

Oak. I don't know; but I hope so, with all my

Mrs. O. Hope! with all your soul! Do you hope so? (*Alarmed.*)

Oak. Hope so! Ye—yes—why, don't you hope so? (*Surprised.*)

Mrs. O. Why—yes—(*Recovering.*) O, ay, to be sure. I hope it of all things. You know, my dear, it must give me great satisfaction, as well as yourself, to see Charles well settled.

Oak. I should think so; and really I don't know where he can be settled so well. She is a most deserving young woman, I assure you.

Mrs. O. You are well acquainted with her then?

Oak. To be sure, my dear; after seeing her so often last summer, at the Major's house in the country, and at her father's.

Mrs. O. So often?

Oak. Ay; very often: Charles took care of that—almost every day.

Mrs. O. Indeed! But pray—a—a—I say—a—a—(*Confused.*)

Oak. What do you say, my dear? [some?

Mrs. O. I say—a—a—(*Stammering.*) Is she hand-

Oak. Prodigiously handsome, indeed!

Mrs. O. Prodigiously handsome! And is she reckoned a sensible girl?

Oak. A very sensible, modest, agreeable, young lady as ever I knew. You would be extremely fond of her, I am sure. You can't imagine how happy I was in her company. Poor Charles! she soon made a conquest of him; and no wonder, she has so many elegant accomplishments; such an infinite fund of cheerfulness and good-humour. Why, she's the darling of the whole country. [her!

Mrs. O. Lord! you seem quite in raptures about

Oak. Raptures! not at all. I was only telling you the young lady's character. I thought you would be glad to find that Charles had made so sensible a choice, and was so likely to be happy.

Mrs. O. Oh, Charles! True, as you say, Charles will be mighty happy.

Oak. Don't you think so?

Mrs. O. I am convinced of it. Poor Charles! I am much concerned for him. He must be very uneasy about her. I was thinking whether we could be of any service to him in this affair.

Oak. Was you, my love? that is very good of you. Why, to be sure, we must endeavour to assist him. Let me see: how can we manage it? 'Gad! I have hit it. The luckiest thought! and it will be of great service to Charles.

Mrs. O. Well, what is it? (*Eagerly.*) You know I would do anything to serve Charles, and oblige you. (*Mildly.*)

Oak. That is so kind! Lord! my dear, if you would but always consider things in this proper light, and continue this amiable temper, we should be the happiest people—

Mrs. O. I believe so: but what's your proposal?

Oak. I'm sure you'll like it. Charles, you know, may, perhaps, be so lucky as to meet with this lady.

Mrs. O. True.

Oak. Now I was thinking, that he might, with your leave, my dear—

Mrs. O. Well!

Oak. Bring her home here.

Mrs. O. How?

Oak. Yes, bring her home here, my dear: it will make poor Charles's mind quite easy; and you may take her under your protection till her father comes to town.

Mrs. O. Amazing! this is even beyond my expectation.

Oak. Why!—What?—

Mrs. O. Was there ever such assurance! (*Rises.*) Take her under my protection! What! would you keep her under my nose?

Oak. Nay, I never conceived—I thought you would have approved—

Mrs. O. What! make me your convenient woman?—No place but my own house to serve your purposes!

Oak. Lord! this is the strangest misapprehension—I am quite astonished.

Mrs. O. Astonished! yes—confused, detected, betrayed, by your vain confidence of imposing on me. Why sure you imagine me an idiot, a driveller. Charles, indeed! yes Charles is a fine excuse for you. The letter this morning; the letter, Mr. Oakly!

Oak. The letter! why sure that—

Mrs. O. Is sufficiently explained. You have made it very clear to me. Now I am convinced. I have no doubt of your perfidy. But I thank you for some hints you have given me, and you may be sure I shall make use of them: nor will I rest till I have full conviction, and overwhelm you with the strongest proof of your baseness towards me.

Oak. Nay, but—

Mrs. O. Go, go! I have no doubt of your falsehood: away! [*Exit.*

Oak. Was there ever anything like this? Such unaccountable behaviour! Angry, I don't know why! jealous of I know not what! Hints!—hints I have given her! What can she mean?

TOILET *crosses the stage.*

Toilet, where are you going?

Toil. To order the porter to let in no company to my lady to-day. She won't see a single soul, sir. [*Exit.*

Oak. What an unhappy woman! Now will she sit all day feeding on her suspicions, till she has convinced herself of the truth of them.

JOHN *crosses the stage.*

Well, sir, what's your business?

John. Going to order the chariot, sir; my lady's going out immediately. [*Exit.*

Oak. Going out! what is all this? But every way she makes me miserable. Wild and ungovernable as the sea or the wind! made up of storms and tempests! I can't bear it: and one way or other I will put an end to it. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Lady Freelove's House.*

Enter LADY FREELOVE, *with a card; a Servant following.*

Lady F. (*Reading as she enters.*) "*And will take the liberty of waiting on her ladyship en cavalier, as he comes from the manege.*" Does anybody wait, that brought this card?

Serv. Lord Trinket's servant is in the hall, madam.

Lady F. My compliments, and I shall be glad to see his lordship. Where is Miss Russet?

Serv. In her own chamber, madam.

Lady F. What is she doing?

Serv. Writing, I believe, madam.

Lady F. Oh! ridiculous: scribbling to that Oakly, I suppose. (*Apart.*) Let her know, I should be glad of her company here. [*Exit. Serv.*] It is a mighty troublesome thing to manage a simple girl, that knows nothing of the world. Harriot, like all other girls, is foolishly fond of this young fellow of her own choosing—her first love; that is to say, the first man that is particularly civil; and the first air of consequence which a young lady gives herself. Poor, silly soul! But Oakly must not have her, positively. A match with Lord Trinket will add to the dignity of the family. I must bring her into it. But here she comes.

Enter HARRIOT.

Well, Harriot, still in the pouts! Nay, pr'ythee, my dear little runaway girl, be more cheerful; your everlasting melancholy puts me into the vapours.

Har. Dear madam, excuse me. How can I be cheerful in my present situation? I know my father's temper so well, that I am sure this step of mine must almost distract him. I sometimes wish that I had remained in the country, let what would have been the consequence.

Lady F. Why, it is a naughty child, that's certain; but it need not be so uneasy about papa, as you know that I wrote by last night's post, to acquaint him that his little, lost sheep was safe; and that you were ready to obey his commands in every particular, except marrying that oaf, Sir Harry Beagle. Lord! lord! what a difference there is between a country and a town education! Why, a London lass would have jumped out of a window into a gallant's arms; and, without thinking of her father, unless it were to have drawn a few bills on him, been a hundred miles off in nine or ten hours, or perhaps out of the kingdom in twenty-four.

Har. I fear I have already been too precipitate: I tremble for the consequences.

Lady F. I swear, child, you are a downright prude. Your way of talking gives me the spleen; so full of affection, and duty, and virtue; 'tis just like a funeral sermon. And yet, pretty soul! it can love. Well, I wonder at your taste; a sneaking, simple gentleman, without a title! and when, to my knowledge, you might have a man of quality to-morrow.

Har. Perhaps so. Your ladyship must excuse me, but many a man of quality would make me miserable.

Lady F. Indeed, my dear, these antediluvian notions will never do now-a-days; and, at the same time, too, those little wicked eyes of your's speak a very different language. Indeed, you have fine eyes, child! and they have made fine work with Lord Trinket.

Har. Lord Trinket?

Lady F. Yes, Lord Trinket; you know it as well as I do: and yet, you ill-natured thing! you will not vouchsafe him a single smile. But you must give the poor soul a little encouragement, pr'ythee do.

Har. Indeed I can't, madam; for of all mankind, Lord Trinket is my aversion.

Lady F. Why, so, child? He is counted a well-bred, sensible, young fellow; and the women all think him handsome.

Har. Yes, he is just polite enough to be able to be very unmannerly, with a great deal of good breeding; is just handsome enough to make him excessively vain of his person; and has just reflection enough to finish him for a coxcomb; qualifications which are all very common among those whom your ladyship calls men of quality.

Lady F. A satirist too! Indeed, my dear, this affectation sits very awkwardly upon you. There will be a superiority in the behaviour of persons of fashion.

Har. A superiority, indeed! for his lordship always behaves with so much insolent familiarity, that I should almost imagine he was soliciting me for other favours, rather than to pass my whole life with him.

Lady F. Innocent freedoms, child, which every fine woman expects to be taken with her, as an acknowledgment of her beauty.

Har. They are freedoms which, I think, no innocent woman can allow,

Lady F. Romantic to the last degree! Why, you are in the country still, Harriot!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My Lord Trinket, madam. [*Exit.*

Lady F. I swear now, I have a good mind to tell him all that you have said.

Enter LORD TRINKET, *in boots, &c. as from the riding-house.*

Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant.

Lord T. Your ladyship does me too much honour. Here I am, *en bottine*, as you see; just come from the *manege*.

Lady F. Your lordship is always agreeable in every dress.

Lord T. Vastly obliging, Lady Freelove. Miss Russet, I am your slave. I declare it makes me quite happy to find you together. 'Pon honour, ma'am, (*to Harriot,*) I begin to conceive great hopes of you; and, as for you, Lady Freelove, I cannot sufficiently commend your assiduity with your fair pupil. She was before possessed of every grace that nature could bestow on her, and nobody is so well qualified as your ladyship to give her the *bon ton*.

Har. Compliment and contempt all in a breath! My lord, I am obliged to you. But waving my acknowledgments, give me leave to ask your lordship, whether nature and the *bon ton*, as you call it, are so different, that we must give up one in order to obtain the other.

Lord T. Totally opposite, madam. The chief aim of the *bon ton* is to render persons of family different from the vulgar; for whom, indeed, nature serves very well. For this reason, it has, at various times, been ungenteel to see, to hear, to

walk, to be in good health, and to have twenty other horrible perfections of nature. Nature, indeed, may do very well sometimes: it made you, for instance, and it then made something very lovely; and if you would suffer us of quality to give you the *ton*, you would be absolutely divine: but, now—me—madam—me—nature never made such a thing as me.

Har. Why, indeed, I think your lordship has very few obligations to her.

Lord T. Then you really think it's all my own? I declare now that is a mighty genteel compliment: nay, if you begin to flatter already, you improve apace. 'Pon honour, Lady Freelove, I believe we shall make something of her at last.

Lady F. No doubt on't. It is in your lordship's power to make her a complete woman of fashion at once.

Lord T. Hum! why, ay—

Har. Your lordship must excuse me. I am of a very tasteless disposition. I shall never bear to be carried out of nature.

Lady F. You are out of nature now, Harriot! I am sure no woman but yourself ever objected to being carried among persons of quality. Would you believe it, my lord, here she has been a whole week in town, and would never suffer me to introduce her to a rout, an assembly, a concert, or even to court, or the opera; nay, would hardly so much as mix with a living soul that has visited me?

Lord T. No wonder, madam, you do not adopt the manners of persons of fashion, when you will not even honour them with your company. Were you to make one in our little coteries, we should soon make you sick of the boors and bumpkins of the horrid country. By-the-by, I met a monster at the riding-house this morning, who gave me some intelligence that will surprise you, concerning your family.

Har. What intelligence?

Lady F. Who was this monster, as your lordship calls him?—A curiosity, I dare say.

Lord T. This monster, madam, was formerly my head-groom, and had the care of all my running horses; but growing most abominably surly and extravagant, as you know all those fellows do, I turned him off; and ever since, my brother, Slouch Trinket, has had the care of my stud, rides all my principal matches himself, and—

Har. Dear, my lord, don't talk of your groom and your brother; but tell me the news. Do you know anything of my father?

Lord T. Your father, madam, is now in town. This fellow, you must know, is now groom to Sir Harry Beagle, your sweet, rural swain, and informed me that his master and your father were running all over the town in quest of you, and that he himself had orders to inquire after you: for which reason, I suppose he came to the riding-house-stable to look after a horse, thinking it, to be sure, a very likely place to meet you. Your father, perhaps, is gone to seek you at the Tower, or Westminster Abbey, which is all the idea he has of London; and your faithful lover is probably cheapening a hunter, and drinking strong beer, at the Horse and Jockey, in Smithfield.

Lady F. The whole set admirably disposed of!

Har. Did not your lordship inform him where I was?

Lord T. Not I, 'pon honour, madam; that I left to their own ingenuity to discover.

Lady F. And pray, my lord, where, in this town, have this polite company bestowed themselves?

Lord T. They lodge, madam, of all places in the world, at the Bull and Gate Inn, in Holborn.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha!—The Bull and Gate!—incomparable! What, have they brought any hay or cattle to town?

Lord T. Very well, Lady Freelove, very well, indeed! There they are, like so many graziers; and there it seems they have learned that this lady is certainly in London.

Har. Do, dear madam, send a card directly to my father, informing him where I am; and that your ladyship would be glad to see him here. For my part, I dare not venture into his presence, till you have in some measure pacified him; but, for heaven's sake! desire him not to bring that wretched fellow along with him.

Lord T. Wretched fellow!—O ho!—Courage Milor Trinket! (*Aside.*)

Lady F. I'll send immediately. Who's there?

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. (*Apart to Lady F.*) Sir Harry Beagle is below, madam.

Lady F. (*Apart to Servant.*) I am not at home. Have they let him in?

Serv. Yes, madam.

Lady F. How abominably unlucky this is! Well, then, shew him into my dressing-room; I will come to him there. [*Exit Serv.*

Lord T. Lady Freelove, no engagement, I hope? We won't part with you, 'pon honour.

Lady. F The worst engagement in the world. A pair of musty old prudes—Lady Formal and Miss Prate.

Lord T. O the beldams! As nauseous as ipecacuanha, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Lud, lud! what shall I do with them? Why do these foolish women come troubling me now? I must wait on them in the dressing-room; and you must excuse the card, Harriot, till they are gone. I'll despatch them as soon as I can; but heaven knows when I shall get rid of them, for they are both everlasting gossips! though the words come from her ladyship one by one, like drops from a still, while the other tiresome woman overwhelms us with a flood of impertinence. Harriot, you'll entertain his lordship till I return.

[*Exit.*

Lord T. Gone!—'Pon honour, I'm not sorry for the coming in of these old tabbies; and am much obliged to her ladyship for leaving us to such an agreeable *tête-à-tête*.

Har. Your lordship will find be extremely bad company.

Lord T. Not in the least, my dear! We'll entertain ourselves one way or other, I'll warrant you.—Egad! I think it a mighty good opportunity to establish a better acquaintance with you.

Har. I don't understand you.

Lord T. No?—Why, then, I'll speak plainer. (*Pausing, and looking her full in the face.*) You are an amazing fine creature, 'pon honour.

Har. If this be your lordship's polite conversation, I shall leave you to amuse yourself in soliloquy. (*Going.*)

Lord T. No, no, no, madam; that must not be. (*Stopping her.*) This place, my passion, the opportunity, all conspire— [violence.

Har. How, Sir! you don't intend to do me any

Lord T. 'Pon honour, ma'am, it will be doing great violence to myself, if I do not. You must excuse me. (*Struggling with her.*)

Har. Help! help! murder! help!

Lord T. Your yelping will signify nothing: nobody will come. (*Struggling.*)

Har. For heaven's sake!—Sir!—My lord—(*Noise within.*)

Lord T. Plague on't, what a noise! Then I must be quick. (*Still Struggling.*)

Har. Help! murder! help! help!

Enter Charles, *hastily.*

Charles. What do I hear? My Harriot's voice calling for help! Ha!—(*Seeing them.*)—Is it possible? Turn, ruffian! I'll find you employment (*Drawing.*)

Lord T. You are a most impertinent scoundrel; and I'll whip you through the lungs, 'pon honour.

[*They fight.—Harriot runs out, screaming help, &c.*

Re-enter Lady Freelove, *with* Sir Harry Beagle *and Servants.*

Lady F. How's this? Swords drawn in my house! Part them. This is the most impudent thing—

Lord T. Well, rascal! I shall find a time; I know you, sir!

Charles. The sooner the better: I know your lordship, too.

Sir H. I'faith, madam, (*to Lady Freelove,*) we had like to have been in at the death.

Lady F. What is all this? Pray, sir, what is the meaning of your coming hither to raise this disturbance? Do you take my house for a brothel? (*To Charles.*)

Charles. Not I, indeed, madam; but I believe his lordship does.

Lord T. Impudent scoundrel!

Lady F. Your conversation, sir, is as insolent as your behaviour. Who are you? What brought you here?

Charles. I am one, madam, always ready to draw my sword in defence of innocence in distress; and more especially in the cause of that lady I delivered from his lordship's fury, in search of whom I troubled your ladyship's house.

Lady F. Her lover, I suppose; or what?

Charles. At your ladyship's service: though not quite so violent in my passion as his lordship there.

Lord T. Impertinent rascal!

Lady F. You shall be made to repent of this insolence.

Lord T. Your ladyship may leave that to me.

Charles. Ha, ha!

Sir H. But, pray, what is become of the lady all this while? Why, Lady Freelove, you told me she was not here; and i'faith, I was just drawing off another way, if I had not heard the view-halloo.

Lady F. You shall see her immediately, sir! Who's there?

Enter Servant.

Where is Miss Russet?

Serv. Gone out, madam.

Lady F. Gone out? Where?

Serv. I don't know, madam: but she ran down the back stairs, crying for help, crossed the servants' hall in tears, and took a chair at the door.

Lady F. Blockheads! to let her go out in a chair alone! Go and inquire after her immediately.

[*Exit Servant.*

Sir H. Gone! When I had just run her down: and is the little puss stole away at last?

Lady F. Sir, if you will walk in—(*to Sir H.*) with his lordship and me, perhaps you may hear some tidings of her; though it is most probable she may be gone to her father: I don't know any other friend she has in town.

Charles. I am heartily glad she is gone: she is safer any where than in this house.

Lady F. Mighty well, sir! My lord, Sir Harry, I attend you.

Lord T. You shall hear from me, sir! (*To Charles.*)

Charles. Very well, my lord.

Sir H. Stole away! plague on't—stole away!

[*Exeunt Sir Harry and Lord Trinket.*

Lady F. Before I follow the company, give me leave to tell you, sir, that your behaviour here has been so extraordinary—

Charles. My treatment here, madam, has indeed been very extraordinary.

Lady F. Indeed! Well, no matter: permit me to acquaint you, sir, that there lies your way out; and that the greatest favour you can do me, is to leave the house immediately.

Charles. That your ladyship may depend upon. Since you have put Miss Russet to flight, you may be sure of not being troubled with my company. I'll after her immediately.

Lady F. If she has any regard for her reputation, she'll never put herself into such hands as your's.

Charles. O! madam, there can be no doubt of her regard for that, by her leaving your ladyship.

Lady F. Leave my house.

Charles. Directly—a charming house; and a charming lady of the house too! Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Vulgar fellow!

Charles. Fine lady! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Lady Freelove's House.*

Enter Lady Freelove *and* Lord Trinket.

Lord T. Doucement, doucement, my dear Lady Freelove! Excuse me, I meant no harm, 'pon honour!

Lady F. Indeed, indeed, my Lord Trinket, this is absolutely intolerable. What, to offer rudeness to a young lady in my house. What will the world say of it?

Lord T. Just what the world pleases. It does not signify a doit what they say. However, I ask pardon; but, egad! I thought it was the best way.

Lady F. For shame, for shame, my lord. I am quite hurt at your want of discretion; and as this is rather an ugly affair in regard to me as well as your lordship, and may make some noise, I think it absolutely necessary, merely to save appearances, that you should wait on her father, palliate matters as well as you can, and make a formal repetition of your proposal of marriage.

Lord T. Your ladyship is perfectly in the right. You are quite *au fait* of the affair. It shall be done immediately, and then your reputation will be safe, and my conduct justified to all the world. But should the old rustic continue as stubborn as his daughter, your ladyship, I hope, has no objection to my being a little *rusée;* for I must have her, 'pon honour.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Captain O'Cutter, to wait on your ladyship.

Lady F. O, the hideous fellow! the Irish sailorman, for whom I prevailed on your lordship to get the post of regulating captain. I suppose he is come to load me with his odious thanks. I won't be troubled with him now.

Lord T. Let him in, by all means. He is the best creature to laugh at in nature. He is a perfect sea-monster, and always looks and talks as if he were upon deck. Besides, a thought strikes me—he may be of use.

Lady F. Well, send the creature up, then. [*Exit Servant.*] But what fine thought is this?

Lord T. A *coup de maître,* 'pon honour. I intend—But, hush! here the porpus comes.

Enter Captain O'Cutter.

Lady F. Captain, your humble servant. I am very glad to see you.

O'Cut. I am much obliged to you, my lady. Upon my conscience, the wind favours me at all points. I had no sooner got under weigh, to tank your ladyship, but I have borne down upon my noble friend his lordship too. I hope your lordship's well?

Lord T. Very well, I thank you, Captain. But you seem to be hurt in the service: what is the meaning of that patch over your right eye?

O'Cut. Some advanced wages from my new post, my lord. This pressing is hot work, though it entitles us to smart money.

*

Lady F. And pray in what perilous adventure did you get that scar, Captain?

O'Cut. Quite out of my element, indeed, my lady. I got it in an engagement by land. A day or two ago, I spied three stout fellows, belonging to a merchantman. They made down Wapping. I immediately gave my lads the signal to chase, and we bore down right upon them. They tacked, and lay to: we gave them a thundering broadside, which they resaved like men; and one of them made use of small arms, which carried off the weathermost corner of Ned Gage's hat; so I immediately stood in with him, and raked him, but resaved a wound on my starboard eye, from the stock of the pistol. However, we took them all, and they now lie under the hatches, with fifty more, aboard a tender off the Tower.

Lord T. Well done, noble Captain! But, however, you will soon have better employment, for I think the next step to your present post, is commonly a ship.

O'Cut. The sooner the better, my lord! Honest Terence O'Cutter shall never flinch, I warrant you; and has had as much sea-sarvice as any man in the navy.

Lord T. You may depend on my good offices, Captain. But, in the meantime, it is in your power to do me a favour.

O'Cut. A favour, my lord?—your lordship does me honour. I would go round the world, from one end to the other, by day or by night, to sarve your lordship, or my good lady here.

Lord T. Dear madam, the luckiest thought in nature! (*Apart to Lady F.*) The favour I have to ask of you, Captain, need not carry you so far out of your way. The whole affair is, that there are a couple of impudent fellows at an inn in Holborn, who have affronted me, and you would oblige me infinitely, by pressing them into his majesty's service.

Lady F. Now I understand. Admirable! (*Apart.*)

O'Cut. With all my heart, my lord, aad tank you, too, 'fait. But, by-the-by, I hope they are not house-keepers, or freemen of the city. There's the devil to pay in meddling with them. They boder one so about liberty, and property, and stuff. It was but t'other day, that Jack Trouser was carried before my lord mayor, and lost above a twelvemonth's pay for nothing at all at all.

Lord T. I'll take care you shall be brought into no trouble. These fellows were formerly my grooms. If you'll call on me in the morning, I'll go with you to the place.

O'Cut. I'll be with your lordship, and bring with me four or five as pretty boys as you'll wish to clap your two lucking eyes upon of a summer's day.

Lord T. I am much obliged to you.—But, Captain, I have another little favour to beg of you.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul I'll do it.

Lord T. What, before you know it?

O'Cut. Fore and aft, my lord!

Lord T. A gentleman has offended me in a point of honour—

O'Cut. Cut his troat!

Lord T. Will you carry him a letter from me?

O'Cut. Indeed and I will; and I'll take you in tow, too; and you shall engage him yard-arm and yard-arm.

Lord T. Why, then, Captain, you'll come a little earlier to-morrow morning than you proposed, that you may attend him with my billet, before you proceed on the other affair.

O'Cut. Never fear it, my lord. Your sarvant! My ladyship, your humble sarvant!

Lady F. Captain, your's. Pray give my service to my friend, Mrs. O'Cutter. How does she do?

O'Cut. I tank your ladyship's axing;—the dear creature is purely tight and well.

Lord T. How many children have you, Captain?

O'Cut. Four, and please your lordship, and another upon the stooks.

Lord T. When it is launched, I hope to be at the christening. I'll stand godfather, Captain.

O'Cut. Your lordship's very good.

Lord T. Well, you'll come to-morrow.

O'Cut. Ay, my lord, and every day next week. Little Terence O'Cutter never fails, fait, when a troat is to be cut. [*Exit.*

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! But sure you don't intend to ship off both her father and her country lover for the Indies?

Lord T. O no! Only let them contemplate the inside of a ship, for a day or two; and, in the meanwhile, measures may be concerted to carry off the girl.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Mrs. Oakly, madam, is at the door, in her chariot, and desires to have the honour of speaking to your ladyship on particular business.

Lord T. Mrs. Oakly! what can that jealous-pated woman want with you?

Lady F. No matter what; I hate her mortally. Let her in. [*Exit Servant.*

Lord T. What wind blows her hither?

Lady F. A wind that must blow us some good.

Lord T. How? I was amazed you chose to see her.

Lady F. How can you be so slow of apprehension! She comes, you may be sure, on some occasion relating to this girl; in order to assist young Oakly, perhaps, to soothe me, and gain intelligence, and so forward the match; but I'll forbid the bans, I warrant you. Whatever she wants, I'll draw some sweet mischief out of it.—But away, away! I think I hear her: slip down the back stairs—or—stay, now I think on't, go out this way—meet her—and be sure to make her a very respectful bow as you go out.

Lord T. Hush! here she is!

Enter Mrs. Oakly. [*Lord Trinket bows, and exit.*

Mrs. O. I beg pardon, for giving your ladyship this trouble.

Lady F. I am always glad of the honour of seeing Mrs. Oakly.

Mrs. O. There is a letter, madam, just come from the country, which has occasioned some alarm in our family. It comes from Mr. Russet.

Lady F. Mr. Russet?

Mrs. O. Yes, from Mr. Russet, madam; and is chiefly concerning his daughter. As she has the honour of being related to your ladyship, I took the liberty of waiting on you.

Lady F. She is, indeed, as you say, madam, a relation of mine; but, after what has happened, I scarce know how to acknowledge her.

Mrs. O. Has she been so much to blame then?

Lady F. So much, madam!—Only judge for yourself. Though she has been so indiscreet, not to say indecent in her conduct, as to elope from her father, I was in hopes to have hushed up that matter, for the honour of our family; but she has run away from me, too, madam—went off in the most abrupt manner, not an hour ago.

Mrs. O. You surprise me. Indeed, her father, by his letter, seems apprehensive of the worst consequences. But does your ladyship imagine any harm has happened?

Lady F. I can't tell: I hope not. But, indeed, she's a strange girl. You know, madam, young women can't be too cautious in their conduct. She is, I am sorry to declare it, a very dangerous person to take into a family.

Mrs. O. Indeed! (*Alarmed.*)

Lady F. If I was to say all I know—

Mrs. O. Why sure your ladyship knows of nothing that has been carried on clandestinely between her and Mr. Oakly? (*In disorder.*)

Lady F. Mr. Oakly?

Mrs. O. Mr. Oakly—no, not Mr. Oakly—that is, not my husband—I don't mean him—not him, but his nephew—young Mr. Oakly.

Lady F. Jealous of her husband! So, so! now I know my game. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. O. But pray, madam, give me leave to ask, was there anything very particular in her conduct while she was in your ladyship's house?

Lady F. Why, really, considering she was here scarce a week, her behaviour was rather mysterious; letters and messages, to and fro, between her and I don't know who. I suppose you know that Mr. Oakly's nephew has been here, madam?

Mrs. O. I was not sure of it. Has he been to wait on your ladyship on this occasion?

Lady F. To wait on me!—the expression is much too polite for the nature of the visit. My Lord Trinket, the nobleman whom you met as you came in, had, you must know, madam, some thoughts of my niece; and, as it would have been an advantageous match, I was glad of it: but, I believe, after what he has been witness to this morning, he will drop all thoughts of it.

Mrs. O. I am sorry that any relation of mine should so far forget himself—

Lady F. It's no matter: his behaviour indeed, as well as the young lady's, was pretty extraordinary: and yet, after all, I don't believe he is the object of her affections.

Mrs. O. Ha! (*Much alarmed.*)

Lady F. She has certainly an attachment somewhere, a strong one. But his lordship, who was present all the time, was convinced, as well as myself, that Mr. Oakly's nephew was rather a convenient friend, a kind of go-between, than the lover. Bless me! madam, you change colour!—you seem uneasy! What's the matter?

Mrs. O. Nothing, madam—nothing; a little shocked that my husband should behave so.

Lady F. Your husband, madam?

Mrs. O. His nephew, I mean. His unpardonable rudeness—But I am not well. I am sorry I have given your ladyship so much trouble: I'll take my leave.

Lady F. I declare, madam, you frighten me. Your being so visibly affected makes me quite uneasy. I hope I have not said anything: I really don't believe your husband is in fault. Men, to be sure, allow themselves strange liberties; but I think, nay, I am sure, it cannot be so—it is impossible! Don't let what I have said have any effect on you.

Mrs. O. No, it has not: I have no idea of such a thing. Your ladyship's most obedient. (*Going, returns.*) But sure, madam, you have not heard—or don't know anything.

Lady F. Come, come, Mrs. Oakly; I see how it is, and it would not be kind to say all I know. I dare not tell you what I have heard. Only be on your guard; there can be no harm in that. Do you be against giving the girl any countenance, and see what effect it has.

Mrs. O. I will. I am much obliged. But does it appear to your ladyship, then, that Mr. Oakly—

Lady F. No, not at all: nothing in't, I dare say. I would not create uneasiness in a family: but I am a woman myself, have been married, and can't help feeling for you.—But don't be uneasy; there's nothing in't I dare say. [servant.

Mrs. O. I think so. Your ladyship's humble

Lady F. Your servant, madam. Pray don't be alarmed: I must insist on your not making yourself uneasy.

Mrs. O. Not at all alarmed—not in the least uneasy. Your most obedient. [*Exit.*

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! There she goes; brimfull of anger and jealousy, to vent it all on her husband. Mercy on the poor man!

Re-enter LORD TRINKET.

Bless me! my lord, I thought you was gone!

Lord T. Only into the next room. My curiosity would not let me stir a step further. I heard it all; and was never more diverted in my life, 'pon honour. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. How the silly creature took it.—Ha, ha, ha!

Lord T. Ha, ha, ha!—My dear Lady Freelove, you have a deal of ingenuity—a deal of *esprit*, 'pon honour.

Lady F. A little shell thrown into the enemy's works, that's all.

Both. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. But I must leave you: I have twenty visits to pay. You'll let me know how you succeed in your secret expedition.

Lord T. That you may depend on.

Lady F. Remember, then, that to-morrow morning I expect to see you. At present, your lordship will excuse me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Mr. Oakly's House.*

Enter HARRIOT, *following* WILLIAM.

Har. Not at home! Are you sure that Mrs. Oakly is not at home, sir?

Wil. She is just gone out, madam.

Har. I have something of consequence—If you will give me leave, sir, I will wait till she returns.

Will. You would not see her, if you did, madam. She has given positive orders not to be interrupted with any company to-day.

Har. Sure, sir, if you was to let her know that I had particular business—

Wil. I should not dare to trouble her, indeed, madam.

Har. How unfortunate this is! What can I do? Pray, sir, can I see Mr. Oakly, then?

Wil. Yes, madam: I'll acquaint my master, if you please.

Har. Pray do, sir.

Wil. Will you favour me with your name, madam?

Har. Be pleased, sir, to let him know that a lady desires to speak with him.

Wil. I shall, madam. [*Exit.*

Har. I wish I could have seen Mrs. Oakly. What an unhappy situation am I reduced to by my father's obstinate perseverance, to force me into a marriage which my soul abhors.

Enter OAKLY.

Oak. (*At entering.*) Where is the lady? (*Seeing her.*) Bless me! Miss Russet, is it you?—Was ever anything so unlucky? (*Aside.*) Is it possible, madam, that I see you here?

Har. It is too true, sir; and the occasion on which I am now to trouble you, is so much in need of an apology, that—

Oak. Pray make none, madam. If my wife should return before I get her out of the house again! (*Aside.*)

Har. I dare say, sir, you are not quite a stranger to the attachment your nephew has professed to me.

Oak. I am not, madam. I hope Charles has not been guilty of any baseness towards you. If he has, I'll never see his face again.

Har. I have no cause to accuse him; but—

Oak. But what, madam? Pray be quick. The very person in the world I would not have seen! (*Aside.*)

Har. You seem uneasy, sir!

Oak. No, nothing at all. Pray go on, madam.

Har. I am at present, sir, through a concurrence of strange accidents, in a very unfortunate situation; and do not know what will become of me without your assistance.

Oak. I'll do every thing in my power to serve you; I know of your leaving your father, by a let-

ter we have had from him. Pray let me know the rest of your story.

Har. My story, sir, is very short. When I left my father's, I came immediately to London, and took refuge with a relation; where, instead of meeting with the protection I expected, I was alarmed with the most infamous designs upon my honour. It is not an hour ago since your nephew rescued me from the attempts of a villain: I tremble to think that I left him actually engaged in a duel.

Oak. He is very safe. He has just sent home the chariot, from the St. Alban's tavern, where he dines to day. But what are your commands for me, madam?

Har. The favour, sir, I would now request of you is, that you would suffer me to remain, for a few days, in your house.

Oak. Madam!

Har. And that, in the meantime, you will use your utmost endeavours to reconcile me to my father, without his forcing me into a marriage with Sir Harry Beagle.

Oak. This is the most perplexing situation! Why did not Charles take care to bestow you properly?

Har. It is most probable, sir, that I should not have consented to such a measure myself. The world is but too apt to censure, even without a cause; and if you are so kind as to admit me into your house, I must desire not to consider Mr. Oakly in any other light than as your nephew.

Oak. What an unlucky circumstance! Upon my soul, madam, I would do anything to serve you; but being in my house creates a difficulty, that—

Har. I hope, sir, you do not doubt the truth of what I have told you?

Oak. I religiously believe every tittle of it, madam; but I have particular family considerations, that—

Har. Sure, sir, you cannot suspect me to be base enough to form any connexions in your family contrary to your inclinations, while I am living in your house?

Oak. Such connexions, madam, would do me and all my family great honour. I never dreamt of any scruples on that account. What can I do? Let me see—let me see. Suppose—(*Pausing.*)

Enter Mrs. Oakly.

Mrs. O. I am sure I heard the voice of a woman, conversing with my husband. Ha! (*Seeing Harriot.*) It is so indeed! Let me contain myself: I'll listen. (*Aside.*)

Har. I see, sir, you are not inclined to serve me. Good heaven! what am I reserved to? Why, why did I leave my father's house, to expose myself to greater distresses?

Oak. I would do anything for your sake, indeed I would. So pray be comforted, and I'll think of some proper place to bestow you in.

Mrs. O. So! so! [house?

Har. What place can be so proper as your own

Oak. My dear madam, I—I—

Mrs. O. My dear madam! Mighty well! (*Aside.*)

Oak. Hush!—hark! What noise?—No—nothing. But I'll be plain with you, madam; we may be interrupted. The family consideration I hinted at is nothing else than my wife. She is a little unhappy in her temper, madam; and if you were to be admitted into the house, I don't know what would be the consequence.

Mrs. O. Very fine! (*Aside.*)

Har. My behaviour, sir—

Oak. My dear life, it would be impossible for you to behave in such a manner as not to give her suspicion.

Har. But if your nephew, sir, took every thing upon himself—

Oak. Still that would not do, madam. Why, this very morning, when the letter came from your father, though I positively denied any knowledge of it, and Charles owned it, yet it was almost impossible to pacify her.

Har. What shall I do? What will become of me?

Oak. Why, lookye, my dear madam; since my wife is so strong an objection, it is absolutely impossible for me to take you into the house. Nay, if I had not known she was gone out, just before you came, I should be uneasy at your being here, even now. So we must manage as well as we can. I'll take a private lodging for you, a little way off, unknown to Charles, or my wife, or anybody; and if Mrs. Oakly should discover it at last, why, the whole matter will light upon Charles, you know.

Mrs. O. Upon Charles! (*Aside.*)

Har. How unhappy is my situation! (*weeping*) I am ruined for ever.

Oak. Ruined! not at all. Such a thing as this has happened to many a young lady before you, and all has been well again. Keep up your spirits! I'll contrive, if I possibly can, to visit you every day.

Mrs. O. (*Advances.*) Will you so? O, Mr. Oakly! have I discovered you at last? I'll visit you, indeed! And you, my dear madam, I'll—

Har. Madam, I don't understand—

Mrs. O. I understand the whole affair, and have understood it for some time past. You shall have a private lodging, miss! It is the fittest place for you, I believe. How dare you look me in the face?

Oak. For heaven's sake! my love, don't be so violent. You are quite wrong in this affair—you don't know who you are talking to. This lady is a person of fashion.

Mrs. O. Fine fashion, indeed, to seduce other women's husbands!

Har. Dear madam, how can you imagine—

Oak. I tell you, my dear, this is the young lady that Charles—

Mrs. O. Mighty well! but that won't do, sir: did not I hear you lay the whole intrigue together? Did not I hear your fine plot of throwing all the blame upon Charles?—

Oak. Nay, be cool a moment. You must know, my dear, that the letter which came this morning related to this lady—

Mrs. O. I know it.

Oak. And since that, it seems, Charles has been so fortunate as to—

Mrs. O. O, you deceitful man! That trick is too stale to pass again with me. It is plain now what you meant by your proposing to take her into the house this morning. But the gentlewoman could introduce herself, I see.

Oak. Fie! fie! my dear, she came on purpose to inquire for you.

Mrs. O. For me!—better and better! Did not she watch her opportunity, and come to you just as I went out? But I am obliged to you for your visit, madam. It is sufficiently paid. Pray don't let me detain you.

Oak. For shame, for shame, Mrs. Oakly! How can you be so absurd? Is this proper behaviour to a lady of her character?

Mrs. O. I have heard her character. Go, my fine runaway madam! Now you have eloped from your family, and run away from your aunt! Go! you sha'n't stay here, I promise you.

Oak. Pr'ythee be quiet. You don't know what you are doing. She shall stay.

Mrs. O. She sha'n't stay a minute.

Oak. She shall stay a minute, an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year! 'Sdeath! madam, she shall stay for ever, if I choose it.

Mrs. O. How!

Har. For heaven's sake, sir, let me go. I am frightened to death.

Oak. Don't be afraid, madam. She shall stay, I insist upon it.

Rus. (*Within*). I tell you, sir, I will go up. I am sure the lady is here, and nothing shall hinder me.

Har. O, my father! my father! (*Faints.*)

Oak. See, she faints! (*Catches her.*) Ring the bell! Who's there?

Mrs. O. What!—take her into your arms, too! I have no patience.

Enter RUSSET.

Rus. Where is this?—Ha! fainting! (*Runs to her.*) O, my dear Harriot! my child, my child!

Oak. Your coming so abruptly shocked her spirits: but she revives. How do you do, madam?

Har. (*To Russet.*) O, sir!

Rus. O, my dear girl, how could you run away from your father, that loves you with such fondness? But I was sure I should find you here.

Mrs. O. There—there! Sure he should find her here! Did I not tell you so?—Are not you a wicked man to carry on such base, underhand doings with a gentleman's daughter?

Rus. Let me tell you, sir, whatever you may think of the matter, I shall not easily put up with this behaviour. How durst you encourage my daughter to an elopement, and receive her in your house?

Mrs. O. There—mind that! The thing is as plain as the light.

Oak. I tell you, you misunderstand—

Rus. Lookye, Mr. Oakly, I shall expect satisfaction from your family for so gross an affront. Zounds! sir, I am not to be used ill by any man in England.

Har. My dear sir, I can assure you—

Rus. Hold your tongue, girl! You'll put me in a passion.

Oak. Sir, this is all a mistake.

Rus. A mistake! Did not I find her in your house?

Oak. Upon my soul, she has not been in my house above—

Mrs. O. Did not I hear you say, you would take her a lodging—a private lodging?

Oak. Yes, but that—

Rus. Has not this affair been carried on a long time, in spite of my teeth?

Oak. Sir, I never troubled myself—

Mrs. O. Never troubled yourself! Did not you insist on her staying in the house, whether I would or no?

Oak. No.

Rus. Did not you send to meet her, when she came to town?

Oak. No.

Mrs. O. Did not you deceive me about the letter this morning?

Oak. No—no—no; I tell you, no.

Mrs. O. Yes—yes—yes; I tell you, yes.

Rus. Sha'n't I believe my own eyes?

Mrs. O. Sha'n't I believe my own ears?

Oak. I tell you, you are deceived.

Rus. Zounds, sir, I'll have satisfaction.

Mrs. O. I'll stop these fine doings, I warrant you.

Oak. 'Sdeath! you will not let me speak; and you are both alike, I think. I wish you were married to one another with all my heart.

Mrs. O. Mighty well! mighty well!

Rus. I shall soon find a time to talk with you.

Oak. Find a time to talk! you have talked enough now for all your lives.

Mrs. O. Very fine! Come along, sir! Leave that lady with her father. Now she is in the properest hands. [*Exit.*

Oak. I wish I could leave you in his hands.—(*Going, returns.*) One word with you, sir! The height of your passion, and Mrs. Oakly's strange misapprehension of this whole affair, makes it impossible to explain matters to you at present. I will do it when you please, and how you please. [*Exit.*

Rus. Yes, yes; I'll have satisfaction. So, madam, I have found you at last. You have made a fine confusion here.

Har. I have indeed been the innocent cause of a great deal of confusion.

Rus. Innocent! What business had you to be running hither, after—

Har. My dear sir, you misunderstand the whole affair. I have not been in this house half an hour.

Rus. Zounds! girl, don't put me in a passion! You know I love you; but a lie puts me in a passion. But, come along; we'll leave this house directly. (*Charles sings without.*) Heyday! what now?

Enter CHARLES, *drunk.*

Charles. (*Sings.*) *But my wine neither nurses nor babies can bring,*
And a big bellied bottle's a mighty good thing.
What's here? a woman? Harriot! impossible! My dearest, sweetest Harriot! I have been looking all over the town for you; and at last, when I was tired, and weary, and disappointed, why then, the honest Major and I sat down together to drink your health in pint bumpers. (*Running to her.*)

Rus. Stand off! How dare you take any liberty with my daughter before me? Zounds! sir, I'll be the death of you!

Charles. Ha! 'Squire Russet, too! You jolly old cock, how do you do? But, Harriot! my dear girl! (*Taking hold of her.*) My life, my soul, my—

Rus. Let her go, sir; come away, Harriot! Leave him this instant, or I'll tear you asunder. (*Pulling her.*)

Har. There needs no violence to tear me from a man who could disguise himself in such a gross manner, at a time when he knew I was in the utmost distress. [*Disengages herself, and exit with Rus.*

Charles. Only hear me, sir! madam! my dear Harriot. Mr. Russet—gone! she's gone! and, egad, in very ill-humour, and in very bad company. I'll go after her; but hold! I shall only make it worse, as I did, now I recollect, once before. How the devil came they here? Who would have thought of finding her in my own house? My head turns round with conjectures. I believe I am drunk, very drunk; so, egad, I'll e'en go and sleep myself sober, and then inquire the meaning of all this. For

"I love Sue, and Sue loves me," &c.

[*Exit, singing.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Oakly's House.*

Enter CHARLES *and* MAJOR OAKLY.

Maj. O. Poor Charles! What a scene of confusion! I would give the world to have been there.

Charles. And I would give the world to have been anywhere else. May wine be my poison, if ever I am drunk again!

Maj. O. Ay, ay, so every man says the next morning.

Charles. Where, where can she be? Her father would hardly carry her back to Lady Freelove's, and he has no house in town himself, nor Sir Harry. I don't know what to think. I'll go in search of her, though I don't know where to direct myself.

Enter WILLIAM.

Wil. A gentleman, sir, that calls himself Captain O'Cutter, desires to speak with you.

Charles. Don't trouble me. I'll see nobody. I'm not at home.

Wil. The gentleman says he has very particular business, and he must see you.

Charles. What's his name! Who did you say?

Wil. Captain O'Cutter, sir.

Charles. Captain O'Cutter! I never heard of him before. Do you know anything of him, Major?

Maj. O. Not I. But you hear he has particular business. I'll leave the room.

Charles. He can have no business that need be a secret to you. Desire the Captain to walk up.

[*Exit William.*

Enter Captain O'Cutter.

O'Cut. Jontlemen, your sarvant. Is either of your names Charles Oakly, Esq.?

Charles. Charles Oakly, sir, is my name, if you have any business with it.

O'Cut. Avast, avast, my dear! I have a little business with your name; but as I was to let nobody know it, I can't mention it till you clear the decks, fait. (*Pointing to the Major.*)

Charles. This gentleman, sir, is my most intimate friend, and anything that concerns me may be mentioned before him.

O'Cut. O, if he's your friend, my dear, we may do all above board. It's only about your decidiug a deferance with my Lord Trinket. He wants to shew you a little warm work; and, as I was steering this way, he desired me to fetch you this letter. (*Gives a letter.*)

Maj. O. How, sir, a challenge?

O'Cut. Yes, fait, a challenge. I am to be his lordship's second; and if you are fond of a hot birth, and will come along with that jontleman, we'll all go to it together, and make a little line of battle a-head of our own, my dear.

Charles. (*Reads.*) Ha! what's this? This may be useful. (*Aside.*)

Maj. O. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you. A rare fellow this! (*Aside.*) Yes, yes, I'll meet all the good company. I'll be there in my waistcoat and pumps, and take a morning's breathing with you. Are you very fond of fighting, sir?

O'Cut. Indeed, and I am; I love it better than grog.

Maj. O. But pray, sir, how are you interested in this difference? Do you know what it is about?

O'Cut. O! the devil burn me, not I. What signifies what it's about, you know, so we do but tilt a little.

Maj. O. What, fight, and not know for what?

O'Cut. When the signal's out for engaging, what signifies talking?

Maj. O. I fancy, sir, a duel's a common breakfast with you. I'll warrant now, you have been engaged in many such affairs.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul, and I have: sea or land, it's all one to little Terence O'Cutter. When I was last in Dublin, I fought one jontleman for cheating me out of a thousand pounds; I fought two of the Mermaid's crew about Sally Macguire; three about politics; and one about the playhouse in Smock Alley. But upon my fait, since I am in England, I have done nothing at all, at all.

Charles. This is lucky; but my transport will discover me. (*Aside.*) Will you be so kind, sir, (*to O'Cutter*) as to make my compliments to his lordship, and assure him, that I shall do myself the honour of waiting on him.

O'Cut. Indeed, and I will. Arrah! my dear, wont you come too? (*To Major Oakly.*)

Maj. O. Depend upon it, Captain. A very extraordinary fellow! (*Aside.*)

Charles. Now, to get my intelligence. (*Aside.*) I think the time, sir, his lordship appoints in his letter, is—a—

O'Cut. You say right. Six o'clock.

Charles. And the place—a—a—is—I think, behind Montague House?

O'Cut. No, my dear! Avast! by the ring in Hyde-park, 'fait. I settled it there myself, for fare of interruption.

Charles. True, as you say, the ring in Hyde-park. I had forgot. Very well, I'll not fail you, sir.

O'Cut. Devil burn me, nor I. Upon my shoul, little Terence O'Cutter will see fair play, or he'll know the reason. And so, my dear, your sarvant. You'll not forget to come, my dear? [*Exit.*

Maj. O. Ha, ha, ha! What a fellow! He loves fighting like a game cock.

Charles. O uncle, the luckiest thing in the world!

Maj. O. What! to have the chance of being run through the body? I desire no such good fortune.

Charles. Wish me joy, wish me joy! I have found her, my dear girl, my Harriot! She is at an inn in Holborn, Major!

Maj. O. Ay! how do you know?

Charles. Why, this dear, delightful, charming, blundering Captain, has delivered me a wrong letter.

Maj. O. A wrong letter?

Charles. Yes, a letter from Lord Trinket to Lady Freelove.

Maj. O. The devil! What are the contents?

Charles. The news I told you just now, that she's at an inn in Holborn; and, besides, an excuse from my lord, for not waiting on her ladyship this morning according to his promise, as he shall be entirely taken up with his design upon Harriot.

Maj. O. So! so! A plot between the lord and the lady.

Charles. There! read, read, man! (*Gives the letter.*)

Maj. O. (*Reading.*) Um—um—um. Very fine! What do you propose doing?

Charles. To go thither immediately.

Maj. O. Then you shall take me with you. Who knows what his lordship's designs may be? I begin to suspect foul play.

Charles. No, no; pray mind your own business. If I find there is any need of your assistance, I'll send for you.

Maj. O. You'll manage this affair like a boy, now. Go on rashly, with noise, and bustle, and fury, and get yourself into another scrape.

Charles. No, no. Let me alone; I'll go *incog.* Leave my chariot at some distance; proceed prudently, and take care of myself, I warrant you. I did not imagine that I should ever rejoice at receiving a challenge; but this is the most fortunate accident that could possibly have happened. B'ye, b'ye, uncle! [*Exit hastily.*

Maj. O. I don't half approve of this; and yet I can hardly suspect his lordship of any very deep designs neither. Charles may easily outwit him. Harkye, William! (*At seeing William at some distance.*)

Re-enter William.

Wil. Sir!

Maj. O. Where's my brother?

Wil. In his study, sir.

Maj. O. Is he alone?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Maj. O. And how is he, William?

Wil. Pretty well, I believe, sir.

Maj. O. Ay, ay; but is he in good humour, or—

Wil. I never meddle in family affairs, not I, sir.

[*Exit.*

Maj. O. Well said, William! No bad hint for me, perhaps! What a strange world we live in! no two people in it love one another better than my brother and sister, and yet the bitterest enemies could not torment each other more heartily. However, yesterday, to give him his due, he behaved like a man. Keep it up, brother! keep it up! or it's all over with you. Since mischief is on foot, I'll even set it forward on all sides. I'll in to him directly, read him one of my morning lectures, and persuade him, if I possibly can, to go out with me immediately; or work him to some open act of rebellion against the sovereign authority of his lady wife. Zounds, brother! rant, and roar, and rave, and turn the house out of the window. If I was a husband!—'Sdeath, what a pity it is that nobody knows how to manage a wife but a bachelor. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Bull and Gate Inn.*

Enter HARRIOT.

Har. What will become of me? Among all my distresses, I must confess that Charles's behaviour yesterday is not the least. So wild! so given up to excesses! And yet—I am ashamed to own it even to myself.—I love him: and death itself shall not prevail on me to give my hand to Sir Harry. But here he comes! What shall I do with him?

Enter SIR HARRY BEAGLE.

Sir H. Your servant, miss. What! not speak! Bashful, mayhap. Why then I will. Lookye, miss, I am a man of few words. What signifies haggling? it looks just like a dealer. What d'ye think of me for a husband? I am a tight young fellow; sound wind and limb; free from all natural blemishes. Rum all over, d——e.

Har. Sir, I don't understand you. Speak English, and I'll give you an answer.

Sir H. English! Why so I do; and good plain English too. What d'ye think of me for a husband? That's English—e'nt it? I know none of your French lingo, none of your parlyvoos, not I. What d'ye think of me for a husband? The 'squire says you shall marry me.

Har. What shall I say to him? I had best be civil. (*Aside.*) I think, sir, you deserve a much better wife, and beg—

Sir H. Better! No, no, though you're so knowing, I'm not to be taken in so. You're a fine thing; your points are all good.

Har. Sir Harry, sincerity is above all ceremony. Excuse me, if I declare I never will be your wife.

Sir H. Eh! how! what! be off! Why, it's a match, miss! It's done and done on both sides.

Har. For heaven's sake! sir, withdraw your claim to me. I never can be prevailed on; indeed I can't—

Sir H. What, make a match, and then draw stakes! That's doing of nothing. Play or pay all the world over.

Har. I am determined not to marry you, at all events.

Sir H. But your father's determined you shall, miss; so the odds are on my side. I am not quite sure of my horse, but I have the rider hollow.

Har. Your horse! sir, d'ye take me for—but I forgive you. I beseech you, come into my proposal: it will be better for us both in the end.

Sir H. I can't be off.

Har. Let me intreat you!

Sir H. I tell you, it's impossible!

Har. Pray, pray do, sir!

Sir H. I can't, d——e.

Har. I beseech you! (*Sir Harry whistles.*) How! laughed at?

Sir H. Will you marry me, dear Ally, Ally Croker? (*Singing.*)

Har. Marry you! I had rather be married to a slave—a wretch! You! (*Walks about.*)

Sir H. A fine going thing; she has a deal of foot; treads well upon her pasterns; goes above her ground——

Har. Peace, wretch! Do you talk to me as if I were your horse?

Sir H. Horse! Why not speak of my horse? If your fine ladies had half as many good qualities, they would be much better bargains.

Har. And if their wretches of husbands liked them half so well as they do their horses, they would lead better lives.

Sir H. Mayhap so. But what signifies talking to you? The 'squire shall know your tricks; he'll doctor you; I'll go and talk to him.

Har. Go anywhere, so that you go from me.

Sir H. He'll break you in; if you won't go in a snaffle, you must be put in a curb. He'll break you, d——e. [*Exit.*

Har. A wretch! But I was to blame to suffer his brutal behaviour to ruffle my temper. I could expect nothing else from him, and he is below my anger.

Enter RUSSET.

Rus. Are not you a sad girl? a perverse, stubborn, obstinate—

Har. My dear sir—

Rus. Lookye, Harriot, don't speak; you'll put me in a passion. Will you have him? Answer me that. Why don't the girl speak? Will you have him? [else—

Har. Dearest sir, there is nothing in the world

Rus. Why there—there—lookye there! Zounds! you shall have him—hussy, you shall have him; you shall marry him to-night. Did not you promise to receive him civilly? How came you to affront him?

Har. Sir, I did receive him very civilly; but his behaviour was so insolent and insupportable—

Rus. Insolent! Zounds, I'll blow his brains out! Insolent to my dear Harriot! A rogue, a villain, a scoundrel! I'll—but it's a lie. I know it's a lie—he durst not behave insolent! Will you have him? Answer me that. Will you have him?—Zounds! you shall have him.

Har. If you have any love for me, sir—

Rus. Love for you! You know I love you; you know your poor, fond father dotes on you to madness; I would not force you, if I did not love you! Don't I want you to be happy? But I know what you would have. You want young Oakly, a rake-helly, drunken—

Har. Release me from Sir Harry; and if I ever marry against your consent, renounce me for ever.

Rus. I will renounce you, unless you'll have Sir Harry.

Har. Consider, my dear sir, you'll make me miserable. Absolve me from this hard command, and in every thing else it will be happiness to obey you.

Rus. You'll break my heart, Harriot, you'll break my heart. Make you miserable! Don't I want to make you happy? Is not he the richest man in the county? That will make you happy. Don't all the pale-faced girls in the country long to get him? And yet you are so perverse, and wayward, and stubborn. Zounds! you shall have him!

Har. For heaven's sake, sir—

Rus. Hold your tongue, Harriot! I'll hear none of your nonsense. You shall have him, I tell you, you shall have him; he shall marry you this very night. I'll go for a license and a parson immediately. Zounds! why do I stand arguing with you? A'n't I your father? Have not I a right to dispose of you? You shall have him.

Har. Sir—

Rus. I won't hear a word. You shall have him. [*Exit.*

Har. Sir, hear me; but one word! He will not hear me, and is gone to prepare for this odious marriage. I will die before I consent to it.

Enter CHARLES, *in a frock, &c.*

Ha! What do I see? (*Screaming.*)

Charles. Peace, my love! My dear life, make no noise! I have been hovering about the house this hour. I just now saw your father and Sir Harry go out, and have seized this precious opportunity to throw myself at your feet.

Har. You have given yourself, sir, a great deal of needless trouble. I did not expect or hope for the favour of such a visit.

Charles. O! my Harriot, upbraid me, reproach me; do anything but look and talk with that air of coldness and indifference. Let me, while their absence allows it, convey you from the brutal violence of a constrained marriage.

Har. No, I will wait the event, be it what it may.

O! Charles, I am too much inclined; they sha'n't force me to marry Sir Harry. But your behaviour—not half an hour ago, my father reproached me with the looseness of your character. (*Weeping.*)

Charles. I see my folly, and am ashamed of it: you have reclaimed me, Harriot; on my soul, you have. If all women were as attentive as yourself to the morals of their lovers, a libertine would be an uncommon character. But let me persuade you to leave this place while you may; Major Oakly will receive us at his house with pleasure. I am shocked at the thoughts of what your stay here may reserve you to.

Har. No, I am determined to remain. To leave my father again, to go off openly with a man of whose libertine character he has himself so lately been a witness, would justify his anger, and impeach my reputation.

Enter Chambermaid.

Chamb. O la, ma'am! Such a terrible accident! As sure as I am here, there's a press-gang has seized the two gemmin, and is carrying them away, thof so be as one an 'em says as how he's a knight and baronight, and that t'other's a squire, and a housekeeper.

Har. Seized by a press-gang; impossible!

Charles. Oh! now the design comes out; but I'll baulk his lordship.

Chamb. Lack-a-daisy, ma'am, what can we do? There is master, and John Ostler, and Bootcatcher, all gone a'ter 'em. There is such an uproar as never was. [*Exit.*

Har. If I thought this was your contrivance, sir, I would never speak to you again.

Charles. I would sooner die than be guilty of it! This is Lord Trinket's doing, I am sure. I knew he had some scheme in agitation, by a letter I intercepted this morning. (*Harriot screams.*) Ha! here he comes. Nay, then, it's plain enough. Don't be frightened, my love! I'll protect you! But now I must desire you to follow my directions.

Enter Lord Trinket.

Lord T. Now, madam. Plague on't, he here again! Nay, then—(*draws*)—come, sir. You're unarmed I see. Give up the lady: give her up, I say, or I am through you in a twinkling. (*Going to make a pass at Charles.*)

Charles. Keep your distance, my lord. I have arms. (*Produces a pistol.*) If you come a foot nearer, you have a brace of balls through your lordship's head.

Lord T. How? what's this? pistols!

Charles. At your lordship's service. Sword and pistol, my lord. Those, you know, are our weapons. If this misses, I have the fellow to it in my pocket. Don't be frightened, madam; his lordship has removed your friends and relations, but he will take great care of you. Shall I leave you with him?

Har. Cruel Charles! you know I must go with you now.

Charles. A little way from the door, if your lordship pleases. (*Waves his hand.*)

Lord T. Sir! 'Sdeath! Madam!—

Charles. A little more round, my lord. (*Waves.*)

Lord T. But sir! Mr. Oakly!

Charles. I have no leisure to talk with your lordship now. A little more that way, if you please. (*Waves.*) You know where I live. If you have any commands for Miss Russet, you will hear of her, too, at my house. Nay, keep back, my lord. (*Presents.*) Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant. [*Exit, with Harriot.*

Lord T. (*Looks at them, and panses for a short time.*) I cut a mighty ridiculous figure here, 'pon honour. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*Lady's Freelove's House.*

Enter Lord Trinket, Lady Freelove, *with a letter, and* Captain O'Cutter.

Lord T. Was ever anything so unfortunate! Plague on't, Captain, how could you make such a strange blunder?

O'Cut. I never thought of a blunder. I was to deliver two letters; and if I gave them one a-piece, I thought it would do.

Lady F. And so, my lord, the ingenious Captain gave the letter intended for me to young Oakly, and here has brought me a challenge.

Lord T. Ridiculous! Never was anything so *malapropos.* Did you read the direction, Captain?

O'Cut. Who! me? Devil burn me, not I. I never rade at all.

Lord T. 'Sdeath! how provoking! When I had secured the servants, and got all the people out of the way; when every thing was *en train.*

Lady F. Nay, never despair, my lord. I've hit upon a method to set every thing to rights again.

Lord T. How! how, my dear Lady Freelove, how?

Lady F. Suppose, then, your lordship was to go and deliver these country gentlemen from their confinement; make them believe it was a plot of young Oakly's, to carry off my niece; and so make a merit of your own services with the father.

Lord T. Admirable! I'll about it immediately.

O'Cut. Has your lordship any occasion for my sarvice in this expedition?

Lord T. O, no. Only release me these people, and then keep out of the way, dear Captain.

O'Cut. With all my heart, 'fait. But you are all wrong: this will not signify a brass farding. If you would let me alone, I would give him a salt eel, I warrant you. But, upon my credit, there's nothing to be done without a little tilting. [*Exit.*

Lord T. But where shall I carry them, when I have delivered them?

Lady F. To Mr. Oakly's, by all means; you may be sure my niece is there.

Lord T. To Mr. Oakly's! Why, does your ladyship consider? 'Tis going directly in the fire of the enemy; throwing the *dementi* full in their teeth.

Lady F. So much the better. Face your enemies; nay, you shall outface them too. I'll certainly meet you there. It's hard indeed, if two persons of condition can't bear themselves out against such trumpery folks as the family of the Oaklys.

Lord T. Odious, low people! But I lose time. I must after the Captain; and so, till we meet at Mr. Oakly's, I kiss your ladyship's hands: you won't fail me?

Lady F. You may depend on me. [*Exit Lord Trinket.*] So, here is fine work! this artful, little hussy has been too much for us all. Well, what's to be done? Why, when a woman of fashion gets into a scrape, nothing but a fashionable assurance can get her out of it again. I'll e'en go boldly to Mr. Oakly's, as I have promised; and if it appears practicable, I will forward Lord Trinket's match; but if I find that matters have taken another turn, his lordship must excuse me. In that case, I'll fairly drop him, seem a perfect stranger to all his intentions, and give my visit an air of congratulation to my niece, and any other husband which fortune, her wise father, or her ridiculous self, has provided for her. [*Exit.*

Scene II.—*Mrs. Oakly's Dressing-room.*

Mrs. Oakly *discovered.*

Mrs. O. This is worse and worse! He never held me so much in contempt before. To go out without speaking to me, or taking the least notice. I am obliged to the Major for this. How could he take him out! and how could Mr. Oakly go with him!— *Enter* Toilet.

Well, Toilet.

Toil. My master is not come back yet, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone?

Toil. I don't know, I can assure your ladyship.

Mrs. O. Why don't you know? You know nothing. But I warrant you know well enough, if you would tell. You shall never persuade me, but you knew of Mr. Oakly's going out to-day.

Toil. I wish I may die, ma'am, upon my honour, and I protest to your ladyship, I knew nothing in the world of the matter, no more than the child unborn. There is Mr. Paris, my master's gentleman, knows—

Mrs. O. What does he know?

Toil. That I knew nothing at all of the matter.

Mrs. O. Where is Paris? What is he doing?

Toil. He is in my master's room, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Bid him come here.

Toil. Yes, ma'am. [*Exit.*

Mrs. O. He is certainly gone after this young flirt. His confidence, and the Major's insolence, provoke me beyond expression.

Re-enter TOILET *with* PARIS.

Where's your master?

Par. Il est sorti. He is gone out.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone?

Par. Ah! madame, *je n'en scai rien.* I know nothing of it.

Mrs. O. Nobody knows anything. Why did not you tell me he was going out?

Par. I dress him—*Je ne m'en soucie pas du plus*—He go where he will—I have no business with it.

Mrs. O. Yes, you should have told me; that was your business; and if you don't mind your business better, you sha'n't stay here, I can tell you, sir.

Par. Voila! quelque chose d'extraordinaire?

Mrs. O. Don't staud jabbering and shrugging your shoulders; but go and inquire, go and bring me word where he is gone.

Par. I don't know what I am to do.

Mrs. O. Bid John come to me.

Par. De tout mon cœur. Jean—ici—Jean! speak my lady. [*Exit.*

Mrs. O. Impudent fellow! His insolent gravity and indifference is insupportable. Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Where's John? Why don't he come? Why do you stand with your hands before you? Why don't you fetch him?

Toil. Yes, ma'am, I'll go this minute. O, here, John! my lady wants you.

Enter JOHN.

Mrs. O. Where's your master?

John. Gone out, madam.

Mrs. O. Why did not you go with him?

John. Because he went out in the Major's chariot, madam.

Mrs. O. Where did they go to?

John. To the Major's, I suppose, madam.

Mrs. O. Suppose! Don't you know?

John. I believe so; but can't tell for certain, indeed, madam.

Mrs. O. Believe and suppose—and don't know, and can't tell! You are all fools! Go about your business. (*John going,*) Come here! (*Returns.*) Go to the Major's—no—it does not signify; go along! (*John going.*) Yes, harkye! (*returns*) go to the Major's, and see if your master is there.

John. Give your compliments, madam?

Mrs. O. My compliments, blockhead! Get along. (*John going.*) Come hither! (*Returns.*) Can't you go to the Major's, and bring me word if Mr. Oakly is there, without taking any further notice?

John. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Well, why don't you go, then? And make haste back; and, d'ye hear, John? (*John going, returns.*)

John. Madam!

Mrs. O. Nothing at all—go along. (*John goes*) How uneasy Mr. Oakly makes me! Harkye, John! (*John returns.*)

John. Madam!

Mrs. O. Send the porter here.

John. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Toil. So, she's in a rare humour! I shall have a fine time on't. (*Aside.*) Will your ladyship choose to dress?

Mrs. O. Pr'ythee, creature, don't tease me with your fidde-faddle stuff—I have a thousand things to think of. Where is the porter? Why has not that booby sent him? What is the meaning—

Re-enter JOHN.

John. Madam, my master is this moment returned, with Major Oakly, and my young master, and the lady that was here yesterday.

Mrs. O. Very well. [*Exit. John.*] Returned? yes, truly, he is returned, and in a very extraordinary manner. This is setting me at open defiance. But I'll go down, and shew them that I have too much spirit to endure such usage. (*Going.*) Or, stay—I'll not go amongst his company—I'll go out. Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Order the coach; I'll go out. (*Toilet going.*) Toilet, stay—I'll e'en go down to them. No—Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Order me a boiled chicken, I'll not go down to dinner; I'll dine in my own room, and sup there: I'll not see his face these three days. [*Exeunt.*

Enter OAKLY, MAJOR OAKLY, CHARLES, *and* HARRIOT.

Charles. My dear Harriot, do not make yourself so uneasy.

Har. Alas! I have too much cause for my uneasiness. Who knows what that vile lord has done with my father!

Oak. Be comforted, madam; we shall soon hear of Mr. Russet; and all will be well, I dare say.

Har. You are too good to me, sir; I shall never forgive myself for having disturbed the peace of such a worthy family.

Maj. Don't mind that, madam; they'll be very good friends again. This is nothing among married people. 'Sdeath, here she is! No; it's only Mrs. Toilet.

Re-enter TOILET.

Oak. Well, Toilet, what now? (*Toilet whispers him.*) Not well? Can't come down to dinner? Wants to see me above? Harkye! brother, what shall I do?

Maj. If you go, you are undone.

Har. Go, sir, go to Mrs. Oakly; indeed you had better.

Maj. O. 'Sdeath! brother, don't budge a foot. This is all fractiousness and ill-humour.

Oak. No, I'll not go. Tell her I have company, and we shall be glad to see her here. [*Exit Toil.*

Maj. O. That's right.

Oak. Suppose I go and watch how she proceeds?

Maj. O. What d'ye mean? You would not go to her? Are you mad?

Oak. By no means go to her—I only want to know how she takes it. I'll lie perdue in my study, and observe her motions.

Maj. O. I don't like this pitiful ambuscade work, this bush-fighting. Why can't you stay here? Ay, ay! I know how it will be. She'll come bounce in upon you with a torrent of anger and passion; or, if necessary, a whole flood of tears, and carry all before her at once.

Oak. You shall find that you are mistaken, Major. Now I am convinced I'm in the right, I'll support that right, with ten times your steadiness.

Maj. O. You talk this well, brother.

Oak. I'll do it well, brother.

Maj. O. If you don't, you are undone.

Oak. Never fear, never fear. [*Exit.*

Maj. O. Well, Charles.

Charles. I can't bear to see my Harriot so uneasy. I'll go immediately in quest of Mr Russet. Perhaps I may learn at the inn where his lordship's ruffians have carried him.

Rus. (*Without.*) Here! Yes, yes, I know she's here well enough. Come along, Sir Harry, come along.

Har. He's here! My father! I know his voice. Where is Mr. Oakly? O, now, good sir, (*to the Major*) do but pacify him, and you'll be a friend indeed.

Enter Russet, Lord Trinket, *and* Sir Harry Beagle.

Lord T. There, sir, I told you it was so!

Rus. Ay, ay, it is too plain. O, you provoking slut! Elopement after elopement! And, at last, to have your father carried off by violence! to endanger my life! Zounds! I am so angry, I dare not trust myself within reach of you.

Charles. I can assure you sir, that your daughter is entirely—

Rus. You assure me! You are the fellow that has perverted her mind, that has set my own child against me—

Charles. If you will but hear me, sir—

Rus. I won't hear a word you say. I'll have my daughter—I won't hear a word.

Maj. O. Nay, Mr. Russet, hear reason. If you will but have patience—

Rus. I'll have no patience, I'll have my daughter; and she shall marry Sir Harry to-night.

Lord T. That is dealing rather too much *en cavalier* with me, Mr. Russet, 'pon honour. You take no notice of my pretensions, though my rank and family—

Rus. What care I for rank and family? I don't want to make my daughter a rantipole woman of quality. I'll give her to whom I please. Take her away, Sir Harry; she shall marry you to-night.

Maj. O. Only three words, Mr. Russet.—

Rus. Why don't the booby take her!

Sir H. Hold hard! hold hard! You are all on a wrong scent. Hold hard! I say, hold hard! Harkye, 'Squire Russet!

Rus. Well, what now?

Sir H. It was proposed, you know, to match me with Miss Harriot; but she can't take kindly to me. When one has made a bad bet, it is best to hedge off, you know; and so I have e'en swapped her with Lord Trinket here, for his brown horse, Nabob.

Rus. Swapped her! Swapped my daughter for a horse! Zounds, sir, what d'ye mean?

Sir H. Mean? Why I mean to be off, to be sure! it won't do, I tell you it won't do. First of all I knocked up myself and my horses, when they took for London: and now I have been stew'd aboard a tender, I have wasted three stone at least. If I could have rid my match it would not have grieved me; and so, as I said before, I have swapped her for Nabob.

Rus. The devil take Nabob, and yourself, and Lord Trinket, and—

Lord T. Pardon! *je vous demande* pardon, Monsieur Russet, 'pon honour.

Rus. Death and the devil! I shall go distracted! My daughter plotting against me—the—

Maj. O. Come, come, Mr. Russet, I am your man after all. Give me but a moment's hearing, and I'll engage to make peace between you and your daughter, and throw the blame where it ought to fall most deservedly.

Sir H. Ay, ay, that's right. Put the saddle on the right horse, my buck.

Rus. Well, sir—What d'ye say? Speak—I don't know what to do.

Maj. O. I'll speak the truth, let who will be offended by it. I have proof presumptive and positive for you, Mr. Russet. From his lordship's behaviour at Lady Freelove's, when my nephew rescued her, we may fairly conclude that he would stick at no measures to carry his point; there's proof presumptive. But, sir, we can give you proof positive, too—proof under his lordship's own hand, that he likewise was the contriver of the gross affront that has just been offered you.

Rus. Eh! how?

Lord T. Every syllable romance, 'pon honour.

Maj. O. Gospel, every word on't.

Charles. This letter will convince you, sir. In consequence of what happened at Lady Freelove's, his lordship thought fit to send me a challenge; but the messenger blundered, and gave me this letter instead of it. (*Giving the letter.*) I have the case which enclosed it in my pocket.

Lord T. Forgery from beginning to end, 'pon honour.

Maj. O. Truth, upon my honour. But read, read, Mr. Russet; read, and be convinced.

Rus. Let me see, let me see. (*Reads.*) Um—um—um—um—so, so,—um—um—um—damnation! *Wish me success,—obedient slave,* Trinket. Fire and fury! How dare you do this?

Lord T. When you are cool, Mr. Russet, I will explain this matter to you.

Rus. Cool! 'Sdeath and hell! I'll never be cool again; I'll be revenged. So, my Harriot, my dear girl, is innocent at last. Say so, my Harriot; tell me you are innocent. (*Embraces.*)

Har. I am indeed, sir, and happy beyond expression at your being convinced of it.

Rus. I am glad on't; I am glad on't; I believe you Harriot! You was always a good girl.

Maj. O. So she is, an excellent girl! Worth a regiment of such lords and baronets. Come, sir, finish every thing handsomely at once. Come, Charles will have a handsome fortune.

Rus. Marry! she durst not do it.

Maj. O. Consider, sir, they have long been fond of each other, old acquaintance, faithful lovers, turtles, and may be very happy.

Rus. Well, well, since things are so, I love my girl. Harkye! 'young Oakly, if you don't make her a good husband, you'll break my heart, you rogue.

Maj. O. I'll cut his throat if he don't.

Charles. Do not doubt it, sir; my Harriot has reformed me altogether.

Rus. Has she? Why then—there, heaven bless you both; there, now there's an end on't.

Sir H. So, my lord, you and I are both distanced; a hollow thing, d——e.

Lord T. N'importe.

Sir H. Now this stake is drawn, my lord may be for hedging off, mayhap. Ecod! I'll go to Jack Speed's, secure Nabob, and be out of town in an hour. [*Aside, and exit.*

Enter Lady Freelove.

Lady F. My dear Miss Russet, you'll excuse—

Charles. Mrs. Oakly, at your ladyship's service.

Lady F. Married?

Har. Not yet, madam; but my father has been so good as to give his consent.

Lady F. I protest I am prodigiously glad of it. My dear, I give you joy—and you, Mr. Oakly. I wish you joy, Mr. Russet, and all the good company; for I think the most of them are parties concerned.

Maj. O. How easy, impudent, and familiar! (*Aside.*)

Lady F. Lord Trinket here too! I vow I did not see your lordship before.

Lord T. Your ladyship's most obedient slave. (*Bowing.*)

Lady F. You seem grave, my lord! Come, come,

I know there has been some difference between you and Mr. Oakly; you must give me leave to be a mediator in this affair.

Lord T. Here has been a small *fracas*, to be sure, madam! We are all blown, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Blown! what do you mean, my lord?

Lord T. Nay, your ladyship knows that I never mind these things, and I know that they never discompose your ladyship: but things have happened a little *en travers*. The little billet I sent your ladyship has fallen into the hands of that gentleman (*pointing to Charles,*) and so there has been a little *brouillerie* about it, that's all.

Lady F. You talk to me, my lord, in a very extraordinary style. If you have been guilty of any misbehaviour, I am sorry for it; but your ill conduct can fasten no imputation on me. Miss Russet will justify me sufficiently.

Maj. O. Had not your ladyship better appeal to my friend Charles here? The letter, Charles! out with it this instant!

Charles. Yes, I have the credentials of her ladyship's integrity in my pocket. Mr. Russet, the letter you read a little while ago, was enclosed in this cover, which also I now think it my duty to put into your hands.

Rus. (*Reading.*) *To the Right Honourable Lady Freelove*—'Sdeath and hell! and now I recollect, the letter itself was pieced with scraps of French, and madam, and your ladyship. Fire and fury! madam, how came you to use me so? I am obliged to you, then, for the insult that has been offered me?

Lady F. What is all this? Your obligations to me, Mr. Russet, are of a nature, that—

Rus. Fine obligations! I dare say, I am partly obliged to you, too, for the attempt on my daughter, by that thing of a lord, yonder, at your house. Zounds, madam! these are injuries never to be forgotten: they are the grossest affronts to me and my family: all the world shall know them. Zounds! I'll—

Lady F. Mercy on me! how boisterous are these country gentlemen! Why, really, Mr. Russet, you rave like a man in Bedlam! I am afraid you'll beat me; and then you swear most abominably. How can you be so vulgar? I see the meaning of this low malice; but the reputations of women of quality are not so easily impeached. My rank places me above the scandal of little people, and I shall meet such petty insolence with the greatest ease and tranquillity; but you and your simple girl will be the sufferers. I had some thoughts of introducing her into the first company; but now, madam, I shall neither receive nor return your visits; and will entirely withdraw my protection from the ordinary part of the family. [*Exit.*

Rus. Zounds, what impudence! that's worse than all the rest.

Lord T. Fine presence of mind, 'faith!—the true French nonchalance; but, good folks, why such a deal of rout and *tapage* about nothing at all? If Mademoiselle Harriot had rather be Mrs. Oakly than Lady Trinket, why, I wish her joy, that's all. Mr. Russet, I wish you joy of your son-in-law: Mr. Oakly, I wish you joy of the lady; and you, madam, (*to Harriot*) of the gentleman; and, in short, I wish you all joy of one another, 'pon honour! [*Exit.*

Rus. There's a fine fellow of a lord, now! The devil's in your London folks of the first fashion, as you call them. They will rob you of your estate, debauch your daughter, or lie with your wife; and all as if they were doing you a favour—pon honour!

Maj. Eh! what now! (*Bell rings violently.*)

Re-enter OAKLY.

Oak. D'ye hear, Major, d'ye hear?

Maj. Zounds! what a clatter! She'll pull down all the bells in the house.

Oak. My observations since I left you, have confirmed my resolution. I see plainly that her good humour, and her ill humour, her smiles, her tears, and her fits, are all calculated to play upon me.

Maj. O. Did not I always tell you so? It's the way with them all: they will be rough and smooth, and hot and cold, and all in a breath. Anything to get the better of us.

Oak. She is in all moods at present, I promise you. There has she been in her chamber, fuming and fretting, and despatching a messenger to me every two minutes; servant after servant; now she insists on my coming to her, now again she writes a note to entreat; then Toilet is sent to let me know that she is ill, absolutely dying; then the very next minute, she'll never see my face again; she'll go out of the house directly. (*Bell rings.*) Again! now the storm rises!

Maj. O. It will soon drive this way, then. Now, brother, prove yourself a man: you have gone too far to retreat.

Oak. Retreat! Retreat! No, no! I'll preserve the advantage I have gained, I am determined.

Maj. O. Ay, ay; keep your ground; fear nothing; up with your noble heart! Good discipline makes good soldiers: stick close to my advice, and you may stand buff to a tigress.

Oak. Here she is, by heavens! now, brother!

Maj. O. And now, brother! now, or never!

Re-enter MRS. OAKLY.

Mrs. O. I think, Mr. Oakly, you might have had humanity enough to have come to see how I did. You have taken your leave, I suppose, of all tenderness and affection; but I'll be calm: I'll not throw myself into a passion: you want to drive me out of your house; I see what you aim at, and will be aforehand with you: let me keep my temper. I'll send for a chair, and leave the house this instant.

Oak. True, my love: I knew you would not think of dining in your chamber alone, when I had company below. You shall sit at the head of the table, as you ought, to be sure, as you say, and make my friends welcome.

Mrs. O. Excellent raillery! Look ye, Mr. Oakly, I see the meaning of all this affected coolness and indifference.

Oak. My dear, consider where you are.

Mrs. O. You would be glad, I find, to get me out of your house, and have all your flirts about you.

Oak. Before all this company! Fie!

Mrs. O. But I'll disappoint you; for I shall remain in it, to support my due authority. As for you, Major Oakly—

Maj. O. Heyday! What have I done?

Mrs. O. I think you might find better employment, than to create divisions between married people. And you, sir!—

Oak. Nay, but, my dear—

Mrs. O. Might have more sense, as well as tenderness, than to give ear to such idle stuff.

Oak. Lord! Lord!

Mrs. O. You and your wise counsellor there, I suppose, think to carry all your points with me.

Oak. Was ever any thing—

Mrs. O. But it won't do, sir. You shall find that I will have my own way, and that I will govern my own family.

Oak. You had better learn to govern yourself, by half. Your passion makes you ridiculous. Did ever anybody see so much fury and violence?—Affronting your best friends, breaking my peace, and disconcerting your own temper! And all for what? For nothing. 'Sdeath, madam! at these years, you ought to know better.

Mrs. O. At these years! very fine! Am I to be talked to in this manner?

Oak. Talked to! why not? You have talked to me long enough—almost talked me to death; and I

have taken it all, in hopes of making you quiet; but all in vain. Patience, I find, is all thrown away upon you; and henceforward, come what may, I am resolved to be master of my own house.

Mrs. O. So! so! master, indeed! Yes, sir; and you'll take care to have mistresses enough, too, I warrant you.

Oak. Perhaps I may; but they shall be quiet ones, I can assure you.

Mrs. O. Indeed! and do you think I am such a tame fool as to sit quietly and bear all this? You shall know, sir, that I will resent this behaviour; you shall find that I have a spirit—

Oak. Of the devil!

Mrs. O. Intolerable! you shall find then that I will exert that spirit. I am sure I have need of it. As soon as the house is once cleared again, I'll shut my doors against all company. You sha'n't see a single soul for this month.

Oak. 'Sdeath! madam, but I will! I'll keep open house for a year. I'll send cards to the whole town—Mr. Oakly's rout! All the world will come; and I'll go among the world too: I'll be mewed up no longer.

Mrs. O. Provoking insolence! This is not to be endured! Lookye, Mr. Oakly—

Oak. And lookye, Mrs. Oakly, I will have my own way.

Mrs. O. Nay, then, let me tell you, sir—

Oak. And let me tell you, madam, I will not be crossed; I won't be made a fool.

Mrs. O. Why, you won't let me speak.

Oak. Because you don't speak as you ought. Madam, madam! you sha'n't look, nor walk, nor talk, nor think, but as I please.

Mrs. O. Was there ever such a monster! I can bear this no longer. (*Bursts into tears.*) O you vile man! I can see through your design: you cruel, barbarous, inhuman—such usage to your poor wife! you'll be the death of her.

Oak. She sha'n't be the death of me, I am determined.

Mrs. O. That it should ever come to this! To be contradicted, (*sobbing*) insulted, abused, hated; it is too much, my heart will burst with—oh—oh! (*Falls into a fit. Harriot, Charles, &c. run to her assistance.*)

Oak. (*Interposing.*) Let her alone.

Har. Sir, Mrs. Oakly—

Charles. For heaven's sake! sir, she will be—

Oak. Let her alone; let her alone.

Har. Pray, my dear sir, let us assist her. She may—

Oak. I don't care; let her alone, I say.

Mrs. O. (*Rising.*) O, you monster! you villain! you base man! would you let me die for want of help? would you—

Oak. Bless me! madam, your fit is very violent; take care of yourself.

Mrs. O. Despised, ridiculed—but I'll be revenged, you shall see, sir—

Oak. Tol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol-de-rol-lol. (*singing*)

Mrs. O. What, am I made a jest of? Exposed to all the world? If there's law or justice—

Oak. Tol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol-de-rol-lol. (*singing*)

Mrs. O. I shall burst with anger. Have a care, sir; you may repent this. Scorned and made ridiculous! No power on earth shall hinder my revenge! (*Going.*)

Har. (*Interposing*). Stay, madam.

Mrs. O. Let me go; I cannot bear this place!

Har. Let me beseech you, madam.

Maj. O. Courage, brother; you have done wonders! (*Apart.*)

Oak. I think she'll have no more fits. (*Apart.*)

Har. Stay, madam; pray stay but one moment. I have been a painful witness of your uneasiness; and, in great part, the innocent occasion of it. Give me leave then—

Mrs. O. I did not expect, indeed, to have found you here again; but, however—

Har. I see the agitation of your mind, and it makes me miserable. Suffer me to tell the real truth—I can explain every thing to your satisfaction.

Mrs. O. May be so: I cannot argue with you.

Charles. Pray, madam, hear her, for my sake, for your own, dear madam!

Mrs. O. Well, well—proceed.

Har. I understand, madam, that your first alarm was occasioned by a letter from my father to your nephew.

Rus. I was in a swinging passion, to be sure, madam! The letter was not over civil, I believe; I did not know but the young rogue had ruined my girl. But it's all over now, and so—

Mrs. O. You was here yesterday, sir?

Rus. Yes, I came after Harriot. I thought I should find my young madam with my young sir, here.

Mrs. O. With Charles, did you say, sir?

Rus. Ay, with Charles, madam. The young rogue has been fond of her a long time, and she of him, it seems.

Mrs. O. I fear I have been to blame. (*Aside.*)

Rus. I ask pardon, madam, for the disturbance I made in your house.

Har. And the abrupt manner in which I came in to it demands a thousand apologies. But the occasion must be my excuse.

Mrs. O. How have I been mistaken! (*Aside.*) But did not I overhear you and Mr. Oakly? (*To Harriot.*)

Har. Dear madam, you had but a partial hearing of our conversation: it related entirely to this gentleman.

Charles. To put it beyond doubt, madam, Mr. Russet and my guardian have consented to our marriage; and we are in hopes that you will not withhold your approbation.

Mrs. O. I have no further doubt; I see you are innocent, and it was cruel to suspect you. You have taken a load of anguish off my mind; and yet your kind interposition comes too late; Mr. Oakly's love for me is entirely destroyed. (*Weeping.*)

Oak. I must go to her! (*Apart.*)

Maj. O. Not yet! not yet! (*Apart.*)

Har. Do not disturb yourself with such apprehensions; I am sure Mr. Oakly loves you most affectionately.

Oak. I can hold no longer. (*Going to her.*) My affection for you, madam, is as warm as ever. My constrained behaviour has cut me to the soul; for it was all constrained; and it was with the utmost difficulty that I was able to support it.

Mrs. O. O, Mr. Oakly, how have I exposed myself! What low arts has my jealousy induced me to practise! I see my folly, and fear that you can never forgive me.

Oak. Forgive you! This change transports me! Brother—Mr. Russet—Charles—Harriot—give me joy—I am the happiest man in the world!

Maj. O. Joy, much joy to you both! though, by-the-by, you are not a little obliged to me for it. Did not I tell you I would cure all the disorders in your family? I beg pardon, sister, for taking the liberty to prescribe for you. My medicines have been somewhat rough, I believe; but they have had an admirable effect, and so don't be angry with your physician.

Mrs. O. I am indeed obliged to you, and I feel—

Oak. Nay, my dear, no more of this. All that's past must be utterly forgotten.

Mrs. O. I have not merited this kindness, but it shall hereafter be my study to deserve it. Away with all idle jealousies! And since my suspicions have hitherto been groundless, I am resolved for the future never to suspect at all. [*Exeunt.*

THE JEW;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



Act V. Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

SIR STEPHEN BERTRAM	SAUNDERS	ELIZA RATCLIFFE
SHEVA	JABAL	MRS. GOODISON
FREDERICK	MRS. RATCLIFFE	DORCAS
CHARLES RATCLIFFE		

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the house of Sir Stephen Bertram*

SIR STEPHEN BERTRAM *and* FREDERICK.

Sir Step. Why do you press me for reasons I'm not bound to give? If I choose to dismiss an assistant clerk from my counting-house, how does it concern you?

Fred. That clerk you took at my recommendation and request: I am therefore interested to hope you have no reasons for dismissing him, that affect his character.

Sir Step. I am your father, sir, and in this house sole master; I have no partners to account to; nor will I brook any comments on my conduct from my son.

Fred. Yet, as your son, may I not, without risking your displeasure, offer one humble word upon the part of a defenceless, absent friend?

Sir Step. A friend!

Fred. Yes, sir; I hope I need not blush to call Charles Ratcliffe friend. His virtues, his misfortunes, his integrity, (you'll undeceive me if I err,) have much endeared him to me.

Sir Step. Say rather his connexions. Come, I see where all his friendship points—to folly, to disgrace—therefore no more of it! Break off; new friendships will cost you dear; 'tis better you should cease to call him friend, than put it in his power to call you brother. In one word, Frederick, I never will accept of Ratcliffe's sister as my daughter-in-law; nor, if I can prevent it, shall you so far forget yourself as to make her your mistress.

Fred. Mistress! Good heaven!—But I'll restrain myself.—You never saw Miss Ratcliffe.

Sir Step. I wish you never had.—But you have seen your last of her, or me—I leave it to your choice. [*Exit.*

Fred. I have no choice to make; she is my wife—and if to take beauty, virtue, and elegance, without fortune, when my father would have me take fortune without them, is a crime that merits disinheritance, I must meet my punishment as I can. The only thing I dread is the severe but honourable reproach of my friend Ratcliffe, to whom this marriage is a secret, and whose disinterested resentment I know not how to face: I must dissemble with him still, for I am unprepared with my defence, and he is here.

Enter CHARLES RATCLIFFE.

Char. Well met, Frederick.

Fred. I wish I could say so.

Char. Why, what's the matter now?

Fred. I have no good news to tell you.

Char. I don't expect it; you are not made to be the bearer of good news: knavery engrosses all fortune's favour, and fools run up and down with the tidings of it.

Fred. You are still a philosopher.

Char. I cannot tell that, till I am tried with prosperity: it is that which sets our failings in full view; adversity conceals them.—But come, discuss: tell me in what one part of my composition the ingenious cruelty of fortune can place another blow.

Fred. By my soul, Charles, I am ashamed to tell you, because the blow is now given by a hand I wish to reverence. You know the temper of Sir Stephen Bertram: he is my father, therefore I will not enlarge upon a subject that would be painful to us both. It is with infinite regret I have seen you (nobly descended, and still more nobly endowed,) earning a scanty maintenance at your desk in his counting-house: it is a slavery you are now released from.

Char. I understand you; Sir Stephen has no further commands for me. I will go to him, and deliver up my keys. (*Going.*)

Fred. Have patience for a moment. Do you guess his reasons for this hasty measure?

Char. What care I for his reasons, when I know they cannot touch my honour!

Fred. Oh, Charles, my heart is penetrated with your situation: what will become of those beloved objects?

Char. Why, what becomes of all the objects misery lays low? they shrink from sight, and are forgotten.—You know, I will not hear you on this subject; 'twas not with my consent you ever knew there were such objects in existence.

Fred. I own it; but in this extremity, methinks you might relax a little from that rigid honour.

Char. Never; but, as the body of a man is braced by winter, so is my resolution by adversity. On this point only we can differ. Why will my friend persist in urging it?

Fred. I have done. You have your way.

Char. Then, with your leave, I'll go to your father.

Fred. Hold! Here comes one that supersedes all other visitors—old Sheva, the rich Jew, the merest muckworm in the city of London. How the old Hebrew casts about for prodigals to snap at!—I'll throw him out a bait for sport.

Char. No, let him pass; what sport can his infirmities afford?

Enter Sheva.

Sheva. The goot day to you, my young master! How is it with your health, I pray? Is your fader, Sir Stephen Bertram, and my very good patron, to be spoken with?

Fred. Yes, yes, he is at home, and to be spoken with, under some precaution, Sheva: if you bring him money, you would be welcome.

Sheva. Ah! that is very goot. Monies is welcome every where.

Fred. Pass on, pass on! no more apologies. Good man of money, save your breath to count your guineas. [*Exit Sheva.*] That fellow would not let his shadow fall upon the earth, if he could help it.

Char. You are too hard upon him. The thing is courteous.

Fred. Hang him! he'll bow for half a crown. His carcase and its covering would not coin into a ducat, yet he is a moving mine of wealth.

Char. You see these characters with indignation: I contemplate them with pity. I have a fellow-feeling for poor Sheva: he is as much in poverty as I am, only it is poverty of another species: he wants what he has; I have nothing, and want every thing. Misers are not unuseful members of the community; they act like dams to rivers, hold up the stream that else would run to waste, and make deep water where there would be shallows.

Fred. I recollect you was his rescuer; I did not know you were his advocate.

Char. 'Tis true, I snatched him out of jeopardy. My countrymen, with all their natural humanity, have no objection to the hustling of a Jew. The poor old creature was most roughly handled.

Fred. What was the cause?

Char. I never asked the cause. There was a hundred upon one; that was cause enough for me to make myself a second to the party overmatched.—I got a few hard knocks, but I brought off my man.

Fred. The synagogue should canonize you for the deed.

Sheva *returns.*

Sheva. Aha? there is no business to be done: there is no talking to your fader. He is not just now in the sweetest of all possible tempers. Anything, Mr. Bertram, wanted in my way?

Fred. Yes, Sheva, there is enough wanted in your way, but I doubt it is not in your will to do it.

Sheva. I do always do my utmost for my principals: I never spare my pains when business is going: be it ever such a trifle I am thankful. Every little helps a poor man like me.

Fred. You speak of your spirit, I suppose, when you call yourself a poor man. All the world knows you roll in riches.

Sheva. The world knows no great deal of me. I do not deny but my monies may roll a little, but for myself I do not roll at all. I live sparingly, and labour hard, therefore I am called a miser—I cannot help it; an uncharitable dog—I must endure it; a bloodsucker, an extortioner, a Shylock, —hard names, Mr. Frederick; but what can a poor Jew say in return, if a Christian chooses to abuse him?

Fred. Say nothing, but spend your money like a Christian.

Sheva. We have no abiding place on earth, no country, no home: everybody rails at us, everybody flouts us, everybody points us out for their maygame and their mockery. If your play writers want a butt or a buffoon, or a knave to make sport of, out comes a Jew to be baited and buffeted through five long acts, for the amusement of all good Christians. Cruel sport!—merciless amusement! Hard dealings for a poor stray sheep of the scattered flock of Abraham! How can you expect us to shew kindness, when we receive none?

Char. (*Advancing.*) That is true, friend Sheva, I can witness: I am sorry to say there is too much justice in your complaint.

Sheva. Bless this goot light! I did not see you—'tis my very goot friend, Mr. Ratcliffe, as I live.—Give me your pardon, I pray you, sir, give me your pardon. I should be sorry to say in your hearing, that there is no charity for the poor Jews. Truly, sir, I am under very great obligations to you for your generous protection t'other night, when I was mobbed and maltreated; and, for aught I can tell, should have been massacred, had not you stood forward in my defence. Truly, sir, I bear it very thankfully in my remembrance; truly I do; yes, truly.

Fred. Leave me with him, Charles; I'll hold him in discourse whilst you go to my father.

[*Exit Charles.*

Sheva. Oh! it was goot deed, very goot deed, to save a poor Jew from a pitiless mob; and I am very grateful to you, worthy Mr.———Ah! the gentleman is gone away: that is another thing.

Fred. It is so, but your gratitude need not go away at the same time; you are not bound to make good the proverb—"Out of sight, out of mind."

Sheva. No, no, no; I am very much obliged to him, not only for my life, but for the monies and

the valuables I had about me; I had been hustled out of them all but for him.

Fred. Well, then, having so much gratitude for his favours, you have now an opportunity of making some return to him.

Sheva. Yes, yes, and I do make him a return of my thanks and goot wishes very heartily. What can a poor Jew say more? I do wish him all goot things, and give him all goot words.

Fred. Good words, indeed! What are they to a man who is cast naked upon the wide world, with a widowed mother and a defenceless sister, who look up to him for their support?

Sheva. Good lack, good lack! I thought he was in occupations in your fader's counting-house.

Fred. He was; and from his scanty pittance, piously supported these poor destitutes: that source is now stopped, and as you, when in the midst of rioters, was in want of a protector, so is he, in the midst of his misfortunes, in want of some kind friend to rescue him.

Sheva. Oh dear, oh dear! this world is full of sadness and of sorrow; miseries upon miseries! unfortunates by hundreds and by thousands, and poor Sheva has but two weak eyes to find tears for them all.

Fred. Come, come, Sheva, pity will not feed the hungry, nor clothe the naked. Ratcliffe is the friend of my heart: I am helpless in myself; my father, though just, is austere in the extreme; I dare not resort to him for money, nor can I turn my thoughts to any other quarter for the loan of a small sum in this extremity, except to you.

Sheva. To me! good lack, to me! What will become of me? What will Sir Stephen say? He is full of monies; but then again, he is a close man, very austere, as you say, and very just, but not very generous.

Fred. Well, well, let me have your answer.

Sheva. Yes, yes; but my answer will not please you without the monies: I shall be a Jewish dog, a baboon, an imp of Beelzebub, if I don't find the monies; and when my monies is all gone, what shall I be then? An ass, a fool, a jack-a-dandy!—Oh dear! oh dear! Well, there must be conditions, look you.

Fred. To be sure: security twice secured; premium and interest, and bond and judgment into the bargain. Only enable me to preserve my friend, give me that transport, and I care not what I pay for it.

Sheva. Mercy on your heart! what haste and hurry you are in! How much did you want? One hundred pounds, did you say?

Fred. More than one, more than one.

Sheva. Ah, poor Sheva! More than one hundred pounds; what! so much as two hundred? 'tis a great deal of monies.

Fred. Come, friend Sheva, at one word—three hundred pounds.

Sheva. Mercies defend me, what a sum!

Fred. Accommodate me with three hundred pounds; make your own terms; consult your conscience in the bargain, and I will say you are a good fellow. Oh, Sheva! did you but know the luxury of relieving honour, innocence, and beauty, from distress!

Sheva, Oh! 'tis great luxury I dare say, else you would not buy it at so high a price. Well, well, well! I have thought a little, and if you will come to my poor cabin in Duke's Place, you shall have the monies.

Fred. Well said, my gallant Sheva! Shall I bring a bond with me to fill up?

Sheva. No, no, no; we have all those in my shop.

Fred. I don't doubt it: all the apparatus of an usurer. (*Aside.*) Farewell, Sheva! be ready with your instruments, I care not what they are; only let me have the money, and you may proceed to dissection as soon after as you please. [*Exit.*

Sheva. Heigho! I cannot choose but weep. Sheva, thou art a fool. Three hundred pounds, by the day, how much is that in the year?—Oh dear, oh dear! I shall be ruined, starved, wasted to a watch light. Bowels, you shall pinch for this: I'll not eat flesh this fortnight: I'll suck the air for nourishment: I'll feed upon the steam of an alderman's kitchen, as I put my nose down his area:—Well, well! but soft, a word friend Sheva! Art thou not rich? monstrous rich, abominably rich? and yet thou livest on a crust. Be it so! thou dost stint thine appetites to pamper thine affections; thou dost make thyself to live in poverty, that the poor may live in plenty. Well, well! so long as thou art a miser only to thine own cost, thou mayest hug thyself in this poor habit, and set the world's contempt at nought.

Enter Charless Ratcliffe, *not noticing the Jew.*

Char. Unfeeling, heartless man, I've done with you. I'll dig, beg, perish, rather than submit to such unnatural terms! I may remain: my mother and my sister must he banished to a distance. Why, this Jew, this usurer, this enemy to our faith, whose heart is in his bags, would not have used me thus—I'll question him. Sheva!

Sheva. What is your pleasure?

Char. I do not know the word.

Sheva. What is your will, then? speak it.

Char. Sheva!—You have been a son—you had a mother—dost remember her?

Sheva. Goot lack, goot lack! do I remember her!—

Char. Didst love her, cherish her, support her?

Sheva. Ah me! ah me! it is as much as my poor heart will bear to think of her. I would have died—

Char. Thou hast affections, feelings, charities—

Sheva. I am a man, sir, call me how you please.

Char. I'll call you Christian, then; and this proud merchant, Jew.

Sheva. I shall not thank you for that compliment.

Char. And hadst thou not a sister too?

Sheva. No; no sister, no broder, no son, no daughter; I am a solitary being, a waif on the world's wide common.

Char. And thou hast hoarded wealth, till thou art sick with gold, even to plethora. Thy bags run over with the spoils of usury, thy veins are glutted with the blood of prodigals and gamesters.

Sheva. I have enough; something perhaps to spare.

Char. And I have nothing, nothing to spare but miseries, with which my measure overflows. By heaven, it racks my soul, to think that those beloved sufferers should want, and this thing so abound! (*Aside.*) Now, Sheva, now, if you and I were out of sight of man, benighted in some desert, wild as my thoughts, naked as my fortune, should you not tremble?

Sheva. What should I tremble for?—You could not harm a poor defenceless, aged man?

Char. Indeed, indeed, I could not harm you, Sheva, whilst I retained my senses.

Sheva. Sorrow disturbs them: yes, yes, it is sorrow. Ah me, ah me! poor Sheva in his time has been driven mad with sorrow.—'Tis a hard world.

Char. Sir, I have done you wrong. You pity me, I'm sure you do: those tones could never proceed but from a feeling heart.

Sheva. Try me, touch me; I am not made of marble.

Char. No, on my life you are not.

Sheva. Nor yet of gold extorted from the prodigal: I am no shark to prey upon mankind. What I have got, I have got by little and little, working

hard and pinching my own bowels.—I could say something; it is in my thoughts; but no, I will not say it here. This is the house of trade; that is not to my purpose. Come home with me, so please you; 'tis but a little walk, and you shall see what I have shewn to no man—Sheva's real heart: I do not carry it in my hand. Come, I pray you, come along. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Mrs. Ratcliffe's Lodgings.*

Enter ELIZA RATCLIFFE.

Eliza. Oh, happy me! possessed of all my heart delights in; and miserable me, for having ruined what I love. Alas! poor Bertram, fond to desperation, generous to thy destruction!—Why then did I marry? Wherefore did I suffer him to be the victim of fatal passion? What power perverted understanding, heart, humanity? What power, but that which can do all things, good or ill, make virtue, and unmake it, animate our courage, and extinguish it?—Love is at once my crime and my excuse. Good heavens! my mother.

Enter MRS. RATCLIFFE.—*Eliza takes her hand and kisses it.*

Mrs. R. Eliza! child! what means this more than usual agitation?

Eliza. Is it then more than usual?

Mrs. R. You weep.

Eliza. Do I? 'Tis natural, when I contemplate a face so dear and so decayed, furrowed with cares and sorrows for my sake.—Ah! my dear mother, you have loved me much too well.

Mrs. R. My darling, can that be, seeing I love your brother also? You share my heart between you.

Eliza. Give all to him; he has deserved it better.

Mrs. R. Heaven bless him to the extent of his deservings! On him rests all our hope; to him we cling, as to the last dear relic of our wrecked nobility. But he's a man, Eliza, and endowed with strength and fortitude to struggle in the storm; we are weak, helpless women, and can do no more than suffer and submit.

Eliza. True; but there is a part allotted to the weakest, even to me; an humble one indeed, and easily performed, since nothing is required but to obey, to love you, and to honour you.

Mrs. R. And you have done it faithfully, my child.

Eliza. You think so, my dear mother; but your praise is my reproach.—Oh! had I now a crime upon my conscience, and should I kneel thus, and beg for pardon at your feet, what would you say?

Mrs. R. Astonishment might keep me silent for a while, but my first words would be to pity and forgive you.

Eliza. That I can err, this guilty hand will witness. Well may you start. That hand is Bertram's; and that ring, pledged at the altar, was put on by him this very morning: I am Bertram's wife.

Mrs. R. Rise, quit this supplicating posture, till you find yourself in presence of some person less disposed to pardon you than I am.

Eliza. How mild is that rebuke! how merciful! Your eye, like nature's, penetrates my heart; you see it weak as woman's resolution is—impassioned, not impure; conquered, but not corrupted.

Mrs. R. I see myself reflected in my child. Justice demands a censure; conscious recollection checks me from pronouncing it; but you have a brother, whose high soaring spirit will not brook clandestine marriages: your husband has a father of another spirit, as I fear. Alas! my child, betwixt the lofty and the low, you must steer well to keep a steady course.

Eliza. I see my danger; and though Bertram's ardour painted it in fainter colours than its true complexion may demand, yet I should hope the nature of a father cannot be so stern as never to forgive a choice that disappoints; but, let me hope, does not disgrace him.

Mrs. R. The name of Ratcliffe cannot. A daughter of your house, in better days, would hardly have advanced his knighthood higher than her foot-cloth.

Eliza. Ay, madam; but the pride of birth does but add stings to poverty. We must forget those days.

Mrs. R. Your father did not.

Eliza. Ah, my father!—

Mrs. R. Your brother never will.

Eliza. Yet he is humble for our sakes. Think what he does. Good heavens, my husband's father's clerk! Dear madam, tell me why he did not rather go where his courage called him, where his person would have graced the colours that he carried?

Mrs. R. Child, child, what colours? Surely you forget the interdiction of a father barred him from that service.

Eliza. Alas, alas!

Mrs. R. The bread would choke him that he earned under a father's curse.

Eliza. We have bled for our opinions, and we have starved for them; the axe, and sword, and poverty, have made sad havoc with our family: 'tis time we were at peace. The world is now before us: on this hour depends the fate of all perhaps that are to come. Frederick is with his father; he is determined to avow his marriage, and to meet the consequences. I never saw Sir Stephen, and have nothing but conjecture to direct me; I tremble for the event.

Mrs. R. 'Tis a distressful interim; and it is now the hour when I expect your brother.

Eliza. Oh! that is worse than all; for pity's sake hide me from him till Frederick returns: let me retire.

Mrs. R. Come, then, my child! I know not what it is, but something whispers me that all will yet be well.

Eliza. Ten thousand blessings on you for that cheering hope: how my heart bounds to embrace it! 'Tis an auspicious omen, and I hail it like the voice of inspiration. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Sheva's House.*

Enter DORCAS.

Dorcas. Why, Jabal! I say, Jabal! Where are you, sluggard?

Enter JABAL.

Jabal. Here am I, Mother Dorcas! Oh! what a starving star was I born under, to be the rich Jew's poor servant. No rest, no peace, whilst you are awake. Lud-a-mercy! if you did but know how your pipe echoes in this empty house!—

Dorcas. Child! child! you must not think to be idle here.

Jabal. What would you have me do? Brush the bare walls for a breakfast? A spider could not make a meal upon them.

Dorcas. I warrant thou hast filled thy belly, cormorant.

Jabal. I have not had a bellyful since I belonged to you. You take care there shall be no fire in the kitchen; master provides no prog upon the shelf;

so, between you both, I have plenty of nothing but cold and hunger.

Dorcas. Hunger, indeed! How should thy stomach ever be filled, when there is no bottom to it? 'tis like the Dead Sea, fathomless.

Jabal, 'Tis like the Dead Sea so far, that neither fish nor flesh are to be found within it.

Dorcas. Sirrah! you have a better master than you think for. It is unknown the charities he gives away.

Jabal. You're right, it is unknown; at least I never found the secret out. If it is charity to keep an empty cupboard, he has that to boast of: the very rats would run away from such a caterer. If it is charity to clothe the naked, here is a sample of it; examine this old drab; you may count the threads without spectacles; a spider's web is a warm blanket to it. If it is charity to feed the hungry, I have an empty stomach at his service to which his charity, at this present moment, would be very seasonable.

Dorcas. You must mortify your carnal appetites; how often shall I teach you that lesson?

Jabal. Every time I set eyes upon you.

Dorcas. Haven't you the credit of belonging to one of the richest men in the city of London?

Jabal. I wish I was turnspit to the poorest cook's-shop instead. Oh! if my master had but fixed his abode at Pye-Corner, or Pudding-Lane, or Fish-Street-Hill, or any of those savoury places! What am I the fatter for the empty dignity of Duke's Place? I had rather be a miser's heir than a miser's servant.

Dorcas. And who knows what may happen? Master has not a relation I ever heard of in the universal world.

Jabal. No, he has starved them all out. A chameleon could not live with him: he would grudge him even the air he feeds on.

Dorcas. For shame, slanderer! His good deeds will shine out in time.

Jabal. I sha'n't stand in their light; they may shine through me, for I am grown transparent in his service. Had not he like to have been torn to pieces t'other day by the mob, for whipping a starved cat out of his area?

Dorcas. And whose fault was that but thine, ungracious boy, for putting it there? I am sure I have cause to bless the gentleman that saved him. But, hush! here comes my good master; and, as I live, the very gentleman with him. Ah! then I guess what is going forward.

Enter Sheva *and* Charles Ratcliffe.

Sheva. So, so, so! What's here to do with you? Why are you not both at your work?—Dorcas, a cup of cold water—I am very thirsty. [*Exit Dorcas.*

Jabal. Are you not rather hungry too, sir?

Sheva. Hold your tongue, puppy! Get about your business: and, here; take my hat, clean it carefully; but mind you do not brush it; that will wear off the nap.

Jabal. The nap, indeed! There is no shelter for a flea. [*Exit.*

Sheva. Aha! I am tired. I beg your pardon, Mr. Ratcliffe. I am an old man. Sit you down, I pray you, sit you down, and we will talk a little. (*Dorcas brings a glass of water.*) So, so, that is right. Water is goot.—Fie upon you, Dorcas; why do you not offer the glass to my guest before me?

Dorcas. Lord love him! I'd give him wine, if I had it.

Sheva. No, no, it is goot water; it is better than wine: wine is heating, water is cooling; wine costs monies, water comes for nothing. Your good health, sir. Oh! 'tis delicious, it is satisfying: I was very empty before; my stomach was craving, now I am quite content. Go your ways, Dorcas; go your ways. [*Exit Dorcas.*] Sir, I have nothing to ask you to but that water, which you would not drink: 'twas very goot water, notwithstanding. Ah! Mr. Ratcliffe, I must be very saving now: I must pinch close.

Char. For what? Are you not rich enough to allow yourself the common comforts of life?

Sheva. Oh, yes, oh, yes! I am rich to be sure. Mercy on me, what a world of monies should I now have, if I had no pity in my heart! But it melts and melts, or else—Oh! dear me, what a heap it would have been!

Cha. Pardon me, sir, if I say there are some seeming contradictions in your character, which I cannot reconcile. You give away your money, it should seem, with the generosity of a prince, and I hear you lament over it in the language of a miser.

Sheva. That is true, that is very true: I love my monies, I do love them dearly; but I love my fellow-creatures a little better.

Cha. Seeing you are so charitable to others, why then can you not spare a little to yourself?

Sheva. Because I am angry with myself for being such a baby, a child, a chicken. Your people do not love me, what business have I to love your people? I am a Jew; my fathers, up to Abraham, all were Jews. Merciless mankind, how you have persecuted them! My family is all gone, it is extinct, my very name will vanish out of memory when I am dead. I pray you pardon me! I'm very old, and apt to weep; I pray you pardon me.

Cha. I am more disposed to subscribe to your tears than to find fault with them.

Sheva. Well, well, well! 'tis natural for me to weep, when I reflect upon their sufferings and my own. Sir, you shall know—but I won't tell you my sad story: you are young and tender-hearted. It is all written down—you shall find it with my papers at my death.

Cha. Sir! At your death?

Sheva. Yes, sure, I must die some time or other: though you have saved my life once, you cannot save it always. I did tell you, Mr. Ratcliffe, I would shew you my heart. Sir, it is a heart to do you all possible good whilst I live, and to pay you the debt of gratitude when I die. I believe it is the only one I owe to the pure benevolence of my fellow-creatures.

Cha. I am sorry you have found mankind so ungrateful.

Sheva. Not so, not so; I might, perhaps, have found them grateful, if I had let them know their benefactor. I did relieve their wants, but I did not court their thanks: they did eat my bread, and hooted at me for a miser.

Enter Jabal.

Jabal. A gentleman, who says his name is Bertram, waits to speak with you. I fancy he comes to borrow money, for he looks wondrous melancholy.

Sheva. Hold your tongue, knave; what is it to you what he comes for?

Jabal. I am sure he does not come for dinner, for he has not brought it with him.

Sheva. I pray you, Mr. Ratcliffe, pass out that way. I would not have you meet.—Admit Mr. Bertram. [*Exeunt Jabal and Charles.*

Enter Frederick.

You are welcome, Mr. Bertram: our business may quickly be despatched. You want three hundred pounds: I have made shift to scrape that sum together, and it is ready for you.

Fred. Alas, Sheva! since last I saw you I am so

totally undone, that it would now be robbery to take your money. My father has expelled me from his house.

Sheva. Why? for what cause?

Fred. I have married—

Sheva. Well, that is natural enough.

Fred. Married without his knowledge.

Sheva. So did he without your's. What besides?

Fred. Married a wife without a farthing.

Sheva. Ah! that is very silly, I must say.

Fred. You could not say so, did you know the lady.

Sheva. That may be; but I do not know the lady: you have not named her to me.

Fred. The sister of Charles Ratcliffe.

Sheva. Ah! to Miss Ratcliffe? Is it so? And she is goot and lovely, but she has no monies; and that has made your fader very angry with you?

Fred. Furious, irreconcilable.

Sheva. Why, truly, monies is a goot thing; and your fader is not the only man in England that does think so. I confess I'm very much of his mind in respect of monies.

Fred. I know you are; therefore, keep your money, and good morning to you.

Sheva. Hold, hold, be not so hasty! If I do love my monies, it may be because I have it in my power to tender them to you.

Fred. But I have said, I never can repay you whilst you are in this world.

Sheva. Perhaps I shall be content to be repaid when I am out of it. I believe I have a pretty many *post obits* of that sort upon the file.

Fred. I do not rightly understand you.

Sheva. Then pray you have a little patience till I'm better understood.—Sir Stephen had a match for you in view?

Fred. He had.

Sheva. What was the lady's fortune?

Fred. Ten thousand pounds.

Sheva. That's a goot round sum; but you did not love her, and you do love your wife?

Fred. As dearly as you love your money.

Sheva. A little better, we will hope, for I do lend my monies to my friend. For instance, take these bills; three hundred pounds. What ails you?—They are goot bills, they are bank—oh! that I had a sack full of them! Come, come, I pray you, take them. They will hire you very pretty lodging, and you will be very happy with your pretty wife—I pray you, take them. Why will you be so hard with a poor Jew, as to refuse him a goot bargain, when you know he loves to lay his monies out to profit and advantage?

Fred. Are you in earnest? You astonish me.

Sheva. I am a little astonished too, for I did never see a man so backward to take money: you are not like your fader. I am afraid you are a little proud.

Fred. You shall not say so: I accept your generous tender.

Sheva. I wish it was ten thousand pounds, then your good fader would be well content.

Fred. Yes; of two equal fortunes, I believe he would be good enough to let me take my choice.

Sheva. Oh! that is very kind: he would give you the preference when he had none himself.

Fred. Just so; but what acknowledgment shall I give you for these bills?

Sheva. None, none; I do acknowledge them myself with very great pleasures in serving you, and no small pains in parting from them. I pray you, make yourself and pretty wife comfortable with the monies, and I will comfort myself, as well as I can, without them. Ah! poor Sheva! when thou art a beggar-man, who will take pity of thee?—Well, well, no matter! Now I must take a little walk about my business—I pray you pardon my unpoliteness.

Fred. No apology: I am gone. Farewell, Sheva! Thou a miser! thou art a prince. [*Exit.*

Sheva. Jabal! open the door.

Enter Jabal.

Jabal. 'Tis done, sir.

Sheva. How now, sirrah! You was listening at the key-hole?

Jabal. Not I, sir; I was only oiling the lock: you love to have your bolts slip easily.

Sheva. You are a jackanapes; I shall slip you out of my door by and by. [*Exit.*

Jabal. You may slip me through the crack of it, if I stay much longer with you.—But, to be sure, I did listen, that is the truth of it. Hip! Holloa! Mother Dorcas!

Enter Dorcas.

O! I am glad you are in the way. Lend me your one ear, and I'll tell you a secret.

Dorcas. Let us hear it, Jabal, I love a secret. Come on this side of me.

Jabal. That's true; your left ear. Well, do you hear me? I have made a discovery.

Dorcas. I have no objection to a discovery. Out with it.

Jabal. Mother Dorcas, I have discovered that our old master is no more a miser than I am.

Dorcas. I told you so.

Jabal. So you did, but that's not all: I have found out, besides, that he is no Hebrew, no more a Jew than Julius Cæsar; for to my certain knowledge he gives away his money by handfuls to the consumers of hog's flesh.

Dorcas. He is merciful to all mankind.

Jabal. Yes, and to all sheep and oxen, lambs, and calves; for he will not suffer us to touch a morsel of their flesh. Now, because he lives without food, that's no reason I should starve for want of eating.—Oh, Mother Dorcas! 'tis untold what terrible and abominable temptations I struggle with.

Dorcas. How are you tempted, child? Tell me what is it that moves you.

Jabal. Why, 'tis the devil himself, in the shape of a Bologna sausage. Gracious! how my mouth did water, as I saw a string of them dangling from the pent-house of an oilman's shop! The fellow would have persuaded me they were made of asses' flesh.—Oh! if I could have believed him!

Dorcas. Oh! horrible! you must not touch the unclean beast.

Jabal. No, to be sure; our people have never tasted bacon, since they came out of the land of Ham.

Dorcas. Jabal, Jabal, what an escape you have had!

Jabal. So had the sausages, for my teeth quivered to be at them.

Dorcas. Come, my good lad, thou shalt be recompensed for thy self-denial: I have an egg for thee in the kitchen.

Jabal. I hope it is an ostrich's, for I am mortally sharp set. Oh, mother, I have a thought in my head—I will give old master warning, and seek my fortune elsewhere.

Dorcas. Where will you seek it?

Jabal. Where there is plenty of prog, be assured.—I will go upon the stage and turn actor: there is a great many eating parts, and I hope to fill them all. I spent sixpence t'other night upon a farce, when there was a notable fine leg of lamb served up before the audience. Oh, how I did long to be the attorney! I won't say so many good things would have come out of my mouth, but a pretty many more would have gone into it.

Dorcas. How you ramble, sirrah! What megrims you have in your head!

Jabal. Emptiness breeds them.—Mercy, how glad I should be, to see it written down in my part —*Enter Jabal with a roast chicken.*

Dorcas. Come, come; homelier fare must content you.—Let us light the lamp, and boil our egg.

Jabal. What! is it between us? One egg, and two to eat it!

Dorcas. Well, I care not if I spend sixpence for a treat, so thou wilt be sociable and merry when it is over.

Jabal. Agreed!—only give me good cheer for my dinner, and we will have good humour for the dessert. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Mrs. Ratcliffe's Lodgings.*

Enter Mrs. Ratcliffe *and* Frederick.

Fred. Can you forgive me? Has my lovely advocate sued out my pardon, and may I now invoke a blessing on my love and me?

Mrs. R. Heaven in its bounty bless you both!—May all good fortune follow you, all comforts light upon you, and love and happiness ever subsist between you!

Fred. Such piety can never pray in vain. Where is Eliza?

Mrs. R. She does not know you are here: shall I call her?

Fred. Not yet. I have a little sum, and you must be our banker: Charles is too proud to touch it: his spirit is of a pitch too high to stoop to worldly matters. We have been warm and cordial friends; how we may fare as brothers, heaven only knows: I have some fears.

Mrs. R. Eliza is impressed with the same apprehensions; but if Sir Stephen acquiesces, all will be well. I hope this money is a token of his forgiveness.

Fred. 'Twill serve to set us out. I have provided lodgings more commodious. I hope you will permit Eliza to remove; and I make further suit, that you will have the goodness to accompany her.

Mrs. R. Well; but you do not answer to my question of the money. Haven't you seen your father?

Fred. I have seen him.

Mrs. R. And explained to him——

Fred. I have.

Mrs. R. Well, what says he?

Fred. If he had said what would have done him honour, and given ease to my Eliza's mother, I should not have waited for your question. But nature must have time to work: I have only stirred the dregs. May I now see Eliza? There is a cloud on my heart, also, which only her bright presence can dispel.

Mrs. R. Ah, sir! she can be only bright henceforward by reflection; her sunshine must be caught from your's? However, I will send her to you.

[*Exit.*

Fred. Oh, that my father was now standing by me to behold her, and confess how irresistible she is!

Enter Eliza.

Oh my soul's joy, my treasure, my Eliza! (*Embracing her.*)

Eliza. Frederick, what tidings?

Fred. None but of love, increasing with each moment; glowing with every beam that those soft eyes diffuse, and heightened into rapture by those charms, those graces, that each look, word, motion, spread around you.

Eliza. These are fond, flattering words; but where's the consolation that you would have given me, had you brought back a pardon from your father? This ardour only proves, that you had too much love, and I too little generosity.

Fred. Take courage, Eliza! I have not lost the field, only prolonged the fight: I have but skirmished with him yet; he has not felt my strength. Let me set you in sight, and if there is a callous in his heart, (which I won't say there is,) your eyes, my charmer, will refine and melt it.

Eliza. My eyes have injured him too much already. Oh! you rash man, why did you take such pains to be undone? Why lull me into dreams of happiness, till I forgot that I was poor and wretched? Deceiver of yourself and me, I thought we trod on flowers, and never spied the precipice behind you.

Fred. I see no precipice: I fear none.

Eliza. Hear me, my Frederick; let love stand off a while, and give your ear to reason. 'Tis fit, that you should know the heart for which you have risked so much. Our marriage was a rash one; be that my witness how I loved you, for never till this day, had I the recollection of one act that weighed upon my conscience, or reproached me with the sin of disobedience in the slightest instance. But, though I wanted firmness to oppose your love, I am not void of courage to prevent your ruin. Have patience! hear me out. Sir Stephen Bertram wished for money; I have none to give him. The fortune of my house is crushed, the spirit yet survives, even in me, the weakest, and, perhaps, the humblest of the name: but I resist contempt, and if he spurns my poverty, I have a sure resource that shall compel him to applaud my spirit.

Fred. What do you mean? Your looks, your language, terrify me.

Eliza. Oh! I have loved you far too well to trifle. I will convince the world 'twas not by interest my heart was gained. 'Twas not to keep off want, to live at ease, and make the noble relics of my family retainers of his charity, I married to Sir Stephen Bertram's son; it was with worthier, purer views, to share his thoughts, unite my heart to his, and make his happiness my own. These sentiments are my inheritance; if these will not suffice for his ambition, they will teach me how to act becoming of my birth, under the imputation of his son's seducer.

Fred. Hence with that word! it is a profanation to your lips. Was ever man so blest, so honoured, so exalted, as I am! If pride will not see it, if avarice cannot feel it, is that a reason why humility and gratitude should not be blest in the enjoyment of it?

Enter Mrs. Ratcliffe.

Mrs. R. Eliza, your brother is come.

Eliza. Leave me, I beseech you, Frederick; leave me! Let me confer with him alone; there's no way else to pacify him.

Mrs. R. Come, let us yield to her request: I do believe she's right.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Ratcliffe and Frederick.*

Enter Charles.

Char. Alone! How is my dear Eliza? You look pale, my love. Have you been out, or are you going out? Has anything occurred? You are more dressed than usual.

Eliza. Am I? No, sure; you have seen this dress before. I have nothing new.

Char. I can't say quite as much, for I have a new livelihood to seek. Sir Stephen has discarded me.

Eliza. Oh! fie upon him!

Char. No, no! the man is worldly wise; no more. He has a son, Eliza; and he has found out I have a

sister. Who can blame him? Beauty is a dangerous thing when honour does not guard it. But I know what my Eliza is; and, therefore, to confute suspicion, and put this careful merchant at his ease, we will cut short the question, and retire from London.

Eliza. Where must we go?

Char. Far enough off for his repose, be sure. I am sorry on account of Frederick, for I love him; but he has been too frequent in his visits here, and he knows I think so. He will be happier for our parting.

Eliza. I doubt that. Is your resolution taken?

Char. Irrecoverable. Northward is my point. Where is my mother? I would speak with her.

Eliza. Stay! Hear your sister first.

Char. What ails you? What is coming? Why do you tremble?

Eliza. Oh, Charles! (*Weeps, and hides her face.*)

Char. What is it? speak.

Eliza. I am the wife of Frederick.

Char. Heaven and good angels forbid it!

Eliza. Heaven and good angels, as I hope, have witnessed it.

Char. Rash girl, you have undone him. Torn asunder nature's strongest tie; set father against son. When was the name of Ratcliffe dishonoured until now? I've done with you.

Eliza. Charles! Brother! Benefactor! Is there yet a name more tender, an appeal more sacred? Did hard fortune leave me only one protector, one dear friend! and will not he forgive me? Take me, then, and hurl me to the ground, as one not worth preserving. (*Throws herself on his neck.*)

Cha. Wretched Eliza! did I ever till this moment meet your embrace with coldness? Have I not loved you, heaven and earth, how much! How then have I deserved to be dishonoured by you, and to have my name stamped as the joint seducer of a fond, weak youth, who will have cause to execrate the hour when first he called me friend?

Eliza. Strike me not to the heart with your reproaches, but in pity hear me. I am not lightly-minded, not ignobly taught how to distinguish honour, for I am your sister, and have a saint that does not blush to call me daughter: she has pronounced my pardon.

Char. She is all pity: sorrow has melted her fond heart to weakness.

Eliza. And can you find no excuse for mine? What have I known but sorrow, except gratitude to you, and love to Frederick? Cannot you allow for a fond, sorrow-melted heart in me as well as in my mother? You said but now, that as a friend you loved him: I love him as a friend; but woman's friendship to your sex, when years, affections, sentiments so harmonize, as Frederick's with mine, how long will it retain its station in two hearts before it draws them closer, and unites them as you see?

Char. We'll have no more of this, Eliza. There is a weakness lurking at my heart, that warns me how I trust myself too far: you have made wreck of your own honour, wretched girl; I may still rescue mine. [*Exit.*

Enter Frederick *and* Mrs. Ratcliffe.

Mrs. R. Eliza! my dear child! how has it passed?

Fred. It is too plain how it has passed. She is in tears, pale, and trembling. By my soul, it is too much!

Eliza. Hush, hush! be still.

Fred. She'll faint; by heavens, she'll faint. Oh, monstrous cruelty; why did I leave her? why did you persuade me?

Eliza. Give me your arm. Lead me into the other room; I shall recover there, if you will be patient. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Sir Stephen Bertram's House*

Enter Sir Stephen Bertram *and* Saunders.

Sir S. Well, Saunders, what news have you been able to collect of my undutiful son?

Saun. I have not seen Mr. Bertram, but I am told he has settled himself in very handsome lodgings, and is gone to remove his lady to them.

Sir S. His lady, do you call her? Can you find no fitter term? Where should he get the means to settle? He was not furnished with them by me; who else will do it? If he attempts to raise money upon expectancies, be it at their peril who are fools enough to trust him: no prudent man will be his bubble. If I were sure that was his practice, I should hold it matter of conscience to advertise against his debts.

Saun. Perhaps there may be some persons in the world, who think you will not always hold out against an only son.

Sir S. Then let those persons smart for their opinion. They little know the feelings of an injured father; they cannot calculate my hopes, my disappointments, my regret? He might have had a lady with an ample fortune. A wife without a shilling is—but what avails complaint? Could you learn nothing further, who supplies him, who holds him up?

Saun. I hear that he had money of your broker, Sheva.

Sir S. That must be false intelligence. He will as soon make gold by transmutation, as wring it from the gripe of that old usurer. No, no, Sheva is too wary, too much a Jew, to help him with a shilling.

Saun. Yet I was so informed by his own servant, Jabal. He says Mr. Bertram came to old Sheva's house by appointment; that he overheard their whole conversation, in which your son very honourably stated the utter ruin your displeasure had brought upon him, and would have refused the money, but that old Sheva forced it upon him.

Sir S. It mocks all belief; it only proves, that Sheva, the most inveterate miser in existence, has a fellow Jew for his servant, one of the completest liars in creation.

Saun. I am apt to give him credit for the fact, notwithstanding.

Sir S. Then give me leave to say, you have more faith than most men living. Was I to give so much credit, Mr. Saunders, I should soon stop.

Saun. I am not quite so fixed in my persuasion of old Sheva's character as you are. In his dealings, all the world knows he is punctually honest; no man's character stands higher in the Alley; and his servant tells me, though he starves himself, he is secretly very charitable to others.

Sir S. Yes, this you may believe, if you are disposed to take one Jew's word for another Jew's character. I am obstinate against both; and if he has supplied the money, as I am sure it must be on usurious principles, as soon as ever I have the old miser in my reach, I will wring either the truth from his lips, or the life out of his carcase.

Enter Sheva.

Sheva. How does my worthy master? I am your very humble servant, goot Sir Stephen Bertram. I have a little private business to impart to you, with your goot leave, and if your leisure serves.

Sir S. Leave us, if you please. [*Exit Saunders.*

Sheva. Aha! I am very much fatigued. There is

great throng and press in the offices at the Bank, and I am aged and feeble.

Sir S. Hold, sir. Before I welcome you within these doors, or suffer you to sit down in my presence, I demand to know, explicitly, and without prevarication, if you have furnished my son with money secretly, and without my leave?

Sheva. If I do lend, ought I not to lend it in secret? If I do not ask your leave, Sir Stephen, may I not dispose of my own monies according to my own liking? But if it is a crime, I do wish to ask you who is my accuser? that, I believe, is justice every where; and in your happy country I do think it is law likewise.

Sir S. Very well, sir; you shall have both law and justice. The information comes from your own servant, Jabal. Can you controvert it?

Sheva. I do presume to say, my servant ought not to report his master's secrets; but I will not say he has not spoken the truth.

Sir S. Then you confess the fact.

Sheva. I humbly think there is no call for that: you have the information from my footboy. I do not deny it.

Sir S. And the sum—

Sheva. I do not talk of the sum, Sir Stephen, that is not my practice; neither, under favour, is my footboy my cashier. If he be a knave, and listen at my key-hole, the more shame his; I am not in the fault.

Sir S. Not in the fault! Wretch, miser, usurer! You never yet let loose a single guinea from your gripe, but with a view of doubling it at the return. I know what you are.

Sheva. Indeed! 'tis more than I will say of myself. I pray you, goot Sir Stephen, take a little time to know my heart before you rob me of my reputation. I am a Jew, a poor defenceless Jew; that is enough to make me miser, usurer. Alas! I cannot help it.

Sir S. No matter: you are caught in your own trap. I tell you now, my son is ruined, disinherited, undone. One consolation is, that you have lost your money.

Sheva. If that be a consolation you are very welcome to it. If my monies are lost, my motives are not.

Sir S. I'll never pay one farthing of his debts. He has offended me for life; refused a lady with ten thousand pounds, and married a poor miss without a doit.

Sheva. Yes, I do understand your son is married.

Sir S. Do you so? By the same token I understand you to be a villain.

Sheva. Aha! that is a very bad word; villain. I did never think to hear that word from one who says he knows me. I pray you, now, permit me to speak to you a word or two in my own defence. I have done great deal of business for you, Sir Stephen; have put a pretty deal of monies in your pocket by my pains and labours; I did never wrong you of one sixpence in my life; I was content with my lawful commission; how can I be a villain?

Sir S. Do you not uphold the son against the father?

Sheva. I do uphold the son, but not against the fader: it is not natural to suppose the oppressor and the fader one and the same person. I did see your son struck down to the ground with sorrow, cut to the heart: I did not stop to ask whose hand had laid him low; I gave him mine, and raised him up.

Sir S. You! you to talk of charity!

Sheva. I do not talk of it: I feel it.

Sir S. What claim have you to generosity, humanity, or any manly virtue? Which of your money-making tribe ever had sense of pity? Shew me the terms on which you have lent this money, if you dare! Exhibit the dark deed, by which you have meshed your victim in the snares of usury; but be assured, I'll drag you to the light, and publish your base dealings to the world. (*Catches him by the sleeve.*)

Sheva. Take your hand from my coat; my coat and I are very old, and pretty well worn out together. There, there! be patient. Moderate your passions, and you shall see my terms: they are in little compass: fair dealings may be comprised in few words.

Sir S. If they are fair, produce them.

Sheva. Let me see, let me see! Ah, poor Sheva! I do so tremble, I can hardly hold my papers. So, so! Now I am right. Aha! here it is.

Sir S. Let me see it.

Sheva. Take it. (*Gives a paper.*) Do you not see it now? Have you cast your eye over it? Is it not right? I am no more than broker, look you. If there is a mistake, point it out, and I will correct it.

Sir S. (Reads.) *Ten thousand pounds, invested in the three per cents money, of Eliza, late Ratcliffe, now Bertram.*

Sheva. Even so. A pretty tolerable fortune for a poor disinherited son, not worth one penny.

Sir S. I'm thunderstruck!

Sheva. Are you so? I was struck too, but not by thunder. And what has Sheva done to be called villain? I am a Jew, what then? Is that a reason none of my tribe should have a sense of pity? You have no great deal of pity yourself, but I do know many noble British merchants that abound in pity, therefore I do not abuse your tribe.

Sir S. I am confounded and ashamed; I see my fault, and most sincerely ask your pardon.

Sheva. Goot lack, goot lack! that is too much. I pray you, goot Sir Stephen, say no more; you'll bring the blush upon my cheek, if you demean yourself so far to a poor Jew, who is your very humble servant to command.

Sir S. Did my son know Miss Ratcliffe had this fortune?

Sheva. When ladies are so handsome, and so goot, no generous man will ask about their fortune.

Sir S. 'Tis plain I was not that generous man.

Sheva. No, no; you did ask about nothing else.

Sir S. But how, in the name of wonder, did she come by it?

Sheva. If you did give me money to buy stock, would you not be much offended were I to ask you how you came by it?

Sir S. Her brother was my clerk. I did not think he had a shilling in the world.

Sheva. And yet you turned him upon the world, where he has found a great many shillings. The world, you see, was the better master of the two. Well, Sir Stephen, I will humbly take my leave. You wished your son to marry a lady with ten thousand pounds; he has exactly fulfilled your wishes: I do presume you will not think it necessary to turn him out of doors, and disinherit him for that.

Sir S. Go on, I merit your reproof. I shall henceforward be ashamed to look you or my son in the face.

Sheva. To look me in the face is to see nothing of my heart; to look upon your son, and not to love him, I should have thought had been impossible. Sir Stephen, I am your very humble servant.

Sir S. Farewell, friend Sheva! Can you forgive me?

Sheva. can orgive my enemy; much more my friend. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*

Enter SIR STEPHEN BERTRAM *and* SAUNDERS.

Sir S. I am wrong, Saunders, totally wrong, in the manner I have resented my son's marriage.

Saun. I am happy to hear you say so. I flattered myself you would not hold out long against a worthy son. It is not in the nature of a father to resent so deeply.

Sir S. Very true, Saunders, very true; my heart is not a hard one; but the lady he has married has ten thousand pounds for her fortune.

Saun. Oh! that indeed makes all the difference in life. This is a mollifying circumstance, I confess.

Sir S. I know not how she came by it. It seems to be the work of magic; but so it surely is; I saw the stock in Sheva's hands.

Saun. Well, sir, you could not have it from better hands than from the author himself.

Sir S. How! What! from Sheva! Impossible! Ratcliffe is of a great family. Some sudden windfall; some relation dead. You'll see him in mourning the next time you meet.

Saun. He has not put it on yet, for I left him this minute in the counting-house: he is waiting to speak with you.

Sir S. So, so, so! Now then the news will come out. But pr'ythee, don't let the gentleman wait. We must make up for past slights by double civility. Pray inform Mr. Ratcliffe I shall be most happy to receive his commands.

Saun. O, money! money! what a qualifier thou art! [*Exit*

Sir S. Now I shall be curious to see how this young man will carry himself in prosperity. Had I but staid one day longer without discharging him, I could have met him with a bettter face.

Enter CHARLES RATCLIFFE.

Char. Sir Stephen Bertram, I shall not engross much of your time. My business will be despatched in a very few words.

Sir S. Whatever commands you may have for me, Mr. Ratcliffe, I am perfectly at your service.

Char. I don't doubt it, sir; but I shall not put your spirit to any great trial. My explanation will not be a hostile one, unless you choose to understand it as such.

Sir S. Far be it from me to wish it. Good terms between near connexions, you know, sir, should always be cultivated.

Char. You are pleased to be facetious; but your irony will not put me by from telling you, that your son's connexion with my family is no match of my making. If my sister has dishonoured herself, it behoves me to say, and to say it on my solemn word, that the whole transaction was kept perfectly secret from me, and has received every mark of my displeasure and resentment that I, as yet, had an opportunity to give it.

Sir S. Proud as Lucifer himself! (*Aside.*) Well, sir, if you are dissatisfied with the match, I can only say I am not in the fault of it: but when you say your sister is dishonoured, I protest I do not perfectly understand you; nor did I quite expect such an expression from you.

Char. Probably you did not; your studies, perhaps, have laid more in the book of accounts than in the book of honour.

Sir S. You are very high, sir; I am afraid your unexpected good fortune has rather intoxicated you.

Char. No, sir; the best good fortune I have known this day, was that which discharged me from your connexion, not this which unwillingly imposes it upon me.

Sir S. Very well, Mr. Ratcliffe. It was not with this sort of conversation I was prepared to entertain you; the sooner we put an end to it the better: only this I must take leave to tell you, that the fortune of the family into which your sister has married, is by no means overbalanced by the fortune she has brought into it.

Char. Ay, now your heart's come out: that mercenary taunt is all you have to say. But had my wish prevailed, you never should have had it in your power to utter Ratcliffe's name, without a blush for your unwarranted suspicion of his honour. [*Exit.*

Sir S. He's mad; his head is turned: prosperity has overset him. If the sister of the same blood is provided with no better brains, poor Frederick has made a precious bargain. We shall breed candidates for Bedlam. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Sheva's House.*

Enter SHEVA.

Sheva. Aha! Very goot! very goot! I am at home. Now I will sit down in my own parlour, and not ask leave of anybody. I did not think I could have given so large a sum away, and yet outlived it; but I am pretty well. There is but one man in the world poorer than he was, and he is going out of it: and there is a couple, at least, a great deal happier, and they are coming into it. Well, well! that is two for one,—cent per cent, so I have made a pretty goot bargain. Now I will ring my bell, and order my dinner: yes, yes, I will eat my dinner, for I am hungry. (*Sits.—Rings.*)

Enter JABAL.

Oh! you knave! Oh! you picklock! how dare you listen at my door, and hear my secrets? Sirrah, I will have your ears nailed to it!—Don't you speak, don't you speak: you will make me angry, and that will spoil my appetite. What have you got in the house for my repast?

Jabal. Plenty, as good luck will have it.

Sheva. Plenty, say you! What is it? Let me hear.

Jabal. One egg-shell, and the skins of three potatoes: shall I serve them up at once, or make two courses of them?

Sheva. How now, you jackanapes? One egg-shell is not thing goot for a hungry man. Have you left some of the potatoes in the skins?

Jabal. Not an atom; you may have the broth they were boiled in.

Sheva. You are a saucy knave, to make a joke of your master, Do you think I will keep a jack-pudding in my house like you, to listen at my key-hole, and betray my conversation? Why did you say I gave away my monies?

Jabal. What harm did I do? Nobody believed me.

Sheva. Go your ways, go your ways; you are not for my purpose—you are not fit to be trusted: you do let your idle tongue run away with you.

Jabal. That is because you won't employ my teeth.

Sheva. You do prate too much; you do chatter, and bring your poor master into great straits: I have been much maltreated and abused.

Jabal. Have you so? I wish to goodness I had been by.

Sheva. Sirrah! you wish you had been by, to hear your master abused!

Jabal. Yes; for I would have dealt the fellow that abused you, such a recompense in the fifth

button, that my friend Mendoza should not have placed it better. D—n it! do you think I would stand by, and hear my master abused?

Sheva. Don't you swear, don't you swear: that is goot lad, but don't you swear.

Jabal. No, by the living—! though I may be starved in your service, I will die in your defence.

Sheva. Well, well; you are a merry knave. But my eyes do water a little: the air is sharp, and they are weak. Go your ways, go your ways;—send Dorcas to me. [*Exit Jabal.*] I cannot tell what ails my heart all this day long, it is so troublesome. I have spent ten thousand pounds to make it quiet; but there must be a little fraction more; I must give the poor knave something for his goodwill. Oh dear, oh dear! what will become of me?

Enter DORCAS.

So, so! Come hither, Dorcas. Why do you look sad? What ails you, girl? Why do you cry?

Dorcas. Because you are going to turn away Jabal. He is the kindliest, willingest, good-natur'dest soul alive; the house will be a dungeon without Jabal.

Sheva. Then tell him, 'tis at your request I let him stay in this dungeon. Say, that I was very angry with him, but that you pacified my anger.

Dorcas. Lord love your heart! that is so like you.

Sheva. Hark you, Dorcas; I will give you this piece of money to make the poor knave merry; but mind that you bestow it on him as your own little present, and promise not to say it comes from me.

Dorcas. Well; to be sure you do not give your money like other people. If ever I do a good turn, I take care the person I favour should know from whence it comes, that so he may have the pleasure of returning it.

Sheva. Well, Dorcas, you take your course, and I take mine. Now I will go and beg a bit of dinner of a friend. You are a very good housewife, Dorcas; you do keep an empty kitchen and a clean cupboard.

Dorcas. And whose fault is that? How many people are feasting abroad at your cost, whilst you have a famine at home?—But here comes your friend and neighbour, Mrs. Goodison; she will take care of you. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. GOODISON.

Mrs. G. Ah! my good sir, I perceive you are at your old sport; no smoke in your chimney—no cloth upon your table—full coffers, and an empty cupboard.

Sheva. No, no; my coffers are not full; I am very poor just now.

Mrs. G. Come, then, and partake with one whom your bounty has made rich.

Sheva. Do not talk of my bounty; I do never give away for bounty's sake; if pity wrings it from my heart, whether I will or not, then I do give: how can I help it?

Mrs. G. Well, sir, I can be silent, but I cannot forget. And now, if you will come and share my grateful meal, perhaps I can shew you one of the loveliest objects in creation, a beautiful and amiable young bride, who, with her husband and mother, is now my lodger. She was married this very morning to your friend, Sir Stephen Bertram's son, who, between you and me, has brought himself into sad trouble with his father by the match. But surely, if there is a woman upon earth worth a man's being ruined for, it must be this young creature.—So modest—so sweet-tempered—so engaging! Oh, that Sir Stephen had your heart!

Sheva. It might be inconvenient to him if he had: it is not kept for nothing, I assure you.

Mrs. G. You would not turn such a daughter-in-law from your doors.

Sheva. Nor will he, perhaps.

Mrs. G. Ah, sir! I know a little better: this poor young gentleman himself told me he was ruined. "But don't be afraid to take me into your house," added he, with a sigh that went to my heart; "I am provided with the means of doing justice to you, by a generous friend," shewing me a bank bill of one hundred pounds. Heaven bless the generous friend! quoth I; and at that moment I thought of you, my good Mr. Sheva, who rescued me from the like distress when my poor husband died.

Sheva. You may think of me, Mrs. Goodison; but I beg you will not speak of me in the hearing of your lodgers.

Mrs. G. Well, well, sir; if I must not speak, I must not. Yet a strange thing came out in conversation with the mother of the bride, a very excellent lady, from whom I found out that she is the widow of that very gentleman we knew at Cadiz, by the name of Don Carlos only, and to whom, I believe, you think yourself under some obligations in your escape from that country.

Sheva. Mercies upon his heart! he was the preserver of my life! but for his charitable succour, this poor body would have fed the fires of an *Auto da fe.* Is it possible Mrs. Ratcliffe is the widow of my benefactor?

Mrs. G. Most certain that she is, which you may soon be convinced of; but I perceive you know the lady's name.

Sheva. Did you not name the lady yourself?

Mrs. G. No, on my word. Ah, sir! you are fairly caught; you have betrayed yourself. Ill deeds, they say, will come to light, and so will good ones, it should seem.

Sheva. Hold your tongue, hold your tongue; you forget that I am fasting, and without a dinner. Go your ways, and I will follow; you are nimble, I am slow: you will be shamed with your lodgers, if they see you with a poor old Jew like me.

Mrs. G. Ah! You are cunning in your charities; but I'll do as you would have me, and be ready at the door, to receive and welcome you. [*Exit.*

Sheva. The widow of my preserver from the inquisitors of Cadiz, and the mother of my rescuer from the mob of London! Dear me, dear me! How Providence disposes all things! The friend that's dead wants nothing; the friend that is alive shall likewise want nothing that I can give him: for I will die quickly myself and give him all.—Goot lack! goot lack! when I did heap up monies with such pains and labour, I did always think that I should find a use for them at last. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Mrs. Goodison's House.*

MRS. RATCLIFFE, ELIZA, *and* CHARLES.

Char. I have cleared myself to his father, and I'll clear myself to all the world. No man shall say I lay traps for heirs.

Mrs. R. Charles, Charles, you soar too high.

Char. Madam, madam, you stoop too low.

Mrs. R. How is your honour slighted, when your friend did not even consult his father?

Char. He knew his father's mind too well.

Mrs. R. And what would you have done?

Char. I would have saved my friend.

Eliza. And sacrificed your sister. That, let me say, is a high strain of friendship, but no great proof of brotherly affection.

Char. Sister, there is more peace of mind sacrificed by indulging in an act to be repented of, than by foregoing a dishonourable propensity. The woman without fortune, that consents to a clandes-

tine marriage with a man whose whole dependance is upon an unforgiving father, never can be justified.

Eliza. You argue from the unforgiving nature of Sir Stephen Bertram: you had experience of it, I had none.

Char. You might have had, by an appeal to his consent before you gave your own.

Mrs. R. You bear too hard upon your sister. You forget her sex, her situation, your own tenderness, and the affection you have ever borne her.

Char. No, madam; if I could forget how proudly I have thought of her, I should not be so humbled by her conduct as I am. I own I stand in amaze at your indifference. You think I am too sensitive—too proud: you tell me, that I soar too high. How was it when I was this Bertram's clerk? I bore my lot with patience; I submitted without murmuring to poverty: I cannot brook disgrace.

Eliza. Well, Charles, if you could love me only whilst you thought me faultless, I must wonder how it was that we were friends so long: and now you have said all that rigid justice can enforce against me; had you said less, I should have felt it more.

Enter Frederick.

Fred. Charles—Brother—Friend!—Will you not give me joy? Come, man, shake off this cloud, and smile upon my happiness; we catch it but by gleams.

Char. Yes, sir, we sometimes catch it by surprise and stealth; we catch it by a breach of promise and good faith: then to congratulate a man on such a catch, in my sense of the word, would be to libel him.

Fred. I have frequently seen cause to applaud your philosophy, Charles; now I must think you carry it too far.

Char. It touches you too near; therefore, you like it not.

Fred. To that remark I should return an answer, were not these dear pledges present, that might a little ruffle your philosophy, perhaps, but it would fully vindicate my principle.

Char. Postpone it then, but don't forget it.

Fred. When friends fall into altercation on such points as these, there should be none to witness their folly.

Char. Folly!

Mrs. R. Son, son, no more of this.

Eliza. Stop, I conjure you both! Charles! Charles! if you have love or pity left, let this dissention go no further. And you, Frederick—husband!—You, whose generous heart has put to hazard every hope for me, add yet another proof of love, by suffering these rebukes with patience: they are but flashes of a temper warm in friendship, glowing with honour, impatient of neglect. Perhaps my brother thinks ambition, meanness, artifice, might have some part,—some influence in moving me to what I've done. I spurn such motives—disavow them all. Were I in Frederick's place, and he in mine, I should have done as he did; I should have thought no sacrifice too great to have secured a lasting interest in a heart like his.

Char. This had been only ruin to yourself, and would have had the plea of spirit, therefore more excusable: but this no man of honour would have suffered; therefore 'tis only said, not done.

Fred. Whatever my Eliza says is done; her actions verify her words; and he, that doubts them, would dispute against the light of heaven. 'Tis I that am advanced, she is abased; 'tis I that am enriched, Eliza is impoverished. I only risk a few sharp words from an ungentle father; she suffers keen reproaches, undeserved, from an injurious brother.

Char. Urge me no further; I can bear no more.

Eliza. Oh, my dear mother, save me. (*Falls into her arms.*)

Fred. There! there! you've struck her to the heart, and that's a coward's blow. (*Apart to Charles, in an under voice.*) My life, my soul! look up! Dear madam, take her hence. (*Mrs. Ratcliffe takes Eliza out.*)

Char. A coward's blow! you recollect those words; and know their meaning, I suppose.

Fred. Yes; and will meet your comment when you will, and where you will.

Char. Then follow me, and we'll adjust that matter speedily.

Fred. I will but drop a tear upon the ruin you have made, and then be with you.

Char. I'll wait for you below. [*Exit.*

Enter Eliza, *hastily.*

Eliza. Where are you both, rash men? Ah, Frederick! alone! What is become of Charles? Why is he gone away? What have you said to him? I did not hear it, I was lost in terror. I am sure you have quarrelled.

Fred. No, no, not quarrelled—only jarred, as friends will sometimes do: all will be set to rights.

Eliza. How? when? why not this moment, in my hearing? I shall be happy to make peace between you.

Fred. Peace will be made, assure yourself, sweet love; these little heats are easily adjusted.

Eliza. But I could do it best; you are too hot, both, both too hot and fiery.

Fred. We shall be cooler soon: such heats soon spend themselves, and then the heart is laid to rest.

Eliza. Heaven grant such rest to your's!

Fred. Indeed!

Eliza. What says my Frederick? You are still discomposed. Your colour comes and goes. Oh, that my arms could give you rest!—Nay, what now, my Frederick? you struggle to get loose!—Are these soft toils uneasy to you? will not your proud swelling heart endure such gentle, fond imprisonment?

Fred. Oh, thou angelic virtue!—soul-dissolving softness! would I might thus expire, enfolded in these arms! Love, I conjure thee to bear up! I am sure my father will take pity, and be kind to thee: I shall assail his feelings in a manner that no parent can resist. I am going now to put it to the proof. Farewell!

Eliza. Why in such haste? Stay yet a little while. If you depart so soon, you'll meet with Charles again; and then—

Fred. What then?

Eliza. Some fatal accident will be the issue of it. Alas! you know not what his passions are when once inflamed; let them burn out, and then he's as calm as water.

Fred. Where does this tend? You would not make a coward of your husband?

Eliza. No; nor would you make a distracted wretch of your poor Eliza; therefore, I will not let you loose, till you have promised me not to provoke him to more violence: promise me this, and you shall go.

Fred. Well, then, if that will set your mind at rest, I promise you I'll have no further altercation with him, not another word to gall him.

Eliza. You'll not renew your quarrel?

Fred. No, my Eliza; we will end it, and dismiss it.

Eliza. And this you promise on your honour?

Fred. Yes, I do promise.

Eliza. Then all my fears are over. Now you may go.—Well! what withholds you? What more do you wish than freedom, and release from my fond arms?

Fred. To snatch one last, dear moment; and then die within them. Oh, my soul's better part! may heaven preserve and bless you! [*Exit.*

Eliza. Now I am happy, now I am secure: this breach once healed, I can face all alarms. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Tavern.*

Enter FREDERICK, *attended by a Waiter.*

Fred. Is the porter returned who went with my message to Mr. Saunders, at Sir Stephen Bertram's?

Wait. He is, sir; the gentleman will be with you presently.

Fred. Shew him up as soon as he comes. There will be another gentleman call; I believe you know Mr. Ratcliffe?

Wait. Yes, we know Mr. Ratcliffe very well.

Fred. If he comes while Mr. Saunders is with me, request him to wait a few minutes, till he is gone.

Wait. I shall, sir; any other commands?

Fred. None. [*Exit Waiter.*] I scarce know what I've written to my father; yet, perhaps, these few unstudied lines, dictated in such a moment, may dispose him to protect the widow, if fate will have it so, of a discarded son.—Now I am ready for this angry champion; and since he is resolved to vindicate his courage by his sword, let him produce his weapons when he will, I'll not refuse the satisfaction he demands.

Enter JABAL, *hastily.*

Jabal. Oh, sir, sir! I'm overjoyed to find you. Come, I pray you; come away to my old master, who is pining till he sees you.

Fred. Who is your master, and who are you?

Jabal. As if you did not know Jabal, who lives—No, hold there, who does not live, but starves with your old friend, in Duke's Place. Why, lud-a-mercy! I knew your honour at the length of the street, and saw you turn into this tavern; the puppily waiter would have stopped me from coming up to you.

Fred. I wish you had taken his advice.

Jabal. That would not be your wish, if you knew all. Sure enough I must hunt up Mr. Ratcliffe also: for there is an iron in the fire for each of you. Master is making his will. Lawyer Dash is at his elbow.

Fred. If the devil was at his elbow, I cannot come to him.

Jabal. Oh! the living! I would not carry such a message back for all the world. Why, when lawyer Dash has pen and ink in hand, and a will under his thumb, he'll dash you in, or dash you out, in a crack.

Fred. Then temper the apology to your taste; only let your master understand I cannot come.

Jabal. I'll tell him, then, you are married; that will be a silencer at once.

Fred. Begone! make haste! [*Exit Jabal.*]—Married! how cutting is that recollection! Joys just in sight, shewn only to be snatched away. Dear, lost, undone Eliza! But I won't think, for that is madness,—inexorable honour must be obeyed.

Enter MR. SAUNDERS.

Saun. Mr. Bertram, I came to you the first moment I could get away; for I longed to give you joy.

Fred. Joy! name it not.

Saun. Well, if your joy was somewhat damped at first, you may now take it without any drawback.

Fred. I know not what you mean, nor do I wish to inquire; be silent on that subject, I conjure you. The favour I have to ask you is simply this; here is a letter for my father: deliver it to him with your own hands. You seem surprised.

Saun. I am indeed. The impatience of your looks; the hurry of your speech; the place in which I meet you—

Fred. The letter will explain all that; I could not give it you in presence of my—Well, no matter, I take you for a man of honour, and my friend. Will you give the letter?

Saun. Assuredly; but, if I am a man of honour, and your friend, why will not you let me stay with you? In truth, dear Frederick, I am a friend that, if you want him, will not flinch.

Fred. The friend I want, is one that will not force his services upon me when I can't accept of them; but take my word at once, and leave me.

Saun. Enough! I am gone. [*Exit.*

Fred. I have been harsh with that good man; but this suspense is terrible.

Enter Waiter.

Wait. Mr. Ratcliffe desires to know if you are at leisure.

Fred. Perfectly; let him know I'm at his service. [*Exit Waiter.*

Enter CHARLES RATCLIFFE.

Char. I have brought my sword; compare it with your own, and, if you have a preference, make your choice. I presume you have no objection to the weapon?

Fred. None on my own account; a little, perhaps, on the score of vanity, as thinking I have some advantage over you in point of skill and practice.

Char. As far as that opinion goes, you are welcome to all the advantages it gives you. Oh! sir, this is a sorry business. Will nothing else convince you I am incapable of giving a coward's blow?

Fred. You have offered nothing else: it is a mode of your own choosing.

Char. Your language forced it on me; you have touched my feelings to the quick. Words, such as you made use of, cannot be passed over without absolute disgrace, unless you will revoke them by apology.

Fred. You may well conceive, Mr. Ratcliffe, with what repugnance I oppose myself to you on this occasion. Whether the event be fatal to you or to myself, small consolation will be left for the survivor. The course you take is warranted by every rule of honour, and you act no otherwise than as I expected; but, as my expression justifies your challenge, so did your provocation justify my expression; and your language being addressed to a lady, whom I have the honour to protect, it is not in my power to retract one tittle of what I said; for was you to repeat the same insult, I should follow it with the same retort.

Char. If you hold to the words, I know not how we can adjust it amicably.

Fred. There is a way; you must find it out.

Char. Suppose, then, that my language had been addressed to any other person than Eliza, would you in that case have apologized for your expression.

Fred. I will speak plainly to you, and the rather as I am now perhaps speaking to you for the last time. Admitted by your sister's favour into a family, whose representative resents her conduct, I will not so disgrace her choice in your eyes, who

have opposed it, as to submit, in the first instance, to the most distant hint at an apology.

Char. I understand you now; you would have it spring from me.—Impossible!

Fred. Then, no more is to be said.

Char. No more—defend yourself. (*They fight.*)

Fred. What's that? I've wounded you!

Char. No.

Fred. Yes; I'm sure of it. 'Tis in your arm; you cannot poise your sword. (*Charles drops his sword.*)

Char. It is too true: your point has hit me through the guard: I'm at your mercy.

Fred. I am at your's, dear Charles, for pardon and forgiveness; now I retract my words, and blush for having used them. Let me bind up your wrist: here is a handkerchief. Shall I call for assistance?

Char. No, no; a scratch; 'tis nothing. It scarce bleeds. Hark! somebody is at the door; take up the swords.

Sheva. (*Without.*) Let me in; I pray you, gentlemen, let me in. I am Sheva, your friend.

Char. Open the door, Frederick.

Enter SHEVA.

Sheva. Dear me! dear me! what have you been about? Do you come into a public tavern, and lock yourselves up to be private?

Char. Perhaps we did not wish the world to know the silly business we have been engaged in.

Sheva. Gootness defend me! is it come to this? Have I been studying how to make you happy, whilst you were striving how to make me wretched? What a strange world is this. Are you not friends? Are you not brothers? Is that a reason you should quarrel? And if you differ, must you fight? Can your swords argue better than their masters? You call that an affair of honour, I suppose; under your favour, I do not think it a very honourable affair; 'tis only giving a fine name to a foul deed.

Fred. Custom has glossed it over, and we are slaves to custom.

Sheva. I ask your pardon; I am only a poor Jew, a stranger in your country, and have not yet been taught to reverence all your customs. Goot lack, goot lack! what is the matter with your wrist?

Char. Nothing to signify; a trifling scratch.

Sheva. A scratch you call it! That is a wound in common language. I pray you come to my poor house, and let that scratch be healed; you had great care for me, let me have some for you: that is my sense of an affair of honour; to pay the debt that I do owe to you, and to your fader, who preserved my life in Spain, that is my point of honour. Come, come, let us depart: this is no place to talk in; take up your swords, I hope we have no further use for them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Mrs. Goodison's.*

SIR STEPHEN BERTRAM *and* MRS. GOODISON.

Mrs. G. Your son is not at home, Sir Stephen, but Mrs. Bertram is; and if you will allow me to call her down, I'm sure she will be happy to pay her duty to you.

Sir S. A moment's patience, Mrs. Goodison.—You seem much interested for this young bride, your lodger.

Mrs. G. It is impossible to be otherwise. She has beauty to engage the eye, and manners to interest the heart.

Sir S. Some pride of family about her, I should guess: a little of her brother's vivacity, perhaps.

Mrs. G. None that appears: mildness, and modesty, and every gentle grace, seem inherently her own.

Sir S. Be pleased to tell her I attend to pay my compliments; and, as young ladies' characters are not so easily developed in the company of their mothers, I should be glad she would allow me to confer with her alone. [*Exit Mrs. Goodison.*] Now I shall have this mystery unravelled. Saunders's notion, that the fortune comes from Sheva, is romantic in the extreme. Why should he portion her? She has no Jew's blood in her veins, we'll hope; and, as to a deception, that he dares not practise. She comes.—By heavens, a lovely creature!

Enter ELIZA.

Eliza. You honour me most highly, sir.

Sir S. Not so, madam; the honour is conferred on me.

Eliza. How have I merited this condescension?

Sir S. Call it not condescension; it is no more than is due from one who is proud to embrace the title you have allowed him to assume.

Eliza. This is beyond my hopes. Will you permit me, then, to call myself your daughter, and entreat a blessing and a pardon on my knees?

Sir S. Not for the world in that submissive posture. All you can ask is granted, with acknowledgments on my part for the happiness you have bestowed upon my son. Had certain circumstances occurred before your marriage, that have since turned up, I presume you would not have precipitated matters, at least not in the secret manner they were carried.

Eliza. What circumstances, sir, may you allude to?

Sir S. The death, as I suppose, in your family.

Eliza. Good heaven forbid! What death? my brother?

Sir S. No; your brother, madam! no! Pray be not thus alarmed. I know your brother's circumstances too well, to suppose your sudden fortune could proceed from him——Perhaps some distant relation, or some friend, may have bequeathed——

Eliza. What? let me ask. I know of no bequest.

Sir S. Call it a gift, then, a donation on your marriage; it must have been an agreeable surprise to my son, to have been presented with a fortune so unexpected.

Eliza. I am loth to think Sir Stephen Bertram can descend to ridicule my poverty. That I should be regarded by you as an unwelcome intruder upon your family, I can well believe: that you would point your whole resentment against me alone, and spare your son, is all that I dare wish at present: my future hope aspires no higher than by perseverance in my duty as a wife to merit your opinion, so as, in time, you may acknowledge me as your daughter. Conscious that I have incurred your displeasure, I shall patiently endeavour to soften it by submission and obedience.

Sir S. Madam, that answer is at once so pacifying and so candid, that if the information I have had of your being possessed of ten thousand pounds for your fortune, be false, though I thought I had pretty strong evidence of it——

Eliza. Impossible!—I'm sure your son, I'm sure my brother, never told you this?

Sir S. I cannot say they did.

Eliza. No, I'll engage for them, they would disdain so gross and palpable a deceit.

Sir S. Well, be it as it may, with or without a fortune, portioned or pennyless, I feel myself so irresistibly impelled to open my arms to you as a father, that, whether Sheva has or has not deceived me, I here deposit my resentment; and, by what I experience of your power over my heart,

most thoroughly acquit my son for having surrendered his.

Eliza. It is the impulse of your own generosity, not any impression of my giving, that moves your heart to pity and forgiveness.——But who is Sheva, that you seem to point at as the author of this falsehood?

Sir S. Sheva, the Jew; surely you know the man?

Eliza, Thank heaven! I do not; I can safely say I never, to my recollection, heard his name before. Some vile impostor, I suppose.

Sir S. Not quite that, though bad enough to be so treated, if he has practised this deceit on me. Sheva is my broker; your husband knows him well; a miserly, methodical, old Alley drudge, who shewed me what I believed a true receipt for ten thousand pounds, vested in your name, in the funds. One of my people would have persuaded me it was his own voluntary benefaction; but if you don't know him, never saw him, never heard his name, the thing's impossible.

Eliza. Totally so, without one ray of probability; the man is either mad or mischievous. No Jew of that, or any other name, do I know; nay, I question if I ever exchanged a word with any one of the nation in my life.

Sir S. Your merit, then, and not your fortune, shall endear you to me. I will strike out ten thousand pounds that I perceive you are not possessed of, and write in ten thousand graces, which I perceive you are possessed of, and so balance the account. Now, Saunders, what's the matter?

Enter SAUNDERS.

Saun. Your son requested me to give this letter into your hands.

Sir S. No, no; there needs no letter. Tell him it is done; say, that you found me conquered in less time than he was. Bid him make haste hither in person, before I run away with his wife; and let him write no more letters, for I won't read a word of them. [*Exit Saunders.*

Eliza. Won't you be pleased to open your letter?

Sir S. Positively I will not read it, because Frederick shall not have to say that his rhetoric had any share in making me a convert. If it is, as I suppose, a recital of your graces and good qualities, I do not want his description to assist my sense of what I see; but if you have a wish to see your own fair person painted by his hand, you are welcome to indulge it. (*Takes the letter and gives it to Eliza.*) Break the seal.

Eliza. 'Tis short; I'll read it to you—*I am this instant summoned by Charles Ratcliffe, on a point of honour, sword to sword*——Oh! heavens! I can no more—— (*Drops the letter.*)

Sir S. What is it? What alarms you?

Eliza. Oh! that letter! that letter!—My husband and my brother!—One or both have fallen!

Sir S. Merciful powers forbid it! (*Takes up the letter.*)

Eliza. Stop not to read it! Fly! and take me with you—plant me between them; I am the cause of quarrel. Let the sword that aims to pierce a heart dearer than my own, lodge in my guilty bosom.

Sir S. Oh, horrible to thought! Hark, who is coming?

Eliza. The messenger of death; let him not speak; his very look will kill me.

Enter FREDERICK, *followed by* CHARLES.

Fred. My love, my life, my ever dear Eliza!

Eliza. Where is your wound? Are you not dying? What is become of Charles?

Char. Here is your happy brother—all is well.

Fred. We are both here, with friendly hearts, and joyful news, to greet you.

Eliza. Don't speak of joy too soon; 'twill overthrow my senses. Let me survey you both. Don't deceive me; you have wounds about you.—Ah! Charles, what's this?

Char. The least, but luckiest wound that ever man received. This little glance of your brave husband's sword disarmed me of my weapon, and both our rash hearts of their anger. Now lay aside your fears, and prepare yourselves for wonders.

Fred. Oh! sir, I have offended you; but—

Sir S. But what? You have an advocate, that makes all hearts her own. Spare your appeal; you will but waste your words.

Char. Here comes my mother: bear up Eliza; say not a word of what has passed.

Enter MRS. RATCLIFFE.

Eliza. Oh, my dear madam! I have joy to give you; let me present you to my Frederick's father.

Sir S. Yes, madam; and the greatest joy that son ever conferred upon me, is the title he has given me, to claim a father's share with you in this angel of a daughter.

Mrs. R. Such she has been to me. I am blest to hear you say that you approve her.

Sir S. Frederick, give me your hand. If you had brought me half the Indies with a wife, I should not have joined your hand to her's with such sincere delight.

Fred. How generous is that declaration! Now, Charles, 'tis time to introduce our friend.

[*Exit Charles.*

Mrs. R. What does he mean, Eliza?

Eliza. I know no more than you: some new wonder, I suppose.

Sir S. Ha! Sheva here? This is indeed a wonder.

Enter CHARLES, *with* SHEVA.

Char. This is the man. My benefactor; your's, Eliza; Frederick's; your's, dear mother! all mankind's. The widow's friend, the orphan's father, the poor man's protector, the universal philanthropist.

Sheva. Hush, hush! you make me hide my face. (*Covers his face with his hands.*)

Char. Ah, sir! 'tis now too late to cover your good deeds. You have long masked you charities beneath this humble seeming, and shrunk back from actions princes might have gloried in. You must now face the world and transfer the blush from your own cheeks to theirs, whom prejudice had taught to scorn you. For your single sake, we must reform our hearts, and inspire them with candour towards your whole nation.

Sheva. Enough, enough! more than enough! I pray you spare me: I am not used to hear the voice of praise, and it oppresses me: I should not know myself if you were to describe me: I have a register within, in which these merits are not noted. Simply, I am an honest man, no more; fair in my dealings, as my good patron here, I hope, can witness.—That lady, I believe, is Mrs. Ratcliffe: she does not know me; I will not touch upon a melancholy subject, else I could tell a story.—Merciful heaven! what horrors was I snatched from by her husband, now, alas! no more.

Mrs. R. Oh, gracious powers! The Jew of Cadiz.

Sheva. The very same. Your debtor in no less a sum than all I possess; the earnings of a life preserved, first by your husband, and now again by

your son. Why am I praised, then, if I am merely honest, and discharge my debts?

Sir S. Ah! now the mystery's solved. The ten thousand pounds were your's; give them to Ratcliffe; I will have nothing from fortune where nature gives so much.

Sheva. That is a noble speech; but monies does not lessen merit, at least not always, as I hope, for Mr. Ratcliffe's sake, for he is heir of all that I possess.

Mrs. R. What can I say? My heart's too full for utterance.—O, Charles, the fortunes of your house revive! Surely the blessed spirit of your departed father now sympathises in our joy. Remember, son, to whom you owe this happiness, and emulate his virtues.

Char. If I forget to treat my fortune as becomes the son of such a father, and the heir of such a benefactor, your warning will be my condemnation.

Fred. That will never be; the treasure, that integrity has collected, cannot be better lodged than in the hands of honour.

Sir S. It is a mine of wealth.

Sheva. Excuse me, good Sir Stephen; it is not a mine, for it was never out of sight of those who searched for it. The poor man did not dig to find it; and where I now bestow it, it will be found by him again. I do not bury it in a synagogue, or any other pile; I do not waste it upon vanity, or public works; I leave it to a charitable heir, and build my hospital in the human heart. [*Exeunt.*

KNOW YOUR OWN MIND;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY ARTHUR MURPHY.



Act IV. Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR	DASHWOULD	LADY JANE
SIR HARRY LOVEWIT	MALVIL	MRS. BROMLEY
CAPTAIN BYGROVE	BYGROVE	MISS NEVILLE
MILLAMOUR	LADY BELL	LA ROUGE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Sir John Millamour's House.*

Enter SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR *and* BYGROVE.

Byg. Why, then, I'll marry again, and disinherit him.

Sir John. Brother Bygrove, you think too severely in these matters.

Byg. Well argued, truly! he that should obey is to judge for himself, and you that are his governor, are to be directed by him.

Sir John. Your system and mine differ widely, brother Bygrove. My son is of an enlarged and liberal understanding, and I a father of mild authority.

Byg. If I see anything wrong, I accost him directly: Lookye, sir, do you think to go on in this fashion? Not during my life, I promise you: I will acknowledge you no longer than you prove worthy; and if you can't discern what is befitting you, I at least will judge what is proper on my part.

Sir John. Well, George and I have lived together as friends. From a boy, I endeavoured to subject him rather to his reason than his fears.

Byg. But the consequence of all this? Has he a settled opinion? a fixed principle for a moment?

Sir John. I beg your pardon. I see a person there. Charles! Charles! this way.

Enter CHARLES.

Sir John. Well, Charles, what is he about?

Char. Very busy, sir; a thousand things in hand.

Byg. And all at the same time, I'll warrant.

Char. We have a deal to employ us, sir.

Sir John. Have you sounded him in regard to what I mentioned last night?

Char. That's what I wanted to tell your honour. Last night, sir, as he was going to bed, I touched upon the subject; dropt a hint or two, that it is now time to think of raising heirs to himself; enlarged upon the comforts of matrimony, and I think with no small degree of eloquence.

Byg. The fellow is laughing at you.

Sir John. Well, and how? What effect?

Char. A very visible effect, sir. This morning early, my master rings his bell. Charles, says he, I have been considering what you said last night; I shall pay a visit to the young ladies, and, I believe, I shall marry one of them.

Sir John. There, Mr. Bygrove: I am for ever obliged to you, Charles. Well, go on.

Char. I fly immediately to get him his things to dress, and return in an instant. Charles, says he, then tossed himself back in his chair, beat the ground with his heel, and fell a reading. Won't your honour get ready to visit the young ladies? The ladies! what ladies, you blockhead? Lady Bell, and Lady Jane, your honour, Mrs. Bromley's handsome nieces. Poh! you're a numskull, says he, with an oblique kind of a smile; stretched his

arms, yawned, talked to himself, and bade me go about my business.

Byg. I knew it would end so. There is not a crane-neck carriage in town can give a short turn with him.

Sir John. This is provoking. Anybody with him this morning?

Char. He has had a power of people with him, sir—a commission-broker, to sell him a company in a marching regiment; the mayor of a borough, about a seat in parliament. And there are several with him, now, sir. There is Sir Harry Lovewit, and—

Byg. Ay, Sir Harry! I am glad he is of age, and that I am no longer his guardian.

Char. He is with my master, sir; and there is Mr. Malvil, and Mr. Dashwould, and—(*Bell rings.*) —He rings, sir; you will pardon me, I must be gone, sir. [*Exit.*

Byg. And that fellow, Dashwould; he is the ruin of your son, and of poor Sir Harry into the bargain. He has wit to ridicule you; invention to frame a story of you; humour to help it about, and when he has set the town a laughing, he puts on a familiar air, and shakes you by the hand.

Enter MALVIL.

Mal. Intolerable! there is no being safe where he is. For my part, I had rather throw a veil over the infirmities of my friend, than seek a malicious pleasure in the detection. That's my way of thinking.

Sir John. I fancy you are right. This son of mine does so perplex me.

Mal. Pray, Mr. Bygrove, give me leave. I am sorry to hear certain whispers about a friend of ours.

Byg. About whom? the widow, Mrs. Bromley?

Mal. Oh! no, no; I have a great respect for her; though I—Pray don't you think she throws out the lure for a young husband?

Byg. For a husband, yes, but not too young a one; you can serve my interest in that quarter.

Mal. I know it; rely upon my friendship. But have you heard nothing of an eminent Turkey merchant?

Byg. Mr. Freeport?

Mal. I say nothing; I don't like the affair; have you really heard nothing? Any money of yours in his hands?

Byg. Poh! as safe as the bank.

Mal. I may be mistaken. I hope I am; I was in company the other night; several members of parliament present; they did not speak plainly; hints and inuendoes only; you won't let it go any further. His seat in the house, they all agreed, is perfectly convenient at this juncture. I hope the cloud will blow over. I shall remember you with the widow.

Byg. One good turn deserves another; I sha'n't be unmindful of your interest.

Mal. There now, you hurt me; you know my delicacy; must friendship never act a disinterested part? I esteem you, Mr. Bygrove, and that's sufficient. Sir John, give me leave to say, the man who busies himself about other people's affairs, is a pragmatical character, and very dangerous in society.

Byg. So I have been telling Sir John. But to laugh at everything is the fashion of the age. A pleasant good-for-nothing fellow is by most people preferred to modest merit. A man like Dashwould, who runs on—So! here comes Scandal in folio.

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. Sir John, I rejoice to see you. Mr. Bygrove, I kiss your hand. Malvil, have you been uneasy for any friend since?

Mal. Poh! absurd! (*Walks away.*)

Dash. I have been laughing with your son, Sir John. Pray, have I told you about Sir Richard Doriland?

Byg. You may spare him, sir, he is a very worthy man.

Dash. He is so; great good-nature about him; I love Sir Richard. You know he was divorced from his wife; a good fine woman, but an invincible idiot.

Mal. Lookye there, now, Mr. Bygrove!

Byg. My Lady Doriland, sir, was always accounted a very sensible woman.

Dash. She was so; with too much spirit to be ever at ease, and a rage for pleasure, that broke the bubble as she grasped at it. She fainted away upon hearing that Mrs. Allnight had two card tables more than herself.

Byg. Inveterate malice!

Dash. They waged war a whole winter, for the honour of having the greatest number of fools, thinking of nothing but the odd trick. First, Mrs. Allnight kept Sundays; her ladyship did the same; Mrs. Allnight had forty tables; her ladyship rose to fifty. Then one added, then t'other; till every room in the house was crammed like the black hole at Calcutta; and at last, upon casting up the account, Sir Richard sold off fifteen hundred acres, to clear incumbrances.

Sir John. Ridiculous! and so they parted upon this?

Dash. Don't you know the history of that business?

Mal. Now mark him; now.

Dash. Tender of reputation, Malvil; the story is well known. She was detected with—the little foreign count—I call him the salamander—I saw him five times in one winter upon the back of the fire at Bath, for cheating at cards.

Mal. Go on, sir, abuse everybody. My lady was perfectly innocent. I know the whole affair; a mere contrivance to lay the foundation of a divorce.

Dash. So they gave out. Sir Richard did not care a nine-pin for her while she was his. You know his way; he despises what is in his possession, and languishes for what is not. Her ladyship was no sooner married to—What's-his-name—His father was a footman, and madam Fortune, who every now and then loves a joke, sent him to the East Indies, and in a few years brought him back at the head of half a million, for the jest's sake.

Mal. Mr. Dashwould, upon my word, sir—Families to be run down in this manner.

Dash. Mushroom was his name; my Lady Doriland was no sooner married to him, but up to his eyes Sir Richard was in love with her. He dressed at her; sighed at her; danced at her; she is now libelled in the Commons, and Sir Richard has a *crim. con.* against him in the King's Bench.

Mal. Psha! I shall stay no longer to hear this strain of defamation. [*Exit.*

Dash. Malvil, must you leave us? A pleasant character this same Malvil.

Byg. He has a proper regard for his friends, sir.

Dash. Yes, but he is often present where their characters are canvassed, and is anxious about whispers which nobody has heard. He knows the use of hypocrisy better than a court chaplain.

Byg. There, call honesty by a burlesque name, and so pervert everything.

Dash. Things are more perverted, Mr. Bygrove, when such men as Malvil make their vices do their work, under a mask of goodness; and with that stroke we'll dismiss his character.

Sir John. Ay, very right; my brother Bygrove has a regard for him, and so change the sub-

ject. My son, Mr. Dashwould, what does he intend?

Dash. Up to the eyes in love with Lady Bell, and determined to marry her.

Sir John. I told you so, Mr. Bygrove; I told you, you would soon see him settled in the world. Mr. Dashwould, I thank you: I'll step and confirm George in his resolution. [*Exit.*

Dash. A good-natured man, Sir John, and does not want credulity.

Byg. Ay, there, the moment his back is turned.

Dash. Gulliver's Travels is a true history to him. His son has strange flights. First he was to be a lawyer; bought chambers in the Temple, eat his commons, and was called to the bar. Then the law is a d—d dry, municipal study; the army is fitter for a gentleman; and as he was going to the war office to take out his commission, he saw my Lord Chancellor's coach go by; in an instant, back to the Temple, and no sooner there, "Poh! plague! hang the law! better marry, and live like a gentleman." Now marriage is a galling yoke, and he does not know what he'll do. He calls his man Charles; sends him away; walks about the room, sits down, asks a question; thinks of something else; talks to himself, sings, whistles, lively, pensive, pleasant and melancholy in an instant. He approves, finds fault; he will, he will not; and in short, the man does not know his own mind for half a second. Here comes Sir John.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Dash. You find him disposed to marry, Sir John?

Sir John. I hope so; he wavers a little; but still I—

Byg. Poh! I have no patience; my advice has been all lost upon you. I wish it may end well. A good morning, Sir John. (*Going.*)

Dash. Mr. Bygrove, yours; Sir John will defend you in your absence.

Byg. If you will forget your friends in their absence, it is the greatest favour you can bestow upon them. [*Exit.*

Dash. Did I ever tell you what happened to him last summer at Tunbridge?

Sir John. Excuse me for the present. This light young man! I must step and talk with my lawyer.

Dash. I'll walk part of the way with you. A strange medley this same Mr. Bygrove; with something like wit, he is always abusing wit. You must know, last summer at Tunbridge—

Sir John. Another time, if you please. [*Exit.*

Dash. The story is worth your hearing; a party of us dined at the Sussex— (*Following Sir John.*)

Enter CHARLES.

Char. Mr. Dashwould, Mr. Dashwould!

Re-enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. What's the matter, Charles?

Char. My master desires you won't go.

Enter SIR HARRY.

Sir H. Eh? what, going to leave us?

Dash. Only a step with Sir John. Strange vagaries in your master's head, Charles!—Sir Harry! going to wait upon Miss Neville, I suppose. She has beauty, and you have a heart.

Sir H. Psha! there you wrong me now! Why will you?

Dash. Very well; be it so. I can't see to be sure; but take my word for it, you will marry that girl. Come, I'll follow you.

Sir H. I must not part with you; I had rather lose the whole college of physicians. [*Exit.*

Dash. March on, Sir Harry. (*Turns to Charles.*) Did you ever see such a baronet? This fellow, Charles, is as ridiculous himself as any of them. [*Exit.*

Char. Now have I but one man in the house, and he will be fifty different men in a moment. Hurry! hurry! nothing but hurry! Get me this; get me that; get me t'other. A poor servant does not know which way to turn himself in this house.

Enter RICHARD.

Char. Well, Richard, what are you about?

Rich. Why a man in a whirlwind may as well tell what he is about. Going to order the coachman to put up. He intends to change his dress, and walk to the Temple. [*Exit.*

Char. What does he mean by talking of the Temple again? I hope we are not going to take to our studies once more. I hate the law; there is not a footman in the Temple has a grain of taste. All mere lawyers! They have not an idea out of the profession.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Richard, Richard! where is he gone?

Char. What's in the wind now?

Rob. The wind's in another quarter. He has been writing verses as he calls them, ever since the company left him. He has torn a quire of paper, I believe, and now he wants the carriage directly. [*Exit.*

Char. Run and order it. I had rather be a country curate, than go on in this manner. (*Bell rings.*) What is he at now?

Mil. (*Within.*) Charles! who answers there?

Char. Ay, now for the old work.

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. Is the chariot ready?

Char. At the door, sir.

Mil. Do you step to Mrs. Bromley's, and—perhaps it would be better to—No, do you step, Charles, and—you need not mind it, another time will do as well. [*Exit.*

Char. There again now; this is the way from morning to night.

Re-enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. The sooner the better; I promised Sir John, and I will pay this visit. Lady Bell reigns sovereign of my heart. That vivacity of mind—"Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those."

Char. She is by far preferable to her sister, your honour.

Mil. Poh! you are illiterate in these matters. The sober graces of Lady Jane! Lady Bell advances like a conqueror, and demands your heart. Lady Jane seems unconscious of her charms, and yet enslaves you deeper.

Char. Which of them does your honour think—

Mil. Which of 'em, Charles? (*Reads a paper.*) "I look'd, and I sigh'd, and I wish'd I could speak."

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Captain Bygrove, sir.

Mil. That's unlucky. I am not at home; tell him I went out an hour ago.

Enter CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

Mil. My dear Bygrove, I longed to see you.—But why that pensive air? Still in love, I suppose. [*Exeunt Char. and Rob.*

Capt. B. My dear Millamour, you have guessed it. I am in love, and glory in my chains.

Mil. Shall I tell you a secret? I suspect myself, plaguily. Everything is not as quiet here as it used to be.

Capt. B. Indulge the happy passion. Let wits and libertines say what they will; there is no true happiness but in the marriage state.

Mil. Why I have thought much upon the subject of late, and with a certain refinement, I don't know but a man may fashion a complying girl to his taste of happiness. Virtuous himself, he confirms her in her virtue; constant, he secures her fidelity; and by continuing the lover, instead of commencing the tyrant husband, he wins from her the sweetest exertion of tenderness and love. I shall most positively marry. Who is your idol? My dear boy, impart.

Capt. B. There I beg to be excused. You know my father?

Mil. Yes, I think I do.

Capt. B. I must not presume to think for myself. I must contrive some stratagem to make him propose the match. Were it to move first from me, I should be obliged to decamp from before the town at once.

Mil. I wish you success. My resolution is taken and with the most amiable of her sex. She romps about the room like one of the graces; and deals about her wit with such a happy negligence—

Capt. B. An agreeable portrait, but mine is the very reverse. That equal serenity in all her ways! Wit she has, but without ostentation, and elegance itself seems the pure effect of nature.

Mil. (*Aside.*) I don't know whether that is not the true character for a wife. And pray, what progress have you made in her affections?

Capt. B. Enough to convince me that I am not quite unacceptable. My dear Millamour, I had rather fold that girl in my arms, than kiss his Majesty's hand for the first regiment of guards.

Mil. I am a lost man. I shall most positively marry. We will wonder at each other's felicity; and be the envy of all our acquaintance.

Enter Dashwould.

Dash. I am as good as my word, you see. Most noble Captain, your father was here this morning. A good agreeable old gentleman, and about as pleasant as a nightmare. Millamour, whom do you think I met since I saw you?

Mil. Whom?

Dash. Our friend Beverley! just imported from Paris, perfectly frenchified, and abusing everything in this country—"Oh! there is no breathing their English atmosphere; roast beef and liberty will be the death of me."

Mil. Ha, ha! poor Beverley, I saw him last summer, at Paris, dressed in the style of an English fox-hunter; he swore there was not a morsel to eat in their country, and kept an opera-singer upon beef-steaks and oyster-sauce.

Dash. He has done his country great honour abroad.

Capt. B. He will settle at home now; he is going to be married.

Dash. Yes, I hear he is in love, and much good may it do him. I wish I may die, if I know so ridiculous a thing as love.—My life!—My soul!—Hybla dwells upon her lips; ecstasy and bliss! blank verse and pastoral nonsense! In a little time, the man wonders what bewitched him; an arm chair after dinner, and a box and dice till five in the morning, make all the comforts of his life.

Mil. Very true. Love is a ridiculous passion indeed.

Capt. B. Do you take up arms against me? But a moment since, just as you came in, he was acknowledging to me—

Mil. No, not I, truly; I acknowledge nothing. Marriage is not to my taste, I promise you. The handsome wife! she is all affectation, routs, drums, hurricanes, and intrigue.

Dash. And the ugly! she makes it up with good sense; pronounces upon wit, and talks you dead with maxims, characters, and reflections.

Mil. And the woman of high birth, she produces her pedigree, as her patent for vice and folly. "Seven's the main," and away goes your whole fortune.

Capt. B. Mere common-place.

Dash. And the tender maukin; she doats upon you. "Don't drink any more, my dear:" "You'll take cold near that window, my love:" "Pray don't talk so much, you'll flurry your spirits." And then kisses you before company.

Mil. So it is. Ha, ha, ha! (*Both laugh.*)

Capt. B. You play finely into one another's hands.

Mil. Now mark the champion of the sex.

Dash. Yes; he'll throw down the gauntlet for 'em. (*Both laugh.*)

Capt. B. Nay, decide it your own way. Since you won't hear, gentlemen, there is a clear stage for you. [*Exit.*

Dash. Fare ye well, most noble Captain. A facetious companion! did you ever hear him say anything?

Mil. He is in for it; and my father would fain reduce me to the same condition with one of Mrs. Bromley's nieces. A good fine woman, Mrs. Bromley!

Dash. Has been. Were she now to rub her cheek with a white handkerchief, her roses and lilies would go to the clear starcher.

Mil. Ha, ha! and yet she sets up for the rival of her nieces.

Dash. The young ladies are pretty well in their way too. Lady Bell has a brisk volubility of nothing, that she plays the pretty idiot with; and Lady Jane, a sly piece of formality, ready to go post for Scotland, with the first red-coat that asks her the question. We all dine at the widow's today, are you to be with us?

Mil. Yes, to meet you; the party will be diverting.

Dash. Observe old Bygrove. He pronounces with rigour upon the conduct of others, and hopes his own follies lie concealed. His whole struggle is to escape detection. Mark him with the widow; you will see him sighing for his deceased wife and Mrs. Bromley's charms at the same time. One eye shall weep for the dead, and the other ogle the living.

Mil. Ha, ha! And then Malvil laying siege to Miss Neville!

Dash. Miss Neville is the best of them. Mrs. Bromley has taken her into her house, as a poor relation, whom she pities; and her pity is no more than the cruel art of tormenting an unhappy dependant upon her generosity.

Mil. But she has generosity. She has promised Miss Neville a fortune of five thousand pounds.

Dash. And so the hook is baited for Malvil. The widow flings out that snare, to counteract Sir Harry.

Mil. Sir Harry!

Dash. Yes; he is in love with Miss Neville; and the best of the story is, he is afraid I shall think him ridiculous. If I say the word, and promise not to laugh at him, he breaks his mind at once. Miss Neville sees clearly that he admires her, and of course will never listen to Malvil. The self-interested designs of that fellow shall be disappointed.

Mil. Admirable! thou art a whimsical fellow. Come, I attend you. A pleasant group they are all together. It is as you say—

Our passions sicken, and our pleasures cloy;
A fool to laugh at, is the height of joy.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*A Room in Mrs. Bromley's House.*

Enter Mrs. Bromley *and* Miss Neville.

Mrs. B. Why, to be sure, Neville, there is something in what you say; one is so odd, and so I don't know how in a morning.

Miss N. Certainly, madam; and then people of your turn, whose wit overflows in conversation, are liable to waste of spirits, and the alteration appears sooner in them.

Mrs. B. So it does; you observe very prettily upon things. Heigho! I am as faded as an old lute-string to-day.

Miss N. No, indeed, madam, you look very tolerably, considering.

Mrs. B. (*Aside.*) Considering! she grows pert, I think. I am glad you think me not altogether intolerable.

Miss N. Madam!

Mrs. B. Tolerably! she is Lady Bell's prime agent. (*Aside.*) Has Sir Harry given you hopes lately?

Miss N. Sir Harry! I really don't understand why he is mentioned.

Mrs. B. Do you think it will be a match? And have you made up your quarrel with Lady Bell? (*Sits down.*)

Miss N. The sweetness of her disposition reconciles everything.

Mrs. B. And is Millamour reconciled to Lady Bell?

Miss N. There was only a slight mistake which I explained.

Mrs. B. Oh! you explained? that was prudently done; I am glad to hear this; and do you think he loves her? Tell me, tell me all. Why, why do you think he loves her?

Miss N. He cannot be insensible of her merit; and the other day he asked me if you were likely to approve of his proposing for Lady Bell.

Mrs. B. And you told him. Well!—what did you tell him?

Miss N. That you, no doubt, would be ready to promote the happiness of so amiable a young lady.

Mrs. B. You told him so? (*Rises and walks.*) And so you are turned match-maker? you busy yourself in my family! Hey! Mrs. Start-up! you are dizened out, I think; my wardrobe has supplied you.

Miss N. Your pardon, madam; I had these things in the country, when you first shewed so much goodness to me.

Mrs. B. What airs! you know I hate to see creatures give themselves airs. Was not I obliged to provide you with everything?

Miss N. You have been very kind; I always acknowledge it.

Mrs. B. Acknowledge it! Does not everybody know it?

Miss N. Yes, madam, I dare say everybody does know it.

Mrs. B. That's maliciously said. I can spy a sneer upon that false face. You suppose I have made my brags. That's what lurks in your ambiguous meaning. I deserve it—deliver me from poor relations!

Miss N. (*Aside.*) Now the storm begins! I am sure I have said nothing to offend you. I am helpless, it is true, but your relation, and by that tie, a gentlewoman still.

Mrs. B. I made you a gentlewoman. Did not I take you up in the country, where you lived in the parsonage-house, you and your sister, with no other company to converse with, than the melancholy tombstones, where you read the high and mighty characters of John Hodge, and Deborah his wife? While your father's miserable horse, worn to a shadow with carrying double to the next market-town, limped about, with a dull alms-begging eye, in quest of the wretched sustenance that grew thriftily between the graves? Did not I take you out of your misery?

Miss N. You did, madam. (*In a softened tone.*)

Mrs. B. Did not I bring you home to the great house?

Miss N. You did, madam. (*Weeps aside.*)

Mrs. B. And I am finely thanked for it. Warm the snake, and it will turn upon you.

Miss N. (*Aside.*) I cannot bear to be insulted thus!

Mrs. B. So! your spirit is humbled, is it?

Miss N. Give me leave to tell you, madam, that when people of superior fortune, whom Providence has enabled to bestow obligations, claim a right, from the favours they confer, to tyrannise over the hopes and fears of a mind in distress; they exercise a cruelty more barbarous than any in the whole history of human malice.

Mrs. B. Is this your gratitude?

Miss N. I could be thankful for happiness, if you permitted me to enjoy it; but when I find myself, under colour of protection, made the sport of every sudden whim; I have a spirit, madam, that can distinguish between real benevolence, and the pride of riches. (*Weeps.*)

Mrs. B. I fancy I have been too violent. After all this sour, I must sweeten her a little. (*Aside.*) Come, dry up your tears; you know I'm good-natured in the main; I am only jealous that you don't seem to love me.

Miss N. Were that left to my own heart, every principle there would attach me to you. But to be dunned for gratitude—

Mrs. B. You are right; the observation is very just; I am in the wrong. Come, let us be friends. I have a great regard for you, Neville. (*Aside.*) The creature should visit with me, only she looks so well. How! did not I hear Mr. Malvil's voice? yes, it is he; I am visible; I am at home; shew him in. Walk in, Mr. Malvil.

Enter Malvil.

Mal. To a person of sentiment, like you, madam, a visit is paid with pleasure.

Mrs. B. You are very good to me. Neville, do you step and bring me the letter that lies upon my table. [*Exit Miss N.*] I am obliged to go out this morning. (*Smiles at Malvil.*) She looks mighty well; I have been speaking for you; our scheme will take. Sir Harry will not be able to rival you; she will be your reward for all your services to me.

Mal. Your generosity is above all praise, and so I was saying this moment to Mr. Bygrove; he is coming to wait on you.

Mrs. B. That's unlucky; I wanted to have some talk with you. Well, have you seen Millamour?

Mal. Yes, and find him apt; I have hopes of succeeding.

Mrs. B. Hush! not so loud! you think me mad, I believe. May I hazard myself with that wild man?

Mal. Your virtue will reclaim him. I have a friendship for Millamour, and that is my reason for counteracting the designs of my friend Bygrove. Mr. Bygrove has desired me to speak favourably of him to your ladyship.

Mrs. B. Oh! but he kept his last wife mewed in the country; I should certainly expire in the country.

Mal. He is a very worthy man. I am sorry to see some oddities in him; but that is very common in life. Vices always border upon virtues.

Dashwould says,—but there's no believing his slander; he says Mr. Bygrove's sorrow for his deceased wife, is all a mere artifice, to weep himself into the good graces of another. But I don't believe it.

Mrs. B. I hear him coming. Do you go and take care of your interest with Neville.

Mal. I obey your commands.

Mrs. B. I shall make her fortune five thousand. Be sure you speak to Millamour. Go, go; success attend you. [*Exit Mal.*

Enter Bygrove.

Byg. (*Bowing.*) Madam!

Mrs. B. This attention to one in my forlorn state is so obliging—

Byg. It is a favour on your part to receive a lost, dejected, spiritless—

Mrs. B. I admire your sensibility, Mr. Bygrove. That tender look, which you are for ever casting back to a beloved, but irrecoverable object, shews so amiable a sorrow! oh! there is something exquisite in virtuous affection. I have found a pleasing indulgence in contemplations of that sort.

Byg. I have had my trials too. Heigho!

Mrs. B. I beg your pardon: I am recalling your afflictions; you should not give way; you should struggle a little. Heaven knows how I have struggled. I have appeared, indeed, with an air, but it was all struggling. (*Looks and smiles.*) I could divert you this morning. Do you know that your son is in love with Lady Jane?

Byg. In love! Has he said anything?

Mrs. B. I don't know as to that; but I can see what is lurking in his heart. He is above-stairs now; I don't half like his choice. Lady Bell is the proper match for him, and her fortune is the best. An estate, you know, must come to her, by the family settlement. You should direct his choice.

Byg. This comes of his presuming to think for himself. Has he declared himself?

Mrs. B. I fancy not; but he hinted something to me, about a match in my family.

Byg. (*Looks at her and smiles.*) Why, a match in your family has diverted me of late. Heigho! It is the only thing that has entertained me for a long time.

Mrs. B. I have had my fancies too. I should like to talk further, but I am engaged abroad this morning. Can I set you down? Will you trust yourself with me?

Byg. You encourage a smile, madam.

Mrs. B. We shall be the town talk; but let them talk; what need we mind? I will just step and say a word to Neville. You should not be too solitary.

Byg. So my friends tell me.

Mrs. B. I shall be with you in a moment. (*Going, returns.*) Do you know that we are very like each other in our tempers? After all, that is the true foundation of lasting friendships. Poor dear Mr. Bromley! (*Going, returns.*) It was similitude of temper brought us together; and if ever I could be prevailed upon again, similitude of temper must do it. Well, you have diverted me this morning. Here comes your son, talk to him now. [*Exit.*

Enter Captain Bygrove.

Byg. Well, sir, what brings you to this house?

Capt. B. A morning visit, sir, merely to kill half an hour.

Byg. There is nothing I hate so much as hypocrisy. I know your errand: you must pretend to be in love.

Capt. B. I, sir!

Byg. What have you been saying to Lady Jane? I thought I had cautioned you against presuming to think for yourself.

Capt. B. You have been very kind that way.

Byg. See what becomes of your friend Millamour's being left to his own discretion. The ass in the fable gives but a faint image of him.

Capt. B. And if I, sir, to avoid irresolution—

Byg. You are in the opposite extreme: he thinks too much and never decides; you never think at all, and so resolve without judgment. Lady Bell is the person I wish to see you married to; go and pay your addresses to her. I will settle that matter for you: you may then marry the person to whom you have not degraded yourself by pining, sighing, love-verses, and I know not what.

Capt. B. This is all unaccountable to me, sir. If you will but hear me—

Enter Malvil.

Byg. No, sir, no; I won't allow you to fetch a single sigh, till I say the word; when I give leave, you may then go and sigh till your heart is ready to break. I'll hear no more; no parleying with me. Leave the house this moment.

Capt. B. I obey. [*Exit.*

Mal. I interrupt you.

Byg. No, no; I am glad to see you. Well, have you had any opportunity with the widow?

Mal. I have; she surprises me a little; she has dropped the mask. I did not think she had been so eager to marry. We had some talk about you. You know my heart: I am always true to my friends: I see but one difficulty; she will never agree to live in the country.

Byg. The lover need not dispute that point, whatever the husband may do hereafter.

Enter Mrs. Bromley *and* Miss Neville.

Mrs. B. I beg your pardon, gentlemen. Neville, mind what I say to you: don't let those giddy girls go out in my absence; to walk in the Green Park, or run to hideous painters, under pretence of seeing odious pictures, that they may have an interview with more odious originals. Keep them at home; I will reward your pains. *Allons,* Mr. Bygrove! [*Exit Byg.*] Come, Mr. Malvil.

Mal. Had not I better stay, and—

Mrs. B. No, no; come now, you may return to her. [*Exit.*

Mal. (*To Miss Neville.*) You see that I am torn from you; but I shall return as soon as possible. [*Exit.*

Miss N. Tyrannical woman! some virtues she has; but they are overshadowed by their opposite qualities. What does Lady Bell mean by talking to me of Sir Harry? She does it—I know her goodness—she does it to soften affliction; and, if possible, divert a mind depressed with sorrow. Sir Harry never threw away a thought on me. He behaves, indeed, with marked civility, but I don't know what to think of him. I must not aspire too high; no, I have no pretensions.

Enter Lady Jane.

Lady Jane. Miss Neville, I am very angry with you. What's the matter? Has anything made you uneasy?

Miss N. No. I am not remarkable for high spirits, you know.

Lady Jane. Why would not you give us your company? How can you be so cross? That sister of mine is the veriest madcap!

Miss N. Lady Bell is rather lively to be sure.

Lady Jane. But when she once begins, she hazards everything, and talks sometimes like a very libertine.

Miss N. The overflowing of gaiety, and good humour.

Lady Jane. I wish she would restrain herself a

little. Madame La Rouge is with her; she has the sweetest point, eyes ever beheld. I was endeavouring to cheapen it, but Lady Bell was so troublesome; she called me a thousand prudes, and will have it that nothing runs in my head but a lover. As I live and breathe, the giddy romp is coming. You must take my part.

Enter LADY BELL.

AIR.—LADY BELL.

Yes, I'm in love, I own it now,
And Celia has undone me;
And yet, I swear, I can't tell how,
The pleasing plague stole on me.

What would I give to have some miserable swain talk in that style of me? "Belinda has undone me;"—charming!

Miss N. A lively imagination is a blessing, and you are happy, Lady Bell.

Lady Bell. I am so: but then I am not talked of; I am losing all my time.

Lady Jane. Why, you bold creature! I hate to hear you talk with so much intrepidity.

Lady Bell. Prudery, my dear sister! downright prudery! I am not for making mysteries of what all the world knows.

Lady Jane. And how do I make mysteries, pray?

Lady Bell. Why, you confident thing! I'll prove it, against you.

Lady Jane. But what? what? what will you prove?

Lady Bell. That you are ready to jump out of your little wits for a husband, my demure, sober sister. Miss Neville, a poet is not more eager for the success of a new comedy, nor one of his brother poets more desirous to see it fail, than that girl is to throw herself into the arms of a man.

Lady Jane. All scandal, sister.

Lady Bell. Miss Neville shall be judge.

Lady Jane. Your story is mere invention.

Lady Bell. Was there ever such a wrangler?

Lady Jane. You'll not make good your words.

Lady Bell. (*Pats her hand.*) Hold your tongue, miss, will you?

Lady Jane. Very well, go on.

Lady Bell. Will you have done? Now, mind, Miss Neville. She does not want to be married, she says. The other night, my young madam, whose thoughts are always composed and even, went to sleep as soon as we got to bed, and then her busy imagination went to work with all the vivacity of an intriguing chambermaid.

Lady Jane. And how can you tell that, pray?

Lady Bell. Out of your own mouth you shall be judged. Miss Neville, she talked in her sleep, like a beauty in a side-box, and then fell a singing:

"No, no; he is true, and I believe;
He look'd, he sigh'd, he can't deceive;
No, no; I have conquer'd; he is mine;
My heart is touch'd, and I resign."

Lady Jane. Oh! you scurrilous creature.

Miss N. Fairly caught, Lady Jane.

Lady Jane. All odious slander: you judge of me by yourself.

Lady Bell. I do so. I mean to be married, and am frank enough to own it. But you may let "concealment feed on your damask cheek." My damask cheek, I hope, was made for other purposes.

Lady Jane. Gracious! there is no bearing this. What a mad girl you are!

Lady Bell. Not in the least. A natural character. One would not, to be sure, tell a hideous man that one loves him; but when one has encouraged him by degrees, and drawn him on like a new glove; and, perhaps, done him a mischief in the doing of it, why, then—

Lady Jane. What then?

Lady Bell. One would draw him off again; and, may be, ask a pretty fellow to help a body; and then the wretch looks so piteous, and kneels at your feet, then rises in a jealous fit. I take my everlasting farewell; never to return; no, never: what to her, who encouraged me? encouraged him? who promised? broke her promise? The treacherous, faithless, dear deluding—then returns in an instant, hands dangling; eyes imploring; tongue faultering: Lady Bell—Lady Bell, when you know that I adore you. And I burst into a fit of laughter in his face. Oh! that's my joy, my triumph, my supreme delight.

Lady Jane. And is not there a kind of cruelty in all this?

Lady Bell. Oh! your very humble servant, my sweet Lady Graveairs. Cruelty! The difference between you and me, sister, is this; you deny your love to your female friends, and own it to the man; now I deny it to him, but among ourselves, I fairly own that Miss Neville is not more impatient to be married to Sir Harry, than I to—

Miss N. Who, I? Spare me, I beg of you. Why Sir Harry?

Lady Jane. Now, now, your turn is come. Never spare her, sister.

Miss N. You must excuse me. I am not in spirits for all this raillery.

Lady Jane. You sha'n't leave us.

Miss N. Give me leave: I beg you will. I'll go and talk to Madame La Rouge. Perhaps I may succeed for you. [*Exit.*

Lady Jane. Well, if you must go. How you run on, sister! And are you really in love?

Lady Bell. Over head and ears.

Lady Jane. With whom?

Lady Bell. Not with Captain Bygrove: how alarmed you are! With Millamour, sister.

Lady Jane. Fix that roving temper, if you can: he will be on his knees to you, and the first pair of black eyes that enters the room will be through his heart.

Lady Bell. As to that, I give myself very little trouble; but if I could once catch him paying his adoration to me, my aunt Bromley does not rise and sink poor Miss Neville's spirits, with such exquisite skill in the art of tormenting, as I should his. I should use him as the men do their punch: a little more sweet, a little more sour; a little more spirit; more acid again; then, perhaps, say it's good for nothing; and then, perhaps—

Lady Jane. What?

Lady Bell. Sip it up at last, as you would do at first. You wicked girl, how could you ask me such a question? La! what am I about? I have a thousand things to do.

Enter MISS NEVILLE *and* MADAME LA ROUGE.

La Rou. Ah, my lady! always so gay! English climate no effect upon you. *De manieres de Paris* for all de vorl. *En verité vous est charmante.*

Lady Bell. Oh! Madame La Rouge, you say such polite things; but you rob me of all my money. My sister is rich; you had better deal with her. Sister, you'll be married before me. (*Sings.*)

"No, no, he is true, and I believe," &c. [*Exit.*

Lady Jane. Was ever anything so crazy? [*Exit.*

La Rou. Mademoiselle, I tell you, persuade my lady to have de lace, and you come to my house, me give you ver pretty present.

Miss N. Oh! you have a national talent for applying a little bribery.

La Rou. Ah! Monsieur Malvil!

Enter Malvil.

Mal. Madame La Rouge, I did not expect this pleasure.

La Rou. It is always pleasure to see *mes amis.* You have ver good choice—Sir Harry have taste as well as you. Mademoiselle, you are ver great favourite.

Miss N. A favourite! Keep your vivacity for some other subject: don't make me the town talk.

La Rou. Monsieur, you lose all your time. (*Goes to him, and speaks low.*) You wait de fortune from Madam Bromley. Sir Harry vill take her vidout any money at all. Vat you slow for?

Mal. Are the apartments kept ready at your house?

La Rou. De apartment it is ready. You take it two, tree weeks ago, and pay de rent for noting. I leave you vid de lady; and I go mind *mes affaires. Bon voyage.* [*Exit.*

Mal. I have disengaged myself, to have the honour of attending you.

Miss N. Your attention is thrown away. Did not I hear Mr. Millamour's voice?

Mal. Yes; he came with me; he is gone into the next room to pay his compliments to Lady Jane. You look chagrined, what has disturbed you?

Miss N. The old story; Mrs. Bromley's eternal whims.

Mal. Your delicacy charms me; it has fixed me your's. I long for nothing so much, as to see you out of her power. They have a strange report about town; people will be talking; the whisper goes that Mr. Bygrove, amidst all his grief, is slily in a hurry for another wife. Mrs. Bromley, they say, encourages him; and, at the same time, has a design upon my friend Millamour.

Miss N. The world is not always wrong.

Mal. Malice will be busy; and does not spare the young ladies.

Miss N. If anything is said to their disadvantage, believe me, they do not deserve it.

Mal. I dare say not. I don't think they are too forward. I am sorry to see, in one of the papers to-day, a character of Sir Harry, not at all favourable. His little follies, his whims, and caprices one does not mind; he may walk in Dashwood's train as long as he please, that only makes him ridiculous; but it grieves me to hear that perfidy stains his character; and, as I am told, the worst of perfidy; the ruin of beauty and innocence is his ruling passion.

Miss N. This is very odd. Somebody has been at the trouble of sending me an anonymous letter to that very effect: and why to me? I am not able to decypher.

Mal. I don't like anonymous letters. In general they aim at mischief; but this, perhaps, is meant as a caution to you: it must be a friend that sent it. Mrs. Bromley, I know, has no opinion of Sir Harry. His designs, with regard to you, she does not think honourable. My heart interests me for you. You know I am all heart. The plan which Mrs. Bromley has proposed—Hark! I think I hear Millamour coming. I'll follow you up stairs.

Miss N. O, sir! you have frightened me out of my wits. [*Exit.*

Mal. She loves Sir Harry, I see; and yet, she sha'n't slip through my hands. I can set on Mrs. Bromley to lead her a weary life; and if I can prevail upon Millamour to renounce Lady Bell, and marry the widow, my business is done. When Miss Neville is heartily tormented by Mrs. Bromley, affliction softens the mind, and I may then decoy her away, and stand upon terms with the family. But Dashwould's wit will fly about. No matter: he is a sad scoundrel, and does not mind how he murders reputations. So! here comes Millamour. I must get clear of him, and talk further with Miss Neville.

Enter Millamour.

Mil. From this moment I blot all other women from my memory. Malvil, wish me joy. The perplexity of choice is now at an end.

Mal. Why, what has happened?

Mil. Lovely Lady Jane.

"*And yield her charms of mind with sweet delay.*"

I can't stay to tell you.

Mal. Nor will I stay to interrupt your raptures. You know, I wish you success. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Bell.

Lady B. (*Reading.*)

"*Who yields too soon, must soon her lover lose.*
Would you restrain him long? then long refuse."

Mil. (*Looks at her, and smiles.*) There is something commanding in that air of vivacity.

Lady B. (*Reads.*)

"*Oft at the door let him for entrance wait,*
There let him kneel—"

How! Millamour here! how could you surprise me so? You horrid thing! How long have you been here?

Mil. Been, madam? I have been—I have been in the next room, paying my respects to your sister.

Lady Bell. And never inquired for poor Lady Bell?

Mil. Your ladyship wrongs me. You are doing injustice to your own charms; they can never be forgot.

Lady Bell. I see how it is: the other day you was listed in my service, and now a deserter to my sister: you are right, you would have been upon hard duty with me.

Mil. Any duty but a forlorn hope would be—

Lady Bell. Hope! Why, sure, you would not have had the intolerable assurance to entertain the smallest degree of hope. My sister, I suppose, has given you some hope. Ay! that's her way; she moves by settled rules, and shines with equal light. Now, I—I am a mere comet, I blaze of a sudden, dazzle for a while, then wheel away, and am thought of no more.

Mil. That gaiety of her's is charming. (*Aside.*) The impression your ladyship makes—

Lady Bell. Words; mere words! No; I am a strange piece of wild nature; never the same for two minutes together. Now, my sister, she is a Prussian blue; holds her colour, and is always the same. I—I am a more changeable silk; I shift about, and display my wit and my folly, so curiously blended, that nobody can tell where one begins, or the other ends. I am not worth your notice. (*Sings.*)

Mil. (*Looking at her.*) She has described herself admirably; without variety, a woman is a downright piece of insipidity.

Lady Bell. Yes, I have my whims. Never the same for two minutes together. Now I love to give a scope to folly, and the men say, "curse catch her, she pleases more, when in the wrong, than other women when they are in the right." Then, good sense is the word; and the next moment I can't bear the fatigue of thinking: why won't somebody write a comedy to divert me? Then all spirit, and I long to lead up the ball. (*Sings.*)

"*Ladies, like variegated tulips, shew,*
'Tis to their weakness all their charms they owe."

Mil. (*Aside.*) Lady Jane is mere mediocrity compared to her.

Lady Bell. Lord! I run on a strange rate. Your's, Mr. Millamour: *au revoir.*

Mil. A moment longer: you must not leave me. You possess my heart: possess it without a rival.

Lady Bell. Hey! what's the matter now?

Mil. Do not trifle with a passion sincere as mine. I adore you, my Lady Bell; adore your matchless charms; thus on my knees adore.

Lady Bell. Stay, stay; let me see what the poet says. (*Reads quick.*)

"Oft at your door let him for entrance wait,
There let him kneel, and threaten, and entreat."

There, stay there; don't offer to stir. Now put up both your hands, and pray; pray, have compassion, Lady Bell. [*Exit laughing.*

Mil. She flies disdainful from her lover's view,
Yet looks and bids him, as she flies, pursue.
[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Mrs. Bromley's.*

Enter LADY JANE, *and* CAPT. BYGROVE.

Lady Jane. And laid his commands upon you to address my sister?

Capt. B. Most peremptorily.

Lady Jane. You have obeyed him, I hope.

Capt. B. You know your power too well; you know that I am devoted to you, and that my happiness depends upon the promise you have made me.

Lady Jane. There, that is always the way with you men: everything we say is construed into a promise.

Capt. B. And have not you promised?

Lady Jane. (*Looks at him, and smiles.*) Need I answer that question? How easily frightened you are! but you have some reason to be alarmed. Millamour has been on his knees to me, breathing such raptures.

Capt. B. Ay! who has set him on? what can be at the bottom of this? And have you listened to him? Here comes Dashwould; he, perhaps, can explain.

Lady Jane. He will only laugh at us; and so I'll make my escape. (*Going.*)

Capt. B. Not to hear Millamour again, I hope. (*Takes her hand.*)

Lady Jane. Well, well; to purchase my liberty, you need not fear. I have received his vows delivered with such ardour!—how terrified you look! I have listened to him, to alarm my sister with an idea of Millamour's growing passion for me. If her jealousy is once touched, it may fix her resolution. At present, she is as volatile as Millamour himself.

Enter DASHWOOD.

Dash. As volatile as Millamour? what can that be? I never knew anything that would bear a comparison.

Lady Jane. What think you of my sister?

Dash. Lady Bell has her whims. I left her above stairs, in close conference with Millamour; he has deserted your ladyship already; Mrs. Bromley will be the next, I hope: your father, Captain, would grieve more for that, than for his deceased wife.

Lady Jane. And then Miss Neville's turn may come.

Dash. Oh, no! To sport with her would be inhumanity. But a brisk widow is fair game.

Capt. B. Yes, and it may help to cure my father of his folly.

Lady Jane. It would be sport, but I despair of it. Well, there's a gentleman wants your advice, and so I'll leave you together. [*Exit.*

Capt. B. My dear Dashwould, you must assist me.

Dash. What distresses you?

Capt. B. My evil genius is at work. You know what my father has resolved upon. Lady Bell is the person he chooses for me.

Dash. I know all that business: a counterplot of the widow's fertile brain, to disappoint Lady Bell, and wreak her malice on Millamour.

Capt. B. But the malice falls on me only. Why will not Millamour know his own mind? Lady Bell loves him; I know she does. I am thwarted in the tenderest point; what must be done?

Dash. Do as they would have you: you ensure success. Millamour's jealousy takes fire upon the first alarm, and while the passion holds, he will have vigour enough to act decisively.

Capt. B. May I hazard the experiment?

Dash. It's a sure card. Take my advice.

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss N. Mrs. Bromley's coach has just stopped at the door; had not you better step up stairs, gentlemen?

Enter SIR HARRY.

Sir Har. Dashwould, you are absent too long. They are all as dull as a funeral above stairs.

Dash. (*Aside to Capt. B.*) How the baronet follows Miss Neville from room to room!—Come, Captain, I'll play a game of picquet with you before dinner. *Allons!* [*Exit with Capt. B.*

Sir Har. If I might have the liberty, ma'am, to—

Miss N. Another time, if you please, Sir Harry. Mrs. Bromley is coming; I hear her voice.

Sir Har. And you promise me the hearing?

Miss N. You are entitled to it, sir. I beg you'll leave me now.

Sir H. I obey your commands; I am gone; you'll remember. [*Exit.*

Miss N. Here she comes; and, I think, in good humour.

Enter MRS. BROMLEY.

Mrs. B. Oh! I am heartily tired. I have been paying visits to people who have never been let into my house, and who, I hope, will never be at home for me. I hate them all, but oat of civility, we must keep up an acquaintance. Where are the girls? Has anybody been here?

Miss N. Mr. Millamour, ma'am, and the rest of the gentlemen that dine here: they are all above stairs.

Mrs. B. Stupidity! Did not I give orders—how long has Millamour been here?

Miss N. About an hour.

Mrs. B. With Lady Bell, I suppose; thou base ingratitude! and Sir Harry is here too, I reckon. Does your match go on? You shall go back to the country, I promise you. You'll be the ruin of those girls. They shall have no visitors when my back is turned. I'll give orders to all the servants this very moment. (*Going.*)

Enter SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR.

Sir John. To see Mrs. Bromley looking so well—

Mrs. B. You are very polite, sir. Business calls me now, Sir John; I beg your pardon. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Has my son been here to-day?

Miss N. He is above stairs with Lady Bell, sir.

Mrs. B. (*Within.*) Miss Neville, Neville, I say.

Miss N. You'll excuse me, Sir John; what can she want? [*Exit.*

Sir John. This visit portends some good, I hope; I shall be happy if he has declared himself. I'll step and see what he is about.

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. Exquisite, lovely angel!

Sir John. Well! how! what!

Mil. I beg your pardon, sir, I am not at leisure;

I am in the third region, and can't descend to the language of the nether world.

Sir John. Then you are in love, George.

Mil. She is a sister of the graces, and surpasses the other three. I am fixed; unalterably fixed; and am going about the marriage articles directly.

Sir John. They are at my lawyer's, ready engrossed, and only wait for the lady's name to fill up the blanks.

Mil. I know it, sir; I must step for them; I have it through my heart: I feel it here. I am your humble servant, sir. (*Going.*)

Sir John. No, no; do you stay here; I'll step for Mr. Copyhold. The writings shall be here in ten minutes. [*Exit.*

Mil. The sooner the better, sir.

"Let those love now, who never lov'd before;
Let those who always lov'd, now love the more."
Lol, tol, lol. (*Sings.*)

Enter Malvil.

Mal. Bravo! you seem in prodigious spirits.

Mil. I am so: I am happy in myself, and happy in my friends, and happy in every circumstance, and in tip-top spirits, and—my dear Malvil, your's down to the ground.

Mal. Methinks I sympathize with you. When our friends are happy, the sensation is well called a fellow feeling.

Mil. Malvil, I thank you; your turn of mind is formed for lasting friendship. With Dashwould it is all dissipation, and giddy mirth, the mere bubble of pleasure. To you I may talk seriously. The topic of the day is enough for Dashwould. I can now tell you, that I shall be happy for life. But for Dashwould, I should have been settled long ago. That fellow has led me into a thousand errors.

Mal. He has his admirers, and not without reason. He thinks me his enemy. Dashwould, notwithstanding all his faults, does hit the mark sometimes. I don't usually laugh at his pleasantry; I don't like to encourage him too much; but it must be owned, he is often right. Behind his back I cannot help being diverted by him. He has a quick insight into characters.

Mil. No want of penetration there.

Mal. He is a shrewd observer.

Mil. Nobody more so.

Mal. If he has a regard for anybody, it is for you. You are the only man I never heard him speak ill of. A match with Lady Bell is not to his mind. He talked seriously on the subject. Has not he told you?

Mil. Not a syllable.

Mal. I wonder at that. Lady Bell, he says, shewed herself early. Impatient of advice, attentive to nothing but her beauty; whole days at her looking glass—I repeat his very words. At her toilet every feature had its instructions how to look, but no instruction for the mind. And then, says he, that terrible love of gaming!

Mil. Gaming!

Mal. Don't you know it? I can't say I ever saw it myself. Time will determine her character.

Mil. If she loves gaming it is pretty well determined already. But my Lady Jane, there's a model for her sex to imitate.

Mal. Have you watched her well? People should appear what they really are. Mrs. Bromley has been very communicative about Lady Jane.

Mil. You alarm me. My dear friend, explain.

Mal. To do Lady Bell justice, she is above disguise: and though she has her faults, I have seen her please by those very faults.

Mil. (*Smiling.*) And so have I. Her very blemishes are beauty spots.

Mal. No frankness about the youngest girl. It is friendship for you that makes me speak. Her character is all forced, studied; put on with her rouge.

Mil. Does she paint?

Mal. A little; the prudent touch. I am sorry for her. When she is settled in the world, many qualities, which now lie concealed, will break out into open day-light.

Mil. What a masked battery there will be to play off upon her husband!

Mal. Their aunt told me all in confidence. You may judge how painful it is to her. I have known the family for some time. I can't but be sorry for the young ladies.

Mil. And since this is the case, I don't care how little I know of them, or their family.

Mal. No occasion to quarrel with the family. Great merit about Mrs. Bromley. She made an admirable wife, and at an early period. She was but seventeen when she was married.

Mil. No more?

Mal. Not an hour: she is not thirty: an estate in her own right, and the command of half a borough. No opposition there; the old houses have the votes. A man may get a seat without trouble. Does not Sir John want to see you in parliament?

Mil. Yes. It would give him pleasure.

Mal. Well, you will judge for yourself. Were I as you, I should know what course to take. Here she comes! a good fine woman! a man may there sit down to his happiness at once.

Enter Mrs. Bromley.

Mrs. B. Mr. Millamour. (*Curtsies.*) Mr. Malvil, what have you done with Mr. Bygrove?

Mal. I parted with him where you set us down. (*Speaks to her aside.*) I have talked to Millamour, and I think it will do.

Mrs. B. Go you up stairs. (*Aside to Mal.*)

Mal. How charmingly you look! like Lady Bell's eldest sister.

Mrs. B. Pho! you are laughing at me.

Mal. Not I, truly; I appeal to Millamour. I'll take the liberty to join the company above. (*Aside to Mil.*) She is the best of the family. [*Exit.*

Mrs. B. A valuable man, Malvil is. He has a great esteem for you, sir. His sincerity is unequalled. You seem thoughtful, Mr. Millamour.

Mil. Thoughtful, ma'am! There are certain subjects that—what Malvil says is true: a man may marry her, and sit down to his happiness at once. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. B. Sir John has been saying a great deal to me about you.

Mil. Has he, ma'am? There is a circumstance, which he is as yet a stranger to—a circumstance, which, to communicate, will, perhaps—it is what I have long wished, and—

Mrs. B. Faultering! hesitating! (*Aside.*) I interrupt you.

Mill. There is a circumstance, ma'am—the affair is—my father for a long time—Sir John, for a long time—Sir John has wished—

Mrs. B. To see you married?

Mil. To see me married, ma'am—and—he has—he has wished it much. And a settlement, by way of jointure,—long ready for the lady's name—that is—any lady, who shall honour me with her affection—and—

Mrs. B. No lady can be insensible of your pretensions.

Mil. You are very good, ma'am; and after long observation, and a lasting passion grafted on it, which, though silent hitherto—yet working secretly—when disclosed at length—may to the person in the world—who already formed by experience, may, in every respect—and if without presuming too far—

Mrs. B. What a delicate confusion he is in. (*Aside.*)

Mil. And if this paper, ma'am—

Mrs. B. (*Taking the paper.*) When given by you, sir—

Enter Bygrove.

Perverse and cruel! (*Walks aside.*)

Byg. You both look grave; nothing amiss, I hope.

Mrs. B. Every thing is as it should be, sir. Mr. Millamour will do what is right. (*Smiling at him.*) You may leave it all to him; trust to his judgment.

Enter Sir Harry.

Sir H. Millamour, I have such a story for you: Malvil and Dashwould have been quarrelling about you, and—

Byg. Poh! and here they all come; I knew the substance could not be far off, when the shadow projected before it.

Enter Lady Bell, Dashwould, *and* Malvil.

Lady Bell. Mr. Dashwould, do you think I'll bear this? What liberty will you take next? You think, because I laugh, that I am not offended. Aunt, I received a letter, and he has attempted to snatch it from me.

Dash. Why it brings a little cargo of ridicule from the country, and my friend Malvil sees no joke in it.

Mal. When my friend's name is brought in question, sir—

Lady Bell. It is diverting, notwithstanding.—Aunt, what do you think? My cousin Cynthia, you know, was to be married to Sir George Squanderstock; her mother oppos'd it, and broke off the match, and now it's come out, that she was all the time the clandestine rival of her own daughter.

Mil. Not inapplicable to the present business. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. B. Go, you giddy girl, no such thing!

Mil. (*Aside.*) She charms by her very faults.

Sir H. (*Goes up to Bygrove.*) And Dashwould has been saying—

Byg. Poh! repeat none of his sayings to me.

Lady Bell. Did you say any thing, Mr. Dashwould? What was it? (*Crosses to Dash.*)

Dash. Oh! nothing. Sir George Squanderstock is my very good friend.

Mal. And for that reason you might spare him. No man is without his faults.

Dash. Ay, allow him faults, out of tenderness.

Byg. Sir George is a valuable man, sir, and represents his country to great advantage.

Dash. He does so; takes a world of pains; nothing can escape him; Manilla ransom not paid; there must be a motion about that matter; he knots his handkerchief to remember it. Scarcity of corn! another knot; triennial parliaments, (knots;) juries judges of law as well as fact, (knots;) national debt, (knots;) bail in criminal cases, (knots;) and so on he goes, till his handkerchief is twisted into questions of state; the liberties and fortunes of all posterity dangling like a head-roll; he puts it in his pocket, drives to the gaming table and the next morning his handkerchief goes to the wash, and his country and the minority are both left in the suds.

Lady Bell. What a description! }
Sir H. Hey! lively Lady Bell! } (*Both laugh.*)

Mil. Ho! ho! I thank you, Dashwould.

Mrs. B. (*Aside to Millamour.*) How can you encourage him? Let us leave them to themselves.

Mal. You see, Mr. Bygrove—

Byg. Ay! thus he gets a story to graft his malice upon, and then he sets the table in a roar at the next tavern.

Sir H. Never be out of humour with Dashwould, Mr. Bygrove; he keeps me alive; he has been exhibiting pictures of this sort all the morning, as we rambled about the town.

Byg. Go on, Sir Harry, ape your friend in all his follies; be the nimble marmozet; to grin at his tricks, and try to play them over again yourself.

Sir H. Well now, that is too severe: Dashwould, defend me from his wit. You know I swallow all your good things.

Dash. You never bring any of them up.

Enter Miss Neville, *and whispers Mrs. Bromley.*

Mrs. B. Very well, Neville, I'll come presently. [*Exit Miss Neville.*

Mal. (*Looking at Miss Neville.*) I shall stay no longer. Mr. Bygrove, will you walk? [*Exit.*

Byg. No, sir, I shall not leave the enemy in this room behind me: a bad translator of an ancient poet, is not so sure to deface his original, as his licentious strain to disparage every character.

Dash. Sir Harry, he will neither give nor take a joke.

Sir H. No, I told you so.

Byg. Let me tell you once for all, sir—

Dash. I wish you would.

Byg. Why interrupt? Do you know what I was going to say?

Dash. No, do you?

Mil. I'll leave them all to themselves. (*Steals out.*)

Mrs. B. (*Aside.*) Millamour gone! [*Exit.*

Byg. And what does all this mighty wit amount to? The wit in vogue, exposes one man; makes another expose himself; gets into the secrets of an intimate acquaintance, and publishes a story to the world; belies a friend; puts an anecdote, a letter, an epigram into the newspaper; and that is the whole amount of modern wit.

Dash. A strain of morose invective is more diverting to be sure.

Byg. (*Looking about for Mrs. Bromley.*) Well, sir, we'll adjourn the debate. You may go on; misrepresent every thing; if there is nothing ridiculous, invent a story; and when you have done it, it is but a cheap and frivolous talent. Has a lady a good natural bloom? Her paint must be an expensive article. Does she look grave? She will sin the deeper. Is she gay and affable? Her true character will come out at the Commons. That is the whole of your art, and I leave you to the practice of it. (*Going.*)

Dash. Satirical Bygrove! now the widow has him in tow.

Byg. (*Turning round.*) Could not you stay till my back was fairly turned? [*Exit.*

Dash. What a look there was!

Lady Bell. At what a rate you run on! you keep the field against them all.

Dash. Sir Harry, step up, and watch him with the widow.

Sir H. I will; don't stay too long.

Dash. I'll follow you: and hark, make your party good with Miss Neville.

Sir H. You see, Lady Bell, a fling at every body. [*Exit.*

Dash. The baronet does not want parts; that is to say, he has very good materials to play the fool with. I shall get him to marry Miss Neville.

Lady Bell. Bring that about, and you will for once do a serious action, for which every body will honour you.

Dash. In the mean time, do you watch your aunt Bromley: she is your rival.

Lady Bell. Rival? that would be charming!

Dash. It is even so. Now Millamour's understanding is good, but his passions quick: if you play your cards right—

Lady Bell. Are you going to teach me how to manage a man?

Dash. Coquetry will never succeed with him. A quicksand does not shift so often as his temper. You must take him at his word, and never give him time to change and veer about.

Lady Bell. Totally out of nature.

Dash. Oh! very well; I give up the point. [*Exit.*

Lady Bell. You may leave the man to my management. My aunt Bromley rival me! that would be delightful.

Enter Lady Jane.

Well, sister!

Lady Jane. Can you be serious for a moment?

Lady Bell. Well, the solemnity of that look! Must I set my face by yours, and contract a wrinkle, by a formal economy of features, which you, like the rest of the world, mistake for wisdom?

Lady Jane. Will you hear me? They are hurrying this match too fast, I think. Sir John is come, and his lawyer is expected every moment. He wants to conclude the affair this day, and my aunt does not oppose it. But I don't like all this hurry.

Lady Bell. And why need you be concerned about it?

Lady Jane. Do you think Millamour capable of love?

Lady Bell. For the moment. It will be difficult to fix him.

Lady Jane. What would you have me do?

Lady Bell. Do?—Nothing.

Lady Jane. How silly! you know it is not my seeking.

Lady Bell. What are you about! Talking in your sleep again? Lady Jane, wake yourself. What have you taken in your head?

Lady Jane. Why, since Mr. Millamour has prevailed with me—

Lady Bell. His affections then are fixed upon you? Why the man has been dying at my feet, with a face as long as my arm.

Lady Jane. You will permit me to laugh in my turn.

Lady Bell. Oh! I can laugh with you, and at you, and at him too. This gives spirit to the business: here are difficulties, and difficulties enhance victory, and victory is triumph.

Lady Jane. Very well! oh! brave! laugh away! you will be undeceived presently. If this does not take, I am at the end of my line. [*Exit.*

Lady Bell. What does all this mean? Rivalled, outwitted by my sister! Insupportable! This begins to grow serious.

Enter Millamour.

Mil. 'Sdeath! she is here! Sir John is quite impatient, and I am going for his attorney.

Lady Bell. And Lady Jane is impatient too: she is the object of your choice.

Mil. Lady Jane! your are pleasant very pleasant!

Lady Bell. She has told me with inflexible gravity!

Mil. She is a great wit; and great wits have great quickness of invention; and so a story is easily dressed up. I could crack my sides with laughing. If trifling civilities have been received as a declaration of love—

Lady Bell. And is that the case? Very whimsical indeed!

Mil. Yes, very whimsical! I am eternally yours, ma'am, and I am on the wing, and your ladyship's adorer.—Confusion! (*Going.*)

Enter Lady Jane.

Lady Jane. (*Aside.*) Now to plague them both. Sister, you may hear it from himself.

Lady Bell. That lady, sir, has the strangest notion—

Lady Jane. You will be so good as to explain all to my sister.

Mil. (*Aside.*) Both upon me at once. I have explained, madam, and all further talk about it is unnecessary.

Lady Bell. Only to satisfy her curiosity.

Lady Jane. To shew my sister her mistake.

Mil. (*To Lady Jane.*) I have made every thing clear, ma'am. (*To Lady Bell.*)—Have not I, Lady Bell? And (*Turns to Lady Jane.*) every thing now is upon a proper footing.

Lady Jane. Very well; only give her to understand—

Mil. Your understanding is admirable—(*Turns to Lady Bell.*) I told you she would talk in this style.—(*Turns to Lady Jane.*) You are perfectly right, and nobody understands things better.—(*Turns to Lady Bell.*) Nobody whatever. (*Looks and laughs at both by turns.*)

Lady Bell. But give me leave, you must speak out, sir.

Mil. (*Aside to Lady Bell.*) Never argue about it, it is not worth your while.

Lady Jane. There is some mystery in all this.

Mil. No; all very clear: (*to Lady Jane,*) drop it for the present.

Lady Bell. But I desire no doubt may remain.

Lady Jane. And I don't like to be kept in suspense. (*Both pulling him by the arm.*)

Mil. Distraction! I am like a lawyer, that has taken fees on both sides. You do me honour, ladies; but upon my soul, I can't help laughing. It will divert us some day or other, this will. Oh, ho, ho! I shall die with laughing. (*Breaks from them.*)

Enter Mrs. Bromley, *and* Sir John.

Mrs. B. What is all this uproar for?

Mil. Another witness of my folly! (*Runs to the other side.*)

Enter Dashwould.

Dash. Millamour, I give you joy. Mr. Copyhold, your attorney, is come with the deeds. What's the matter?

Mil. The strangest adventure! I can't stay now. The ladies have been very pleasant. You love humour, and they have an infinite deal. I'll come to you in a moment. [*Exit.*

Sir John. George, don't run away, let us finish the business.

Dash. If he says he'll marry, you may depend upon him. A poet determined to write no more, or a gamester forswearing play, is not so sure to keep his word. I wish I may die, if I don't think him as much to be relied upon as a prime minister.

Lady Bell. Aunt, would you believe it? The demure Lady Jane (*Bursts into a laugh.*) She has taken such a fancy into her head! Millamour she thinks is up to the eyes in love with her.

Mrs. B. Ha, ha, ha! poor Lady Jane!

Lady Jane. And my sister's pride is hurt. She carries it with an air, as if she had made a complete conquest.

Mrs. B. How ridiculous the girls are! your son has opened his mind to you, Sir John?

Sir John. He has, and I approve of his choice. I hope it is as agreeable to you as to his father.

Mrs. B. I don't know how to refuse my consent.

Enter Bygrove.

Byg. (*Listening.*) What does all this mean?

Dash. As I could wish. There he is. (*Seeing Bygrove.*)

Mrs. B. Since it has your approbation, Sir John, I believe I must yield my consent. I never thought to marry again, but since you will have it so—

Sir John. Lady Bell, I understand, is willing to do me the honour of being my daughter-in-law.

Lady Bell. Oh! ho, ho, ho! this makes amends for all. My dear aunt Bromley, are you imposed upon? Did you listen to the traitor's vows? The dear, perfidious?— (*Laughs violently.*)

Dash. He will soon be settled, Sir John, since there are now three rival goddesses contending for him. Mr. Bygrove, you are come in good time.

Byg. What fool's part are you to play now? (*Coming forward.*)

Mrs. B. Sir John, I desire I may not be made your sport. Have not I here, under his hand, a declaration of his mind; here, in this copy of verses, given to me by himself, an earnest of his affection?

Lady Bell. Verses, aunt?

Lady Jane. Verses to you?

Mrs. B. Verses to me: only hear, Sir John. (*Reads.*)

"*I look'd, and I sigh'd, and I wish'd I could speak,*
And fain would have paid adoration."

Lady Bell. Stay, stay; mine begin the same way. (*Takes out a paper.*)

Lady Jane. The very words of mine. (*Takes out a paper.*)

Mrs. B. Will those girls have done? (*Reads.*)

"*But when I endeavour'd the matter to break.*"

Lady Bell. (*Reads.*) "*Still then I said least of my passion.*"

Mrs. B. Will you be quiet? (*Reads.*)

"*Still then I said least of my passion;*
I swore to myself"—

Lady Bell. (*Reads fast.*) "*And resolv'd I would try*"—

Mrs. B. and Lady Bell. (*Reading together.*)

"*Some way my poor heart to recover.*"

Lady Jane, Lady Bell, and Mrs. B. (*Reading eagerly together.*) "*But that was all vain, for I sooner could die,*
Than live with forbearing to love her."

Lady Bell. O, ho, ho, ho! Mr. Dashwould, what a piece of work has he made!

Dash. And the verses copied from Congreve.

Lady Bell. Copied from Congreve! (*Laughs heartily.*)

Sir John. I never was so covered with confusion! [*Exit.*

Lady Bell. I never was so diverted in all my days.

Dash. He has acted with great propriety upon the occasion.

Mrs. B. He has made himself very ridiculous. He has exposed nobody but himself. Contempt is the only passion he can excite. A crazy, mad, absurd— (*Tearing the paper.*)

Lady Jane. An inconstant, wild, irresolute— (*Tears the paper.*)

Lady Bell. Ha, ha, ha! so whimsical a character. [*Kisses the paper, and exit.*

Dash. (*To Bygrove.*) What shall I give you for your chance? [*Exit.*

Byg. More than I'll give you for your wit. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*An Apartment at Mrs. Bromley's.*

Enter Dashwould *and* Sir Harry.

Dash. This way, Sir Harry. While they are all engaged in the pleasures of the table, I want a word with you in private. Did you mark Miss Neville, at dinner?

Sir Harry. You know I did. And when Mrs. Bromley railed at her—

Dash. She railed at her with a littleness of spirit, that disgraced wealth and influence, and gave to poverty the superior character. Were I at the head of such a fortune as yours, to choose a wife, she should be the object of my affection. You like her, that's clear.

Sir Har. But she does not like me, and that's as clear. Somebody has done me a prejudice there. She received this letter, and gave it me to read.

Dash. (*Reads.*) "To Miss Neville." (*Opens it.*) Without a name.

Sir Har. A poison'd arrow in the dark.

Dash. (*Reads.*) "Anonymous letters are generally the effect of clandestine marriage; this comes from a friend. If your honour, your virtue, and your peace of mind are worth your care, avoid the acquaintance of Sir Harry. He is the deceiver of innocence, and means to add your name to the list of those whom his treachery has already ruined. Make use of this hint, and act accordingly." A pretty epistle—(*Pauses.*) Don't I know this hand? So, so! I nnderstand it, I can trace this; say no more, Sir Harry: pursue Miss Neville the closer for this. Will you let such a fellow as Malvil rob you of a treasure?

Sir Har. You don't suspect him?

Dash. Leave it all to me. Assure Miss Neville that this shall be cleared up. Hush! we are interrupted: go and join the company.

Enter Malvil.

Sir Har. Psha! plague! the company without you—

Dash. Very well; leave me now. [*Exit Sir H.*] What's the matter, Malvil?

Mal. It will be over presently: a sudden sensation; I can't bear to see others made unhappy. Mrs. Bromley is a very valuable woman, but at times rather violent.

Dash. And that's much to be lamented, is not it?

Mal. You may laugh at it, sir, but I think it a serious matter. I left poor Miss Neville in a flood of tears: and, here she comes.

Enter Miss Neville.

Dash. Not rising from table so soon?

Miss N. Excuse me, sir, I had rather not stay.

Dash. Never mind Mrs. Bromley's humours; come, we will all take your part.

Miss N. I am not fit for company, sir.

Dash. I am sorry to lose you. I'll leave you with my worthy friend: he will administer consolation. [*Exit.*

Miss N. Was there ever such inhuman tyranny? Insulted before the whole company!

Mal. It hurts me to the quick. I could not have believed her capable of such violence:

Miss N. You saw that I gave her no provocation.

Mal. It pains me to see what I do.

Miss N. During the whole time of dinner, it was one continued invective against me.

Mal. Millamour's behaviour had disconcerted her. But that is no excuse. Goodness by fits, and generosity out of mere whim, can never constitute a valuable character. I am sorry to see you so afflicted.

Miss N. You are very good, sir.

Mal. No, I have no merit in it; the instincts of my nature leave me no choice. I have studied myself, and I find I am only good by instinct. I am strangely interested for you. I have thought much of your situation: our time is short; they will be all rising from table presently. Attend to what I say: since Mrs. Bromley is so incessant in her

tyranny, do as I already hinted to you. Withdraw from this house at once. Madam La Rouge has an apartment ready for you. You may there remain concealed. In the mean time, I shall be at work for you. I shall prevail upon Mrs. Bromley to keep her word, about the five thousand pounds. That added to what is in my power, will make a handsome settlement for you.

Miss N. You heard what she said to Sir Harry?

Mal. She wants to drive you to some act of despair; perhaps to give you up a sacrifice to Sir Harry's loose desires.

Miss N. Are you so clear about Sir Harry?

Mal. (*Aside.*) 'Sdeath! I see she loves him. Hereafter I will open a scene to astonish you. (*Pauses and looks at her.*) You can never be happy under this roof. Mrs. Bromley will make this quarrel up, I know she will. The whole of her virtue consists in repentance, but what kind of repentance? A specious promise to reform her conduct, and a certain return of the same vices.

Miss N. She has made me desperate. I can stay here no longer. I'll go back to the country: I shall there be at peace.

Mal. You will there be too much out of the way. When you are settled at Madam La Rouge's, the haughty Mrs. Bromley will see to what she has driven you, and for the sake of her character, will begin to relent. Sir Harry must not know where you are. He means your ruin, I am sorry to say it, but I can give you such convincing proof—

Enter Mrs. Bromley.

Mrs. B. Do you go to your room, madam; let me see you no more to-day.

Mal. It was a mere unguarded word that fell from Miss Neville. (*Speaks to Mrs. Bromley aside.*) Millamour is ashamed of his conduct. He is under my influence still; I shall mould him to your wishes.

Mrs. B. (*Aside to him.*) I am a fool to think any more about him. Go to him; watch him all day; you will not find me ungrateful. (*Loud.*) And pray tell those girls to come up stairs. [*Exit Malvil.*] Mighty well, madam; you must sit next to Sir Harry: you have no pretensions, have you? And you must vouch for Lady Bell too? She does not love gaming; that story is all calumny. Bespeak yourself a place in the stage coach; you shall quit this house, I promise you.

Miss N. It will be the last time I shall receive those orders, madam. Your favours are so embittered, there is such a leaven of pride, even in your acts of bounty, that I cannot wish to be under any further obligations. If doing justice to Lady Bell, if avowing my sentiments, in the cause of so amiable a friend, can give you umbrage, I am not fit to remain in this house. [*Exit.*

Mrs. B. O brave! you shall travel. Give her a fortune!—No, let Lady Bell reward her. How! Millamour, as I live.

Enter Millamour.

Mil. Deliver me, fate; she here:—madam—I—I—I—you are not going to leave us, I hope.

Enter Sir John.

Mrs. B. (*Smiling at Millamour.*) And how can you look me in the face?

Mil. (*Seeing Sir John.*) I am glad you are come, sir, I wanted to—

Mrs. B. Perverse!—What brings Sir John? (*Aside.*) I shall expect you above stairs, gentlemen. I must try once more to fix that irresolute, inconstant man. [*Exit.*

Sir John. What a day's work have you made here?

Mil. Sir!

Sir John. Can you expect any good from all this? Ever doing and undoing! These proceedings are terrible to your father.

Mil. You know, sir, that to gratify you is the height of my ambition.

Sir John. For shame! don't imagine that you can deceive me any longer. Are you to be for ever in suspense? Always resolving, and yet never decided? Never knowing your own mind for five minutes.

Mil. You seem exasperated, but I really don't see the cause.

Sir John. No?—Can't you feel how absurd it is to be always beginning the world? For ever in doubt? Day after day embarking in new projects, nay, twenty different projects in one day, and often in an hour?

Mil. Spare my confusion: I feel my folly; I feel it all; and let my future conduct—

Sir John. George, can I take your word? I know you have been at the gaming table.

Mil. The gaming table!

Sir John. Say no more; I know it all: after the indulgence I have shewn you, I now see that my hopes are all to be disappointed. If you have a mind to atone for what is past, pursue one certain plan, and be somebody. The time now opens a new scene, and calls for other manners. Reform your conduct, and I shall be happy. But I am tired of this eternal levity: my patience is worn out. I shall stay no longer in this house, to be a witness of your absurdity. [*Exit.*

Mil. I have made myself very ridiculous here. I can't shew my face any more in this family. I'll go back to the Temple, and not marry these ten years. The law leads to great things: a seat in parliament, a vote or two against your conscience, a silk gown, and a judge; that's the course of things. I'll pursue my ambition—Honest friend, (*Calls to a Servant.*) hist! honest friend, will you be so good as just to get me my hat?

Enter Dashwould.

Dash. No, I bar hats. What, going to desert us? The sport is just beginning. Bygrove has been lecturing his son, and quarrelling with Malvil. The integrity of that honest gentleman is suspected at last. He was the worthiest man in the world this morning, as good a creature as ever was born, but now he has sold himself to the widow. Lady Bell has been lively upon the occasion; and Malvil, to support his spirits, has plyed the Burgundy, till he looks the very picture of hypocrisy, with a ruddy complexion, and a sparkling eye.

Mil. You may divert yourself, sir; I have done with them all.

Dash. But I can't part with you: you shall join us; Malvil shall have no quarter: he will stick to his glass till his charity for his neighbour begins to stagger; then off drops the mask; he will have courage enough to rail at mankind, and his true character will come forth, like letters in lemon juice before the fire.

Mil. Pho! absurd! I am on the rack. Why did you force me to stay dinner? I have been so weak, so frivolous.

Dash. How so? Because you changed your mind? There is nothing more natural. Don't you see men doing the same thing every day? Down goes the old mansion; a new one rises; exotic trees smile on the landscape, and enjoy the northern air; and when the whole is finished, in less than a twelvemonth, the auctioneer mounts his pulpit. "Pleasing contiguity"—"Beautiful and picturesque scene"—"Delectably featured by Nature"—"Shall I say twenty thousand?"—Down it goes to the highest bidder, who pays his money, and runs away the next morning with an opera singer to Italy.

Mil. (*Laughing.*) Why, yes, we see those things every day.

Dash. No doubt; men are fickle and inconstant.

Mil. Very true; it is the way through life; in the lowest rank, as well as the highest. You sha'n't see a journeyman weaver, but he has his disgust, like a lord, and changes his lodging, his house of call, his barber, and his field-preacher.

Dash. Certainly; and then there is a real charm in variety. Besides, what you did to-day, was a mere frolic.

Mil. Nothing more: and that fellow, Malvil, was the occasion of it. My heart never rightly warmed to that man. I shall never consult him again. Affairs were in a right train, if he had not interposed.

Dash. You shall have your revenge. I have a mine to spring, will blow him up. (*Laughs.*) His advice to-day has served to produce the widow's character.

Mil. Yes, it has given a display of her. (*Laughs.*) How could she think me in earnest? Marry her! I would go into the army sooner.

Dash. A good pretty trade, the army, if you are killed in battle, it is your affair; if you conquer, you may retire, and live very prettily upon half-pay.

Mil. Very true: the law is a more certain road.

Dash. A good agreeable life the law is: for ever entangled in the cobwebs of Westminster hall; and you help to spin them yourself into the bargain.

Mil. And at the end of twenty years you are thought a good promising young man.

Dash. In the mean time, you are constantly hiring out your lungs, and ever in a passion about other people's affairs.

Enter Lady Bell, *and* Lady Jane.

Lady Bell. Come, sister, leave the men to themselves. Mr. Dashwould, has their wit frightened you away?

Mil. (*Looking at her.*) "Look in her face and you forget them all."

Dash. Won't your ladyship have compasion on that gentleman?

Lady Bell. Compassion!—my sister and I, we hope for his protection.

Enter Captain Bygrove.

Capt. B. When you go away from company, Lady Bell, you draw every body in your train.

Lady Bell. Oh! you have so overpowered me with civil, and tender things!

Mil. (*Aside.*) What does he follow her for?

Lady Bell. A l'honneur, gentlemen. (*Goes up to Millamour.*) Uncle! Uncle Millamour, when you are married to my aunt, I hope you will be kind to us both. (*Curtsies.*)

Mil. (*Turning away.*) Confusion! daggers! daggers!

Lady Jane. (*Curtsying.*) May I salute you, uncle?

Mil. Pho! this foolery! (*Walks away.*)

Lady Bell. Let us give him all his titles!—Brother, when you marry my sister! (*Makes a low curtsy.*)

Mil. How can you, Lady Bell?

Lady Jane. Uncle!—Brother! } (*Both laugh.*)
Lady Bell. And Brother Uncle! }

Mil. (*Breaking away from them.*) This is too much. No patience can endure it. (*Turns to Lady Bell.*) Madam, this usage—(*Lady Bell and Lady Jane both laugh loud.*)

Lady Jane. Come, sister, let us leave him.

[*Exit.*

Lady Bell. Oh! ho! ho! I shall expire. (*Going.*)

Mil. Why will you torment me thus? (*Takes her by the hand.*) Am I to be for ever made your sport?

Lady Bell. Oh, you would not have me laugh. To be sure, when one considers, it is a serious matter. And though Captain Bygrove (*Pointing to him.*) has orders to be in love with me; and though he has declared himself in the warmest terms—

Mil. And could you listen to him?

Lady Bell. And yet after all your promises, when you have touched my heart. (*In a softened tone.*)

Mil. Jealous of me by this light. (*Aside.*)

Lady Bell. After all your faithless vows, to break them as you have done, like a Turk, or a Jew, or a Mahometan, (*Crying.*) and leave me like Dido and Æneas, it is enough to break a young girl's heart. (*Crying bitterly.*) so it is, it is. There, will that please you? (*Bursts into a laugh.*) Adieu, uncle! my compliments to my aunt—

[*Exit.*

Mil. D——n!

Enter Sir Harry.

Sir Har. Did I not hear somebody crying?

Mil. Yes, and laughing too. Captain Bygrove, you said something to Lady Bell, what was it, sir?

Capt. B. What I desire the world to know; I love her, I adore her. My father has ordered it, Mrs. Bromley approves: Lady Bell encourages me; and I shall be the happiest of mankind.

Mil. You and I must talk apart, sir. You know my prior claim. Attempt my life rather than my love. You must think no more of her, sir: she is mine by every tie, and so I shall tell her this moment.

[*Exit.*

Dash. Now hold that resolution, if you can.

Capt. B. I have managed it well.

Dash. Admirably!

Sir H. What does all this mean? Dashwould, you are wanted in the next room. Malvil is in for it: he sits toasting Miss Neville, while every idea fades away from his countenance, all going out one by one, and his eye sinks into all the dim vacuity of a brisk no meaning at all.

Dash. I'll look in upon them. Bygrove, I see Miss Neville: let us give Sir Harry his opportunity.

Enter Miss Neville.

Miss N. I thought Lady Bell was here; I beg your pardon, gentlemen.

Dash. Your company is always agreeable, is not it, Sir Harry? The gentleman will speak for himself. Come, Bygrove, I have occasion for you.

[*Exit with Capt. Bygrove.*

Sir H. May I now presume, madam—

Miss N. You choose your time but ill, Sir Harry. I have so many things to distract me, I cannot listen to you now.

Sir H. (*Takes her hand.*) But you promised to hear me; I have long beheld your sufferings.

Miss N. They do not warrant improper liberties. I can be humble as becomes my situation. I hope you will not oblige me to shew that spirit, which virtue is as much entitled to, as the proudest fortune in the kingdom.

Sir H. I mean you no disrespect. That letter is a black artifice to traduce my character.

Miss N. Your character, I dare say, sir, will come out clear and unsullied. You will permit me to take care of mine. It is all I have to value. I shall not continue any longer in this house. Mrs. Bromley has made it impossible; I wish you all happiness, sir.

[*Exit.*

Sir H. I wonder what Dashwould will say to all this. I shall like to hear him: he will turn it to a joke, I warrant him. No end of his pleasantry.

[*Exit.*

Enter Malvil, *in liquor*, Bygrove *and* Dashwould.

Mal. Very well; make the most of it. Since you force me to speak, I say, her character is a vile one.

Byg. Here is a fellow, whom wine only inspires with malice.

Dash. Pho! malice! Malvil has no harm in him.

Mal. You may talk of Mrs. Bromley, but she is as vile a character, as pride, and insolence, and avarice, and vanity, and fashionable airs, and decayed beauty, can jumble together.

Byg. Here's a return for her hospitality!

Mal. Marry her, I say; marry her, and try.

Byg. You shall not have a shilling with Miss Neville.

Mal. There, the secret's out: you want to marry her, and make her break her word. Mankind's a villain! a medley of false friends, eloping wives, stock-jobbers, and usurers; wits that won't write, and fools that will. (*Sings.*)

Byg. Dashwould, you are a panegyrist, compared to this man.

Dash. Yes, he takes your trade out of your hands.

Mal. She is Mrs. Bromley, the widow, and you are Mr. Bygrove, the widower; and so, bite the biter, that's all.

Byg. His wit soars above you, Mr. Dashwould.

Mal. Wit is a bad trade. Letters have no friends left in these degenerate times. Shew a man of letters to the first of your nobility, and they will leave him to starve in a garret. Introduce a fellow, who can sing a catch, write a dull political pamphlet, or remarks upon a Dutch memorial, or play off fireworks, and he shall pass six months in the country, by invitation. Mæcenas died two thousand years ago, and you are not historian enough to know it.

Dash. He makes a bankrupt of me.

Byg. I have found him out: I know him now: a pretended friend, that he may more surely betray you. Go, and get some coffee to settle your head. [*Exit.*

Mal. Mrs. Bromley will settle your head.

Dash. Let us take him up stairs: he'll tumble over the tea-table, to shew his politeness. (*Taking him by the arm.*) Come, the ladies wait for us.

Mal. Mankind, I say, is a villain! (*Sings.*)

Enter Lady Bell.

Lady Bell. Bless me! Mr. Malvil!

Mal. All Dashwould's doing, to expose a body. Do you look to Millamour, that's what I say to you.

Dash. He sha'n't stay to plague your ladyship. Come, Malvil, let us go and be tender of reputation above stairs.

Mal. I am always tender, and you are scurrilous. [*Sings and exit, led by Dashwould.*

Lady Bell. How Millamour follows me up and down! charming! here he comes.

Enter Millamour.

Mil. Lady Bell, allow me but one serious moment.

Lady Bell. This braeclet is always coming off. (*Fiddles with it.*)

Mil. Whatever appearances may have been, I burn with as true a passion, as ever penetrated a faithful heart.

Lady Bell. (*Aside and smiling.*) I know he is mine. This silly, obstinate bauble! What were you saying? Oh! making love again.

Mil. By this dear hand I swear—(*Seizes her hand.*)

Lady Bell. Hold, hold; no violence. Give me my liberty, and thus I make use of it. (*Runs away from him.*)

Enter Captain Bygrove.

Lady Bell. (*Meeting him.*) Oh! I have been wishing for you. How could you stay so long?

Capt. B. They detained me against my will. But you see I am true to my appointment.

Mil. (*Aside to Bygrove.*) Are you so? You shall keep an appointment with me.

Lady Bell. I was surrounded with darts and flames. That gentleman was for renewing the old story, but it is so ridiculous. (*Retires with Capt. Bygrove.*)

Mil. Distraction! to be insulted thus!

Lady Bell. You have prevailed upon me to be in earnest at last. Since your father has proposed it, and since you have declared yourself, why, if I must speak, get my auut's consent, and mine follows of course.

Mil. (*Listening.*) If ever I forgive this—

Capt. B. Mrs. Bromley has consented. (*Then aside to Lady Bell.*) He has it; this will gall his pride.

Mil. No end of her folly. I was bent on marriage, but now it's all her own fault. And yet she knows my heart is fixed upon her.

Lady Bell. (*Comes forward with Capt. Bygrove.*) You are so obliging, and I have so many things to say to you; but if people will not perceive, when they interrupt private conversation.

Mil. If ever I enter these doors again, may the scorn of the whole sex pursue me. [*Exit.*

Capt B. We have carried this too far.

Lady Bell. The barbarous man, when he should have taken no denial, but have lain on the ground, imploring, beseeching! Delightful! here he comes again. (*Goes to Capt. Byg.*)

Enter Millamour.

Mil. (*Walking up to Lady Bell.*) Is it not strange that you can't know your own mind for two minutes together?

Lady Bell. Ho! ho! the assurance of that reproach. (*Walks away.*)

Mil. (*To Bygrove.*) Appoint your time and place; I must have satisfaction for this.

Capt. B. To-morrow morning, when the marriage ceremony is over.

Mil. I shall expect you, sir. (*Going.*)

Enter Lady Jane.

Mil. This is lucky. I was in quest of your ladyship.

Lady Jane. In quest of me, sir?

Mil. In quest of you, madam. I have been waiting for an opportunity, and, if the sincerest sorrow can expiate past offences. Here's a chair, ma'am.

Capt. B. (*To Lady Bell.*) We may drive him to extremities with Lady Jane; I'll leave you to recover your wanderer. [*Exit.*

Mil. (*Sitting down.*) If you will permit me to assure you—

Lady Jane. But while my sister is my rival—

Mil. Your sister's charms carry their own antidote with them. If there is faith in man, I mean to atone for what is past.

Lady Bell. (*Coming forward.*) So, so; with what pleasure she hears him. (*Aside.*) Did you speak to me, Mr. Millamour?

Mil. There was a time, madam! (*Turns to Lady Jane.*) Now she wants to interrupt us; don't let us mind her, and she'll withdraw.

Lady Bell. Wear the willow, Lady Bell! Not a word, sir; you are in the right; my spirits are too violent for you; and though what I say is not absolutely wit,—do you like wit? I'm sure you ought, for it is undefinable, like yourself.

Mil. (*Smiling.*) That is not ill said.

Lady Bell. (*Sits at a distance.*) Horrid! I shall be vapoured up to my eyes. I'll try my song, to banish melancholy. Where is that foolish guitar? (*Goes for it.*)

Mil. Now her jealousy is at work. I knew she would be mortified. Let us agree to pique her pride, and probe her to the quick.

Lady Bell. Though I can't sing, it diverts a body to try. (*Sits down and sings.*)

SONG.—LADY BELL.

Sabrina, with that sober mien,
The converse sweet, the look serene:
Those eyes that beam the gentlest ray,
And though she loves, that sweet delay;
Unconscious, seems each heart to take,
And conquers for her subject's sake!

Mil. Vastly well! (*Listens, smiles, looks at her, draws his chair near her, and beats time on her knee.*)

Lady Bell. (*Sings.*)

The tyrant Cynthia wings the dart,
Coquetting with a bleeding heart;
Has cruelty, which all adore,
Flights that torment, yet please the more:
Her lover strives to break his chain,
But can't, such pleasure's in the pain.

Mil. Oh! charming, charming! (*Kisses her hand.*)

Lady Bell. What are you about, you wretch? Only look, sister. I suppose, sir, when you have done, you will give me my hand again?

Lady Jane. I promise you, sister, your triumph will be short. [*Exit.*

Lady Bell. How she flung out of the room! (*Rises and walks about.*)

Mil. You know, Lady Bell, that I am yours by conquest. I adore you still, and burn with a lover's faithful fire.

Lady Bell. Come, and have a dish of tea to cool you. Will you come? (*Beckons him.*) Won't you? Well, consider of it, and when you know your own mind, you may change it again. [*Exit.*

Mil. There now! "Everything by turns, and nothing long." Fickle do they call me? A man must be fickle, who pursues her through all the whimsies of her temper. Admire her in one shape, and she takes another in a moment.

One charm display'd, another strikes our view,
In quick variety for ever new. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Mrs. Bromley's House.*

Enter MILLAMOUR *and* DASHWOULD.

Mil. Am I to be sacrificed to your humour?

Dash. Am I to be sacrified to your absurdity?

Mil. When pleasantry is out of all time and place—

Dash. Why then I shall be tired of all time and place.

Mil. Lookye, Mr. Dashwould, it is time to be serious. The wit that wounds the breast of a friend, is the pest of society.

Dash. What does all this mean, sir? What is it about?

Mil. If I lost money at play, was it for you to carry the tale to my father? for you to subject me to his reproaches?

Dash. I don't know by what fatality it happens, but that generally comes last, which ought to be mentioned first. I repeated nothing to Sir John; who did? Do you ask that question? Malvil, sir, with his usual duplicity.

Mil. Malvil? He has this moment told me how pleasant you were upon the subject, and at my expense.

Dash. Yes, when he had revealed the whole, and with false tenderness lamented your folly.

Mil. 'Sdeath! I understand it now. I have been absurd here.

Dash. I don't dislike you for your absurdity; that serves to divert one. Malvil excites other feelings. You know the character he gave you of Lady Bell.

Mil. Yes, and all slander.

Dash. I left him but now, representing you to Lady Bell in the same colours; and here—(*Shews a letter.*)—Here I have him fast. An anonymous letter against Sir Harry, sent for his own purposes to Miss Neville. All his contrivance, dictated by himself, and written at an attorney's desk. You know old Copyhold?

Mil. Did he pen the letter?

Dash. One of his clerks was the scribe. The young man is now in the house, at my request, and ready to prove Malvil the author. Here he comes—things are not ripe as yet. Say nothing now.

Enter MALVIL.

Mil. Walk in; you come opportunely.

Mal. If I can be of any service—

Mil. To be of dis-service, is your province; and when you have done the mischief, you can transfer the blame to others.

Mal. I have been rather off my guard to-day. I am not used to be overtaken in that manner: my head is not quite clear.

Mil. Then this business may sober you. What was your whisper to me about that gentleman?

Mal. That he treated with wanton pleasantry, what I thought a serious matter. I may mistake the means, but the end of my actions I can always answer for. Sir John might hear of the affair from another quarter, so to soften his resentment—

Mil. You took care to excite it.

Mal. I—I—I am apt to carry my heart at my tongue's end.

Dash. I knew his heart was not in the right place.

Mal. I did not address myself to you, sir.

Mil. I know you have the grimace of character, Mr. Malvil, armed at all points with plausible maxims. But which of your maxims can justify the treachery of betraying the secret of a friend? Who does it, is a destroyer of all confidence; and when he attempts to varnish his conduct, with the specious name of friendship, the malignity strikes the deeper: artful, smiling malignity.

Mal. I deserve all this. Friendship in excess is a fault. There are bounds and limits even to virtue. It would be well, if a man could always hit the exact point. There is however something voluptuous in meaning well.

Dash. Well expressed, Malvil! Ha, ha! you are right.

Mil. No more of your musty sentences.

Mal. Morals are not capable of mathematical demonstration. And, now I recollect myself, it did not occur at first, it was Madam La Rouge, told the affair to Sir John. This gentleman here, I suppose you will take his word, he says she hears everything, tells everything, and he calls her a walking newspaper; not that she means any harm. I only mean to say—

Dash. O, fie! don't be too severe upon her.

Mal. She said at the same time—you know her manner—she told Sir John, that you are in love with half a dozen, and will deceive them all, and Lady Bell into the bargain.

Mil. Distraction! she dare not say it. This is another of your subterfuges. You know, sir, how you traduced Lady Bell, and made that gentleman

the author of your own malevolence. At any other time and place, my sword should read you a lecture of morality.

Mal. You are too warm; and since I see it is so, to avoid contention, I shall adjourn the debate. [*Exit.*

Mil. Deceive Lady Bell! Whoever has dared to say it? Madame La Rouge lives but a little way off. I'll bring her this moment, to confront this arch impostor. (*Going.*)

Dash. You'll be sure to return.

Mil. This very night shall unmask him. [*Exit.*

Dash. I shall depend upon you. Malville shall answer to Sir Harry; all his artifices shall be fairly laid open.

Enter Bygrove.

Byg. Mr. Dashwould, we are now good friends. I have reposed a confidence in you. You know every thing between me and Mrs. Bromley, but you see how she goes on.

Dash. And I see how you go on. You are the dupe of your own policy.

Byg. How so?

Dash. The widow's schemes are seconded by your own imprudence. Can't you see, that if Millamour were once married out of your way, Mrs. Bromley would then be at her last stake, and you might have some chance? And yet your son has it in command to defeat my friend Millamour with Lady Bell.

Byg. How! light breaks in upon me. Gull that I was; my son shall marry Lady Jane directly.

Dash. To be sure; and the consequence is, that Lady Bell declares for Millamour.

Byg. Right; I am for ever obliged to you; I'll go and speak to my son this moment; Lady Jane shall be his without delay. [*Exit.*

Dash. So much for my friend, the Captain; I have settled his business.

Enter Mrs. Bromley.

Mrs. B. Mr. Dashwould, I am so distracted! A terrible business has happened.

Dash. What's the matter?

Mrs. B. Miss Neville! I can't think what is become of her; she is not to be found, high or low. We have searched everywhere for her. What can be the meaning of this?

Dash. Is Malvil gone?

Mrs. B. This very moment; he has no hand in it. He sees, and pities my distress. He is gone to make inquiry. A girl that I was fond of, and never said an angry word to.

Dash. You have been remarkably mild.

Mrs. B. You know how tender I have been of her. What can have put this into her head? How long has Millamour been gone? I understand it now. This is his exploit.

Dash. You wrong him. I will undertake to discover this plot for you.

Enter Bygrove.

You can comfort the lady, sir; I shall return immediately. [*Exit.*

Byg. May I take the liberty, madam—

Mrs. B. Why torment me thus? You are all in a plot against me.

Enter Lady Bell, Lady Jane, *and* Captain Bygrove.

Mrs. B. There, Lady Bell, there is your lover run away with your cousin.

Lady Bell. I can depend upon her. I can still venture to answer for her honour.

Byg. She will come back, you need not alarm yourself.

Mrs. B. You have seduced her, for anything I know. I am distracted by you all, and will hear no more. [*Exit.*

Byg. Mrs. Bromley, permit me to say a word. [*Exit.*

Lady Bell. I hope there is nothing amiss. I can rely upon Miss Neville's discretion; I think I can. Come, sister, let us go and inquire. (*Going, looks back.*) Hey! you two are staying, to say delicate things to each other.

Capt. B. Our difficulties, you know, are at an end. I have my father's orders to follow my own inclination. Had Millamour staid, I have a plot would have fixed him your ladyship's for ever.

Lady Jane. And we sha'n't see him again this month, perhaps.

Lady Bell. Let him take his own way. I am only uneasy about Miss Neville at present.

Enter Dashwould, *with a letter in his hand.*

Dash. This way, you are wanted; I have a letter here, that discovers all. [*Exit.*

Lady Bell. But what does it say? Let us go and hear it directly. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*An Apartment at Madame La Rouge's.*

Enter Millamour *and* La Rouge.

Mil. Have you sent to Dashwonld?

La Rou. Yes, I have send him letter.

Mil. Miss Neville here, you say?

La Rou. She come an hour ago, all in tear.

Mil. Then she is safe. You are sure you never said anything to Sir John about the gaming business? You did not say that I should deceive Lady Bell?

La Rou. Monsieur Malvil, he tell you so?

Mil. Yes; and I tremble for the consequence.

La Rou. It is one great villain—I great respect for you. *Vous est aimable.* Monsieur Malvil, he is great fripon. And I ver sorry he be marry to Mademoiselle Neville.

Mil. Married to her?

La Rou. You not know it? He is marry to her dis day. He take my apartment tree week ago. He not have it known dat he is marry for five or six day; write letter to me dis afternoon: he must be let in ver private; de servant not to see him; go up de back stairs to her room, and so *l'affaire est faite.*

Mil. And thus he has seduced her from her relations? Let me see the letter. (*Reads the letter.*)

"*Madame la Rouge,*

"*Miss Neville has this day given me her hand in marriage. I would not have it known for some time. Conduct me to her apartments, unknown to your servants. The way up the back stairs will be best. Your secrecy shall be rewarded by*

"Martin Malvil."

La Rou. I not tink him so bad to talk of me, and tell such parcel of story, vid not one word true.

Mil. So; here he is in black and white. To come privately, is he? If I could detain him here, and prevent all means of his escaping—

La Rou. Escape? Up back stairs, he must come through dat apartment; (*Pointing to a door in the back scene.*) I turn de key in de back door: *viola votre prisonier*; he is prisoner.

Mil. Exquisite woman! I'll lock this door, and secure the key. (*Locks the door in the back scene.*) Hush! (*A rap at the street door.*)

La Rou. Le voila: he come now.

Mil. Fly, let him in; send once more to Dashwould; I want him this instant; fly, despatch.

La Rou. I do all vat you bid me. [*Exit.*

Mil. It is honest of her to make this discovery. If this be Malvil—a soft whisper that—(*Listens.*) it is he, I hear his voice. I shall have the merit

of defeating villany, and protecting innocence. Don't I hear Miss Neville? Miss Neville!

Enter Miss Neville.

Miss N. Madam La Rouge!—Oh, sir! what brings you hither?

Mil. It is your interest to hear me; your happiness depends upon it.

Miss N. Alas! I fear he is too rash.

Mil. Command your attention, and listen to me: Malvil has planned your ruin.

Miss N. Impossible! he has too much honour: why will you alarm me thus? I am unfortunate, and you, sir, need not added to my afflictions.

Mil. You have trusted yourself to a villain: he means, at midnight, to gain access to your person, to triumph over your honour, and then leave you to remorse, to shame, and misery. Read that letter. (*Gives it to her, and she reads it to herself.*) She's an amiable girl, and I dare say, will make an admirable wife.—Hark! I hear him in yonder room. Suppress each wild emotion of surprise, and wait the event.

Miss N. I can scarce believe what I read. What have I done? (*Weeps.*)

Mil. I will direct you; rely upon me.

Enter Dashwould, Lady Bell, *and* Lady Jane.

Dash. La Rouge has told us the whole story.

Mil. Hush! no noise.

Lady Bell. My sweet girl, how could you frighten me so?

Miss N. I blush for what I have done: but Mrs. Bromley's cruelty drove me to despair.

Lady Jane. My dear, all will be well: don't flurry yourself.

Lady Bell. Though my aunt vexed you, why run away from me?

Enter Mrs. Bromley, Bygrove, Sir Harry, *and* Captain Bygrove.

Mrs. B. Where is this unhappy girl?

Mil. A moment's patience.

Enter Madame La Rouge.

Mil. Is he safe?

La Rou. He is dere in de room as safe as in Bastile.

Mil. Speak to him through the door: now all be silent.

La Rou. Monsieur Malvil, open de door.

Mal. (*Within.*) Do you open it, you have the key.

La Rou. De key, it is dere: Miss Neville, it is gone to bed; all the house asleep: I in de dark; now is your time.

Mil. (*To La Rouge.*) Hush! here is the key. (*Takes away the lights.*)

Mal. (*Within.*) Will you despatch?

La Rou. Attendez: here is de key: I let you out. (*Unlocks the door.*)

Enter Malvil.

Mal. All in darkness: is she gone to bed?

La Rou. (*Leading him.*) She wait for you: vere was you married?

Mal. St. James's parish: Sir Harry has not succeeded; she prefers me. Say nothing of it yet awhile.

La Rou. No; not a vord: tenez, I get light for you. [*Exit.*

Mal. So; I have carried my point. The family will be glad to patch up the affair, to avoid the disgrace.

Enter Madame La Rouge, *with lights.*

La Rou. Ah! you look *en cavalier*; ver good apartment for you; and dere is good picture. And dis room is well furnish: look about you: more picture, and all original. (*Turns him to the company.*)

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha! your servant, Mr. Malvil!

Mal. Hell and confusion!

Mil. (*Taking him by the arm.*) There are bounds and limits even to virtue.

Dash. (*At his other arm.*) Morals are capable of mathematical demonstration.

Lady Bell. (*To Miss Neville.*) Let us withdraw from all this bustle. Sir Harry, step this way, I want you.—

[*Exit with Miss Nev. Lady Jane, and Sir H.*

Dash. This is all according to the fitness of things.

Mil. Something voluptuous in meaning well.

Byg. Dashwould, your ridicule is now in season to expose such a character. He is fair game, and hunt him down as you please.

Mal. The fiends are about me!—Mr. Bygrove, you are a thinking man, I appeal to you.

Mil. I appeal to this letter, sir.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Mal. The letter is forged—let me see it. (*Snatches at it.*)

Dash. And I have another proof! this anonymous scrawl, written by your direction, and sent to Miss Neville, to give a stab to the character of Sir Harry. Do you deny it, sir? Your secretary is now in the house; I brought him with me; he is ready to prove you the author of this mean, clandestine mischief.

Mal. All false; all a forgery. Where is this French impostor? Where is your witness, sir? (*To Dash.*) I'll put them both to the proof this moment. [*Exit.*

Dash. No private parlying. [*Exit.*

Byg. No; we must all hear. [*Exit.*

Mrs. B. Yes; all must hear. [*Exit.*

Mil. My presence may be necessary.

Capt. B. Millamour, stay and give me joy.

Mil. Of what?

Capt. B. The idol of my heart! To-morrow makes her mine.

Mil. Well, I give you joy. Who is she?

Capt. B. My Lady Bell, thou dear fellow: come, let us go and see what they are about.

Mil. Let us go and see who shall cut the other's throat.

Capt. B. A pleasant employment.

Mil. You shall tear this heart out, before you tear Lady Bell from me.

Capt. B. Very well; have your frolic. This works as I could wish. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Mil. Despair and frenzy! if she is capable of a treachery like this—

Enter Lady Bell.

Lady Bell. You have done some good at last, Mr. Millamour.

Mil. Lady Bell! (*Pauses, and looks at her.*) I once thought, but you will break my heart.

Lady Bell. It will bend a little, but never break.

Mil. Will you listen to me? There is a tyrant fair, and you have interest with her; you can serve me; all the joys of life are centered there.

Lady Bell. (*Smiles aside.*) He is mine against the world. And so you want my interest? That's lucky, for I have a favour to request of you.

Mil. Is there a favour in the power of man, you may not command at my hands?

Lady Bell. You are very good, sir; there is a person, but the levity of his temper—

Mil. (*Aside.*) She means me. Your beauty will reclaim him.

Lady Bell. (*Smiles at him.*) May I rely upon you?

Mil. What an angel look there was! (*Aside.*) and do you ask the question?

Lady Bell. When sincere affection—

Mil. It is generous to own it.

Lady Bell. And since the impression made by—

Mil. Do not hesitate.

Lady Bell. Made by Captain Bygrove—

Mil. Made by Captain Bygrove! (*Turns away.*)

Lady Bell. That wounds deep, (*Aside.*) and if you will assist my fond, fond hopes, it will be generous indeed.

Mil. This is a blow I never looked for. (*Aside.*) Yes, ma'am, it will be generous; and in return, if you will intercede for me with Lady Bell—pho! with a—with Lady Jane, I say, I say if you will intercede for me with Lady Jane—

Lady Bell. Oh! by all means. And as I approve of your choice—(*He walks away, she follows him.*) I hope you will approve of mine; and by mutual acts of friendship, we may promote each other's happiness.

Enter Dashwould.

Dash. Malvil is detected.

Lady Bell. And Sir Harry has settled every thing with Miss Neville. Go and wish him joy. [*Exit Dash.*] My sweet friend will be happy at last. (*Going.*)

Mil. (*Taking her hand.*) But you won't marry the Captain?

Lady Bell. Will you make interest for me?

Mil. How can you torment me thus?

Lady Bell. You have done some service, and you may now entertain a degree of hope. (*Smiling at him.*) But have you another copy of verses for my aunt?

Mil. How can you? (*Kisses her hand.*) She yields, and I am blessed indeed.

Enter Miss Neville, Sir Harry Lovewit, Lady Jane, *and* Captain Bygrove.

Lady Bell. Here, Sir Harry, in the presence of this company, I give you, in this friend of mine, truth, good sense and virtue. Take her, sir, and now you have got a treasure.

Sir H. (*To Miss Neville.*) It shall be my pride to raise you to that sphere of life, which your merit, and your sufferings from— (*Looks at Mrs. Bromley.*)

Mrs. B. Why fix on me, sir?

Sir H. They are much mistaken, who can find no way of shewing their superior rank, but by letting their weight fall on those, whom fortune has placed beneath them.

Dash. And that sentiment, however I may rattle, I wish impressed upon all the patrons of poor relations, throughout his majesty's dominions.

Miss N. Mrs. Bromley, I have much to say to you. My obligations to you I shall never forget. I am not ashamed, even in the presence of Sir Harry, to own the distress in which you found me. If at any time I have given offence; if under your displeasure, I have been impatient, you will allow for an education that raised me much above my circumstances. That education shall teach me to act as becomes Sir Harry's lady, with affection, with duty to him; and to you, madam, with gratitude, for that bounty which saved me from calamity and ruin.

Mrs. B. Your words overpower me. I feel that I have done wrong. I rejoice at your good fortune: your merit deserves it. (*She takes her hand —they retire.*)

Dash. Why this is as it should be. Mr. Bygrove, I hope soon to wish you joy.

Byg. Compared to Malvil, thou art an honest fellow, and I thank you.

Dash. Millamour, is there no recompence for your virtue? in a modern comedy, you would be rewarded with a wife.

Mil. Lady Bell has more than poetical justice in her power. I wish Sir John were here: he would now see me reclaimed from every folly, by that lady.

Mrs. B. (*Advances.*) If it is so, I congratulate you both.

Lady Bell. It is even so, aunt; the whim of the present moment. Mr. Millamour has served my amiable friend, and I have promised him my hand, and so, (*Holds up both her hands.*) which will you have? Puzzle about it, and know your own mind if you can.

Mil. With rapture thus I snatch it to my heart.

Lady Bell. Sister, what nunnery will you go to? Mr. Bygrove, command your son to take her.

Capt. B. That command I have obeyed already.

Lady Jane. Since the truth must out, we made use of a stratagem to fix my sister and that gentleman.

Lady Bell. To fix yourself, if you please. I knew you would be married before me.

Mil. Dashwould, give me your hand. Your wit shall enliven our social hours, and while I laugh with you at the events of life, you shall see me endeavour to weed out of my own mind every folly.

Dash. You do me honour, sir; and if Mr. Bygrove will now and then give and take a joke—

Byg. As often as you please: but take my advice, and don't lose your friend for your joke.

Dash. By no means, Mr. Bygrove, except now and then, when the friend is the worst of the two.

Mil. The varieties of life, till now, distracted my attention.

But when our hearts victorious beauty draws,
We feel its pow'r, and own its sov'reign laws;
To that subservient all our passions move,
And even my constancy shall spring from love.

[*Exeunt.*

LOVE FOR LOVE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY WILLIAM CONGREVE.



Act III.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

SIR SAMPSON LEGEND	TATTLE	SNAP	ANGELICA
VALENTINE	FORESIGHT	MRS. FORESIGHT	NURSE
BEN	JEREMY	MRS. FRAIL	JENNY
SCANDAL	TRAPLAND	MISS PRUE	SERVANTS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Valentine's Lodgings.*

VALENTINE *discovered reading;* JEREMY *waiting. Several books upon the table.*

Val. Jeremy!

Jer. Sir?

Val. Here, take away; I'll walk a turn, and digest what I have read. (*Rises.*)

Jer. You'll grow devilish fat upon this paper diet! (*Aside, and taking away the books.*)

Val. And, d'ye hear? go you to breakfast: there's a page doubled down in Epictetus, that is a feast for an emperor

Jer. Was Epictetus a real cook, or did he only write receipts?

Val. Read, read, sirrah, and refine your appetite; learn to live upon instruction; feast your mind, and mortify your flesh. Read, and take your nourishment in at your eyes; shut up your mouth, and chew the cud of understanding: so Epictetus advises.

Jer. Oh, lord! I have heard much of him, when I waited upon a gentleman at Cambridge. Pray, what was that Epictetus?

Val. A very rich man—not worth a groat.

Jer. Hnmph! and so he has made a very fine feast, where there is nothing to be eaten?

Val. Yes.

Jer. Sir, you're a gentleman, and probably understand this fine feeding; but, if you please, I had rather be at board-wages. Does your Epictetus, or your Seneca here, or any of these poor rich rogues, teach you how to pay your debts without money? will they shut up the mouths of your creditors? will Plato be bail for you? or Diogenes, because he understands confinement, and lived in a tub, go to prison for you? 'Slife! sir, what do you mean, to mew yourself up here with three or four musty books, in commendation of starving and poverty?

Val. Why, sirrah, I have no money, you know it; and therefore resolve to rail at all that have: and in that I but follow the examples of the wisest and wittiest men in all ages—these poets and philosophers, whom you naturally hate, for just such another reason; because they abound in sense, and you are a fool.

Jer. Ay, sir, I am a fool, I know it; and yet, heaven help me! I'm poor enough to be a wit. But I was always a fool, when I told you what your expenses would bring you to; your coaches and your liveries; your treats and your balls; your being in love with a lady, that did not care a farthing for you in your prosperity; and keeping company with wits, that cared for nothing but your prosperity, and now when you are poor, hate you as much as they do one another.

Val. Well! and, now I am poor, I have an opportunity to be revenged on them all; I'll pursue Angelica with more love than ever, and appear more notoriously her admirer in this restraint, than when I openly rivalled the rich fops that made court to her. So shall my poverty be a mortification to her pride, and perhaps make her compassionate the love, which has principally reduced me to this lowness of fortune. And for the wits, I'm sure I am in a condition to be even with them.

Jer. Nay, your condition is pretty even with theirs, that's the truth on't.

Val. I'll take some of their trade out of their hands.

Jer. Now heaven of mercy continue the tax upon paper! You don't mean to write?

Val. Yes, I do; I'll write a play.

Jer. Hem! Sir, if you please to give me a small certificate of three lines; only to certify those to whom it may concern, "That the bearer hereof, Jeremy Fetch by name, has, for the space of seven years, truly and faithfully served Valentine Legend, Esquire; and that he is not now turned away for any misdemeanor, but does voluntarily dismiss his master from any future authority over him."

Val. No, sirrah! you shall live with me still.

Jer. Sir, it's impossible; I may die with you, starve with you, or be damned with your works: but to live, even three days, the life of a play, I no more expect it, than to be canonized for a muse after my decease.

Val. You are witty, you rogue; I shall want your help. I'll have you learn to make couplets, to tag to the end of acts. D'ye hear? get the maids to crambo in an evening, and learn the knack of rhyming; you may arrive at the height of a song sent by an unknown hand, or a chocolate-house lampoon.

Jer. But, sir, is this the way to recover your father's favour? Why, Sir Sampson will be irreconcilable. If your younger brother should come from sea, he'd never look upon you again. You're undone, sir; you're ruined; you won't have a friend left in the world, if you turn poet: I never think of the trade but the spirit of famine appears to me; sometimes like a decayed porter, worn out with pimping, and carrying billet-doux and songs; not like other porters, for hire, but for the jest's sake: now like a thin chairman, melted down to half his proportion, with carrying a poet upon tick, to visit some great fortune; and his fare to be paid him, like the wages of sin, either at the day of marriage, or the day of death.

Enter SCANDAL.

Scand. What! Jeremy holding forth?

Val. The rogue has (with all the wit he could muster up) been declaiming against wit.

Scand. Ay! Why, then, I'm afraid Jeremy has wit: for wherever it is, it's always contriving its own ruin.

Jer. Why so I have been telling my master, sir. Mr. Scandal, for heaven's sake! sir, try if you can dissuade him from turning poet.

Scand. Poet! he shall turn soldier first, and rather depend upon the outside of his head, than the lining! Why, what the devil! has not your poverty made you enemies enough? must you needs shew your wit to get more?

Jer. Ay, more indeed; for who cares for anybody that has more wit than himself?

Scand. Jeremy speaks like an oracle. Don't you see how worthless great men and dull rich rogues avoid a witty man of small fortune? Why he looks, like a writ of inquiry, into their titles and estates; and seems commissioned by heaven to seize the better half.

Val. Therefore, I would rail in my writings, and be revenged. (*Rises.*)

Scand. Rail! at whom? the whole world? Impotent and vain! Who would die a martyr to sense, in a country where religion is folly? You may stand at bay for a while; but, when the full cry is against you, you sha'n't have fair play for your life. If you can't be fairly run down by the hounds, you will be treacherously shot by the huntsman. No; turn flatterer, quack, lawyer, anything but a poet: a modern poet is worse, more servile, timorous, and fawning, than any I have named; without you could retrieve the ancient honours of the name, recall the stage of Athens, and be allowed the force of open honest satire.

Val. You are as inveterate against our poets, as if your character had been lately exposed upon the stage. Nay, I am not violently bent upon the trade. (*A knock.*) Jeremy, see who's there. [*Exit Jeremy.*] But tell me what you would have me do? What do the world say of me, and my forced confinement?

Scand. The world behaves itself, as it uses to do on such occasions. Some pity you, and condemn your father; others excuse him, and blame you. Only, the ladies are merciful, and wish you well; since love and pleasurable expense have been your greatest faults.

Enter JEREMY.

Val. How now?

Jer. Nothing new, sir. I have despatched some half a dozen duns with as much dexterity as a hungry judge does causes at dinner-time.

Val. What answer have you given them?

Scand. Patience, I suppose—the old receipt?

Jer. No, faith, sir: I have put them off so long with patience and forbearance, and other fair words, that I was forced to tell them in plain downright English—

Val. What?

Jer. That they should be paid.

Val. When?

Jer. To-morrow.

Val. And how the devil do you mean to keep your word?

Jer. Keep it? not at all: it has been so very much stretched, that I reckon it will break of course by to-morrow, and nobody be surprised at the matter! (*Knocking.*) Again! Sir, if you don't like my negociation, will you be pleased to answer these yourself?

Val. See who they are. [*Exit Jeremy.*] By this, Scandal, you may see what it is to be great. Secretaries of state, presidents of the council, and generals of an army, lead just such a life as I do; have just such crowds of visitants in a morning, all soliciting of past promises; which are but a civiller sort of duns, that lay claim to voluntary debts.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. Oh! sir, there's Trapland, the scrivener, with two suspicious fellows, like lawful footpads, that would knock a man down with pocket tipstaves; and there's your father's steward; and the nurse, with one of your children, from Twit'nam.

Val. Plague on her! could she find no other time to fling my sins in my face? Here! give her this, (*gives money*) and bid her trouble me no more: bid Mr. Trapland come in. If I can give that Cerberus a sop, I shall be at rest for one day. [*Exit Jeremy.*

Enter JEREMY *with* TRAPLAND.

Oh! Mr. Trapland, my old friend, welcome! Jeremy, a chair quickly: a bottle of sack and a toast. Fly—a chair first. [*Exit Jeremy.*

Trapl. A good morning to you, Mr. Valentine; and to you, Mr. Scandal.

Scand. The morning's a very good morning, if you don't spoil it.

Val. Come, sit you down: you know his way.

Trapl. (*Sits.*) There is a debt, Mr. Valentine, of fifteen hundred pounds, of pretty long standing—

Val. I cannot talk about business with a thirsty palate. Sirrah! the sack.

Enter JEREMY, *with wine, &c.*

Trapl. And I desire to know what course you have taken for the payment.

Val. Faith and troth, I am heartily glad to see you. My service to you! fill, fill, to honest Mr. Trapland—fuller!

Trapl. Hold! sweetheart, this is not to our business. My service to you, Mr. Scandal! (*Drinks.*) I have forborne as long—

Val. T'other glass, and then we'll talk. Fill, Jeremy.

Trapl. No more, in truth. I have forborne I say—

Val. And how does your handsome daughter?—Come, a good husband to her. (*Drinks.*)

Trapl. Thank you—I have been out of this money—

Val. Drink first. Scandal, why do you not drink? (*They drink.*)

Trapl. And, in short, I can be put off no longer.

Val. I was much obliged to you for your supply: it did me signal service in my necessity. But you delight in doing good. Scandal, drink to me my friend Trapland's health. An honester man lives not, nor one more ready to serve his friend in distress; though I say it to his face. Come, fill each man his glass.

Scand. What! I know Trapland has been a wencher, and loves a girl still. You never knew a wencher, that was not an honest fellow.

Trapl. Fie! Mr. Scandal, you never knew—

Scand. What don't I know? I know the buxom black widow in the Poultry—eight hundred pounds a-year jointure, and twenty thousand pounds in money. Ha, ha! old Trap!

Val. Say you so, i'faith? Come, we'll remember the widow: I know whereabouts you are; come, to the widow.

Trapl. No more, indeed.

Val. What! the widow's health? off with it. (*They drink.*) A lovely girl, i'faith, black sparkling eyes, soft pouting ruby lips! Better sealing there, than a bond for a million, eh?

Trapl. Ha, ha, ha! Verily, give me a glass. You're a wag; and here's to the widow. (*Drinks.*)

Scand. He begins to chuckle; ply him close, or he'll relapse into a dun. [*Exit Jeremy.*

Enter SNAP.

Snap. By your leave, gentlemen. Mr. Trapland, if we must do our office, tell us. We have half a dozen gentlemen to arrest in Pall Mall and Covent Garden; and if we don't make haste, the chairmen will be abroad, and block up the chocolate-houses; and then our labour's lost.

Enter JEREMY.

Trapl. Odso! that's true. Mr. Valentine, I love mirth; but business must be done; are you ready to—

Jer. Sir, your father's steward says he comes to make proposals concerning your debts.

[*Exit Jeremy.*

Val. Bid him come in: Mr. Trapland, send away your officer; you shall have an answer presently.

Trapl. Mr. Snap, stay within call. [*Exit Snap.*

Enter JEREMY *and Steward, who whispers Valentine.*

Scand. Here's a dog now, a traitor in his wine! Sirrah! refund the sack; Jeremy, fetch him some warm water; or I'll rip up his stomach, and go the shortest way to his conscience.

Trapl. Mr. Scandal, you are uncivil. I did not value your sack; but you cannot expect it again, when I have drunk it.

Scand. And how do you expect to have your money again, when a gentleman has spent it?

Val. You need say no more. I understand the conditions; they are very hard, but my necessity is very pressing: I agree to them. Take Mr. Trapland with you, and let him draw the writing. Mr. Trapland, you know this man; he shall satisfy you.

Trapl. Sincerely, I am loth to be thus pressing; but my necessity—

Val. No apology, Mr. Scrivener; you shall be paid.

Trapl. I hope you forgive me: my business requires— [*Exeunt Trapland, Steward, and Jeremy.*

Scand. He begs pardon, like a hangman at an execution.

Val. But I have got a reprieve.

Scand. I am surprised. What! does your father relent?

Val. No; he has sent me the hardest conditions in the world. You have heard of a booby brother of mine, that was sent to sea, three years ago? This brother, my father hears, is landed; whereupon, he very affectionately sends me word, if I will make a deed of conveyance of my right to his estate, after his death, to my younger brother, he will immediately furnish me with four thousand pounds, to pay my debts and make my fortune. This was once proposed before, and I refused it; but the present impatience of my creditors for their money, and my own impatience of confinement, and absence from Angelica, force me to consent.

Scand. A very desperate demonstration of your love to Angelica! and, I think, she has never given you any assurance of hers.

Val. You know her temper; she never gave me any great reason either of hope or despair.

Scand. Women of her airy temper, as they seldom think before they act, so they rarely give us any light to guess at what they mean. But you have little reason to believe that a woman of this age, who has had an indifference for you in your prosperity, will fall in love with your ill fortune. Besides, Angelica has a great fortune of her own; and great fortunes either expect another great fortune, or a fool.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. More misfortunes, sir!

Val. What! another dun?

Jer. No, sir; but Mr. Tattle is come to wait upon you.

Val. Well, I can't help it; you must bring him up; he knows I don't go abroad. [*Exit Jeremy.*

Scand. Plague on him, I'll begone.

Val. No, pr'ythee, stay: Tattle and you should never be asunder; you are light and shadow, and shew one another. He is perfectly thy reverse, both in humour and understanding; and as you set up for defamation, he is a mender of defamations.

Scand. A mender of reputations! ay, just as he is a keeper of secrets; another virtue that he sets up for in the same manner. For the rogue will speak aloud, in the posture of a whisper; and deny a woman's name, while he gives you the marks of her person: he will forswear receiving a letter from her, and, at the same time, shew you her hand in the superscription; and yet, perhaps, he has counterfeited the hand, too, and sworn to a truth. In short, he is a public professor of secrecy, and makes proclamation that he holds private intelligence. He is here.

Enter TATTLE.

Tatt. Valentine, good morrow: Scandal, I am your's—that is, when you speak well of me.

Scand. That is, when I am your's: for while I am my own, or anybody's else, that will never happen.

Tatt. How inhuman!

Val. Why, Tattle, you need not be much concerned at anything that he says: for to converse with Scandal, is to play at Losing Loadum; you must lose a good name to him, before you can win it for yourself.

Tatt. But how barbarous that is, and how unfortunate for him, that the world should think the better of any person for his calumniation! I thank heaven, it has always been a part of my character to handle the reputations of others very tenderly, indeed.

Scand. Ay, such rotten reputations as you have to deal with, are to be handled tenderly, indeed.

Tatt. Nay, why rotten? why should you say rotten, when you know not the persons of whom you speak? How cruel that is!

Scand. Not know them? Why, thou never hadst to do with any one that was not common to all the town.

Tatt. Ha, ha, ha! nay, now you make a jest of it, indeed. For there is nothing more known, than that nobody knows anything of that nature of me.

As I hope to be saved, Valentine, I never exposed a woman, since I knew what woman was.

Val. And yet you have conversed with several?

Tatt. To be free with you, I have; I don't care if I own that; nay, more, (I'm going to say a bold word, now,) I never could meddle with a woman, that had to do with anybody else.

Scand. How!

Val. Nay, faith! I'm apt to believe him; except her husband, Tattle.

Tatt. Oh! that—

Scand. What think you of that noble commoner, Mrs. Drab?

Tatt. Pooh! I know Madam Drab has made her brags in three or four places, that I said this and that, and writ to her, and did I know not what—but, upon my reputation, she did me wrong. Well, well! that was malice; but I know the bottom of it. She was bribed to that by one we all know—a man, too—only to bring me into disgrace with a certain woman of quality—

Scand. Whom we all know.

Tatt. No matter for that. Yes, yes; everybody knows! no doubt on't, everybody knows my secrets! But I soon satisfied the lady of my innocence; for I told her: "Madam, (says I,) there are some persons who make it their business to tell stories, and say this and that of one and the other, and everything in the world; and, (says I,) if your grace—

Scand. Grace! [tongue!

Tatt. Oh, lord! what have I said? My unlucky

Val. Ha, ha, ha!

Scand. Why, Tattle, thou hast more impudence than one can in reason expect: I shall have an esteem for thee. Well, and ha, ha, ha! well, go on; and what did you say to her grace?

Val. I confess this is something extraordinary.

Tatt. Not a word, as I hope to be saved; an arrant *lapsus linguæ!* Come, let us talk of something else.

Val. Well! but how did you acquit yourself?

Tatt. Pooh, pooh! nothing at all; I only rallied with you. A woman of ordinary rank was a little jealous of me, and I told her something or other, faith! I know not what. Come, let's talk of something else. (*Hums a song.*)

Scand. Hang him! let him alone; he has a mind we should inquire.

Tatt. Valentine, I supped last night with your mistress, and her uncle, old Foresight: I think your father lies at Foresight's.

Val. Yes.

Tatt. Upon my soul, Angelica's a fine woman! And so is Mrs. Foresight, and her sister, Mrs. Frail.

Scand. Yes; Mrs. Frail is a very fine woman; we all know her.

Tatt. Oh! that is not fair.

Scand. What?

Tatt. To tell—

Scand. To tell what? Why, what do you know of Mrs. Frail?

Tatt. Who, I? Upon honour, I don't know whether she be a man or a woman; but by the smoothness of her chin, and roundness of her hips.

Scand. No!

Tatt. No.

Scand. She says otherwise.

Tatt. Impossible!

Scand. Yes, faith! Ask Valentine else.

Tatt. Why, then, as I hope to be saved, I believe a woman only obliges a man to secrecy, that she may have the pleasure of telling herself.

Scand. No doubt on't. Well, but has she done you wrong or no? You have succeeded with her, eh?

Tatt. Though I have more honour than to tell first, I have more manners than to contradict what a lady has declared.

Scand. Well, you own it?

Tatt. I am strangely surprised! Yes, yes; I cannot deny it, if she taxes me with it.

Scand. She'll be here by-and-by; she sees Valentine every morning.

Tatt. How?

Val. She does me the favour—I mean, of a visit sometimes. I did not think she had granted more to anybody.

Scand. Nor I, faith! But Tattle does not use to belie a lady; it is contrary to his character. How one may be deceived in a woman, Valentine!

Tatt. Nay, what do you mean, gentlemen?

Scand. I'm resolved I'll ask her.

Tatt. Oh, barbarous! Why did you not tell me—

Scand. No; you told us.

Tatt. And bid me ask Valentine?

Val. What did I say? I hope you won't bring me to confess an answer, when you never asked me the question.

Tatt. But, gentlemen, this is the most inhuman proceeding—

Val. Nay, if you have known Scandal thus long, and cannot avoid such a palpable decoy as this was; the ladies have a fine time, whose reputations are in your keeping.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, Mrs. Frail has sent to know if you are stirring.

Val. Shew her up when she comes.

[*Exit Jeremy.*

Tatt. I'll begone.

Val. You'll meet her.

Tatt. Is there not a back way?

Val. If there were, you have more discretion than to give Scandal such an advantage; why, your running away will prove all that he can tell her.

Tatt. Scandal, you will not be so ungenerous. Oh! I shall lose my reputation of secrecy for ever. I shall never be received but upon public days; and my visits will never be admitted beyond a drawing-room: I shall never see a bed-chamber again, never be locked in a closet, nor run behind a screen, or under a table; never be distinguished among the waiting-women by the name of trusty Mr. Tattle more. You will not be so cruel?

Val. Scandal, have pity on him; he'll yield to any conditions.

Tatt. Any, any terms!

Scand. Come, then, sacrifice half a dozen women of good reputation to me presently. Come, where are you familiar? And see that they are women of quality, too; the first quality.

Tatt. 'Tis very hard. Won't a baronet's lady pass?

Scand. No; nothing under a right honourable.

Tatt. Oh, inhuman! You don't expect their names?

Scand. No, their titles shall serve.

Tatt. Alas! that is the same thing! Pray spare me their titles; I'll describe their persons.

Scand. Well, begin, then. But take notice, if you are so ill a painter, that I cannot know the person by your picture of her, you must be condemned, like other bad painters, to write the name at the bottom.

Tatt. Well, first, then—

Mrs. Frail. (*Within.*) No, no; bid them wait.

Tatt. Oh, unfortunate! she's come already. Will you have patience till another time? I'll double the number.

Scand. Well, on that condition—Take heed you don't fail me.

Enter MRS. FRAIL.

Mrs. F. I shall get a fine reputation, by coming to see fellows in a morning! Scandal, you devil, are you here, too? Oh! Mr. Tattle, everything is safe with you, we know.

Scand. Tattle!

Tatt. Mum—Oh! madam, you do me too much honour.

Val. Well, Lady Galloper, how does Angelica?

Mrs. F. Angelica? Manners!

Val. What, you will allow an absent lover—

Mrs. F. No; I'll allow a lover present with his mistress to be particular; but, otherwise, I think his passion ought to give place to his manners.

Val. But what if he has more passion than manners?

Mrs. F. Then let him marry, and reform.

Val. Marriage, indeed, may qualify the fury of his passion; but it very rarely amends a man's manners.

Mrs. F. You are the most mistaken in the world; there is no creature perfectly civil, but a husband: for in a little time, he grows only rude to his wife; and that is the highest good-breeding, for it begets his civility to other people. Well, I'll tell you news; but I suppose you heard your brother Benjamin is landed; and my brother Foresight's daughter is come out of the country: I assure you, there's a match talked of by the old people. Well, if he be but as great a sea beast, as she is a land monster, we shall have a most amphibious breed; the progeny will be all otters: he has been bred at sea; and she has never been out of the country.

Val. Plague take them! their conjunction bodes no good, I'm sure.

Mrs. F. Now you talk of conjunction, my brother Foresight has cast both their nativities, and prognosticates an admiral, and an eminent justice of the peace, to be the issue male of their two bodies. 'Tis the most superstitious old fool! He would have persuaded me that this was an unlucky day, and would not let me come abroad: but I invented a dream, and sent him to Artemidorus for interpretation, and so stole out to see you. Well, and what will you give me now? what will you give me, Mr. Tattle?

Tatt. I? My soul, madam.

Mrs. F. Pooh! no, I thank you; I have enough to do to take care of my own. Well; but I'll come and see you one of these mornings: I hear you have a great many pictures.

Tatt. I have a pretty good collection, at your service; some originals.

Scand. Hang him! he has nothing but the Seasons, and the Twelve Cæsars, paltry copies; and the Five Senses, as ill-represented as they are in himself; and he himself is the only original you will see there.

Mrs. F. Ay, but I hear he has a closet of beauties.

Scand. Yes; all that have done him favours, if you will believe him.

Mrs. F. Ay! let me see those, Mr. Tattle.

Tatt. Oh! madam, those are sacred to love and contemplation. No man but the painter and myself was ever blest with the sight.

Mrs. F. Well, but a woman—

Tatt. Nor woman, till she consented to have her picture there, too; for then she is obliged to keep the secret.

Scand. No, no! come to me if you'd see pictures.

Mrs. F. You?

Scand. Yes, faith! I can shew you your own picture, and most of your acquaintance, to the life, and as like as at Kneller's.

Mrs. F. Oh! lying creature! Valentine, does not he lie? I can't believe a word he says.

Val. No, indeed; he speaks truth now; for, as Tattle has pictures of all that has granted him favours, he has the pictures of all that has refused him; if satires, characters, and lampoons, are pictures.

Scand. Yes; mine are most in black and white; and yet there are some set out in their true colours, both men and women. I can shew you pride, folly, affectation, wantonness, inconstancy, covetousness, dissimulation, malice, and ignorance, all in one piece. Then, I can shew you lying, foppery, vanity, cowardice, bragging, and ugliness, in another piece: and yet one of these is a celebrated beauty, and t'other a professed beau. I have some hieroglyphics, too.

Mrs. F. Come, let's hear them.

Scand. I have a lawyer with a hundred hands, two heads, and but one face; a divine, with two faces, and one head; and I have a soldier, with his brains in his belly, and his heart where his head should be.

Tatt. And no head?

Scand. No head.

Mrs. F. Pooh! this is all invention. Well, I'll come, if it be but to disprove you.

Enter Jeremy.

Jer. Sir, here's the steward again from your father.

Val. I'll come to him. [*Exit Jeremy.*] Will you give me leave? I'll wait on you again presently.

Mrs. F. No; I'll begone. Come, who squires me to the Exchange? I must call on my sister Foresight there.

Scand. I will: I have a mind to your sister.

Mrs. F. Civil!

Tatt. (*To Mrs. Frail.*) I will; because I have a *tendre* for your ladyship.

Mrs. F. That's somewhat the better reason, to my opinion. [*Exeunt Mrs. Frail and Tattle.*

Val. Tell Angelica I am about making hard conditions to come abroad, and be at liberty to see her.

Scand. I'll give an account of you and your proceedings. If indiscretion be a sign of love, you are the most a lover of anybody that I know. You fancy that parting with your estate will help you to your mistress; in my mind, he is a thoughtless adventurer,

Who hopes to purchase wealth by selling land;
Or win a mistress with a losing hand. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*A Room in Foresight's house.*

Enter Foresight *and* James.

For. Heyday! What, are all the women of my family abroad? Is not my wife come home? nor my sister, nor my daughter?

James. No, sir.

For. Mercy on us! what can be the meaning of it? Sure, the moon is in all her fortitudes! Is my niece Angelica at home?

James. Yes, sir.

For. I believe you lie, sir.

James. Sir?

For. I say, you lie, sir. It is impossible that anything should be as I would have it; for I was born, sir, when the crab was ascending; and all my affairs go backward.

James. I can't tell, indeed, sir.

For. No, I know you can't, sir; but I can tell, and foretell, sir.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse, where's your young mistress?

Nurse. Wee'st heart! I know not; they're none of them come home yet. Poor child! I warrant she's fond of seeing the town! Marry, pray heaven, they have given her any dinner! Good lack-a-day! ha, ha, ha! Oh, strange! I'll vow and swear now, ha, ha, ha! Marry, and did you ever see the like?

For. Why, how now! what's the matter?

Nurse. Pray heaven send your worship good luck! marry, and amen, with all my heart! for you have put on one stocking with the wrong side outward.

For. Ha! how? Faith and troth, I'm glad of it! and so I have; that may be good luck, in troth; in troth, it may, very good luck: nay, I have had

some omens. I got out of bed backwards, too, this morning, without premeditation; pretty good that, too. But, then, I stumbled coming down stairs, and met a weasel; bad omens those! Some bad, some good; our lives are chequered; mirth and sorrow, want and plenty, night and day, make up our time. But, in troth, I am pleased at my stocking—very well pleased at my stocking! Oh! here's my niece! Sirrah, go tell Sir Sampson Legend I'll wait on him, if he's at leisure. [*Exit James.*] 'Tis now three o'clock, a very good hour for business; Mercury governs this hour.

Enter ANGELICA.

Ang. Is it not a good hour for pleasure, too, uncle? Pray lend me your coach; mine's gone to be mended.

For. What, would you be gadding too? Sure, all females are mad to-day. It is of evil portend, and bodes mischief to the master of a family. I remember an old prophecy, written by Messahalah, the Arabian, and thus translated by a reverend Buckinghamshire bard:

When housewives all the house forsake,
And leave good men to brew and bake,
Withouten guile, then be it said,
That house doth stand upon its head;
And when the head is set in ground,
No mar'l, if it be fruitful found.

Fruitful! the head fruitful! that bodes horns; the fruit of the head is horns! Dear niece, stay at home; for by the head of the house, is meant the husband; the prophecy needs no explanation.

Ang. Well, but I can neither make you a cuckold, uncle, by going abroad, nor secure you from being one, by staying at home.

For. Yes, yes; while there's one woman left, the prophecy is not in full force.

Ang. But my inclinations are in force. I have a mind to go abroad; and if you won't lend me your coach, I'll take a hackney, or a chair. Why don't you keep your wife at home, if you are jealous of her when she's abroad? You know my aunt is a little retrograde (as you call it) in her nature. Uncle, I'm afraid you are not lord of the ascendant! Ha, ha, ha!

For. Well, jill-flirt! you are very pert; and always ridiculing that celestial science.

Ang. Nay, uncle, don't be angry. If you are, I'll reap up all your false prophecies, ridiculous dreams, and idle divinations. I'll swear, you are a nuisance to the neighbourhood. What a bustle did you keep against the last invisible eclipse, laying in provision, as it were for a siege! What a world of fire and candle, matches and tinder-boxes, did you purchase! One would have thought we were ever after to live under ground; or, at least, to make a voyage to Greenland, to inhabit there all the dark season. Indeed, uncle, I'll indite you for a wizard.

For. How, hussy! was there ever such a provoking minx?

Nurse. Oh! merciful father, how she talks!

Ang. Yes, I can make oath of your unlawful midnight practices; you and the old nurse there.

Nurse. Marry, heaven defend! I at midnight practices! Oh, lord! what's here to do? I in unlawful doings with my master's worship! Why, did you ever hear the like now? Sir, did ever I do anything but warm your bed, and tuck you up, and set the candle and your tobacco-box by you, and now and then rub the soles of your feet? Oh, lord! I—

Ang. Yes, I saw you together, through the key-hole of the closet, one night, like Saul and the witch of Endor, turning the sieve and shears, and pricking your thumbs to write poor innocent servants' names in blood, about a little nutmeg-grater which she had forgot in the caudle-cup.

For. I defy you, hussy! but I'll remember this. I'll be revenged on you, cookatrice! I'll hamper you! You have your fortune in your own hands! but I'll find a way to make your lover, your prodigal spendthrift gallant, Valentine, pay for all, I will. I will have patience, since it is the will of the stars that I should be thus tormented; this is the effect of the malicious conjunctions and oppositions in the third house of my nativity; there the curse of kindred was foretold. But I will have my doors locked up; I'll punish you; not a man shall enter my house.

Ang. Do, uncle; lock them up quickly, before my aunt comes home; you'll have a letter for alimony to-morrow morning! But let me begone first; and then let no mankind come near the house: but converse with spirits and the celestial signs; the bull, and the ram, and the goat. Bless me! there are a great many horned beasts among the twelve signs, uncle! But cuckolds go to heaven!

For. But there's but one virgin among the twelve signs, spitfire! but one virgin!

Ang. Nor there had not been that one, if she had had to do with anything but astrologers, uncle! That makes my aunt go abroad.

For. How, how! is that the reason? Come, you know something; tell me, and I'll forgive you; do, good niece. Come, you shall have my coach and horses; faith and troth, you shall. Does my wife complain? Come, I know women tell one another.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha!

For. Do you laugh? Well, gentlewoman, I'll—But, come, be a good girl; don't perplex your poor uncle! Tell me—Won't you speak? Od! I'll—

Enter JAMES.

James. Sir Sampson is coming to wait upon you, sir. [*Exit.*

Ang. Good b'ye, uncle. Call me a chair. I'll find out my aunt, and tell her she must not come home. [*Exit.*

For. I am so perplexed and vexed, I am not fit to receive him; I shall scarce recover myself before the hour be past. Go, nurse, and bid them tell Sir Sampson I'm ready to wait on him.

Nurse. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

For. Well—why, if I were born to be a cuckold, there's no more to be said! He is here already.

Enter SIR SAMPSON LEGEND, *with a paper.*

Sir S. Nor no more to be done, old boy; that is plain—here it is, I have it in my hand, old Ptolemy; I'll make the ungracious prodigal know who begat him; I will, old Nostrodamus. What, I warrant, my son thought nothing belonged to a father but forgiveness and affection; no authority, no correction, no arbitrary power; nothing to be done, but for him to offend, and me to pardon! I warrant you, if he danced till doomsday, he thought I were to pay the piper. Well, but here it is under black and white, *signatum, sigillatum,* and *deliberatum*—that, as soon as my son Benjamin is arrived, he is to make over to him his right of inheritance. Where's my daughter that is to be, eh! old Merlin? Body of me! I'm so glad I'm revenged on this undutiful rogue!

For. Odso! let me see; let me see the paper. Ay, faith and troth, here it is, if it will but hold; I wish things were done, and the conveyance made. When was this signed? what hour? Odso! you should have consulted me for the time. Well, but we'll make haste.

Sir S. Haste! ay, ay, haste enough; my son Ben will be in town to-night; I have ordered my lawyer to draw up writings of settlement and jointure; all shall be done to-night. No matter for the time; pr'ythee, brother Foresight, leave superstition: there's no time but the time present; there's no more to be said of what's past; and all that is to come will happen. If the sun shine by

day, and the stars by night—why, we shall know one another's faces without the help of a candle; and that's all the stars are good for.

For. How, how, Sir Sampson? that all? Give me leave to contradict you, and tell you, you are ignorant.

Sir S. I tell you, I am wise: and *sapiens dominabitur astris;* there's Latin for you to prove it, and an argument to confound your Ephemeris. Ignorant! I tell you, I have travelled, old Fercu! and know the globe. I have seen the antipodes, where the sun rises at midnight, and sets at noon day.

For. But I tell you I have travelled, and travelled in the celestial spheres; know the signs and the planets, and their houses; can judge of motions, direct and retrograde; of sextiles, quadrates, trines, and oppositions; fiery trigons, and aquatical trigons; know whether life shall be long or short, happy or unhappy; whether diseases are curable or incurable; if journeys shall be prosperous, undertakings successful, or goods stolen, recovered: I know—

Sir S. I know the length of the emperor of China's foot; have kissed the great mogul's slipper, and rid a hunting upon an elephant with the cham of Tartary. Body o'me! I have made a cuckold of a king; and the present majesty of Bantam is the issue of these loins.

For. I know when travellers lie, or speak truth, when they don't know it themselves.

Sir S. I have known an astrologer made a cuckold in the twinkling of a star.

For. What! does he twit me with my wife, too? I must be better informed of this. (*Aside.*) Do you mean my wife, Sir Sampson? Though you made a cuckold of the king of Bantam, yet, by the body of the sun—

Sir S. By the horns of the moon, you would say, brother Capricorn.

For. Capricorn in your teeth, thou modern Mandeville; Ferdinand Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude. Take back your paper of inheritance; send your son to sea again. I'll wed my daughter to an Egyptian mummy, ere she shall incorporate with a contemner of sciences and a defamer of virtue.

Sir S. (*Aside.*) Body o'me! I have gone too far; I must not provoke honest Alhumazar. An Egyptian mummy is an illustrious creature, my trusty hieroglyphic; and may have significations of futurity about him. Odsbud! I would my son were an Egyptian mummy for thy sake. What! thou art not angry for a jest, my good Haly? I reverence the sun, moon, and stars, with all my heart. What! I'll make thee a present of a mummy. Now I think on't, body o'me! I have a shoulder of an Egyptian king, that I purloined from one of the pyramids, powdered with hieroglyphics; thou shalt have it brought home to thy house, and make an entertainment for all the philomaths, and students in physic and astrology, in and about London.

For. But what do you know of my wife, Sir Sampson?

Sir S. Thy wife is a constellation of virtues; she is the moon, and thou art the man in the moon; nay, she is more illustrious than the moon; for she has her chastity, without her incontinency. 'Sbud! I was but in jest.

Enter Jeremy.

How now? who sent for you, eh? what would you have?

For. Nay, if you were but in jest—Who's that fellow? I don't like his physiognomy.

Sir S. (*To Jeremy.*) My son, sir? what son, sir? my son Benjamin, eh?

Jer. No, sir; Mr. Valentine, my master! it is the first time he has been abroad since his confinement, and he comes to pay his duty to you.

Sir S. Well, sir!

Enter Valentine.

Jer. He is here, sir.

Val. Your blessing, sir!

Sir S. You've had it already, sir; I think I sent it you to-day, in a bill of four thousand pounds. A great deal of money, brother Foresight!

For. Ay, indeed, Sir Sampson, a great deal of money for a young man; I wonder what he can do with it!

Sir S. Body o' me! so do I. Harkye! Valentine, if there be too much, refund the superfluity; dost hear, boy?

Val. Superfluity, sir! it will scarcely pay my debts. I hope you will have more indulgence than to oblige me to those hard conditions which my necessity signed to.

Sir S. Sir! how, I beseech you, what were you pleased to intimate concerning indulgence?

Val. Why, sir, that you would not go to the extremity of the conditions, but release me at least from some part.

Sir S. Oh! sir, I understand you; that's all, eh?

Val. Yes, sir; all that I presume to ask; but what you, out of fatherly fondness, will be pleased to add, will be doubly welcome.

Sir S. Here's a rogue, brother Foresight, makes a bargain under hand and seal in the morning, and would be released from it in the afternoon! here's a rogue, dog! here's conscience and honesty! This is your wit now, this is the morality of your wit! You are a wit, and have been a beau, and may be a—Why, sirrah! is it not here under hand and seal? Can you deny it?

Val. Sir, I don't deny it!

Sir S. Sirrah, you'll be hanged; I shall live to see you go up Holborn-hill. Has he not a rogue's face? Speak brother; you understand physiognomy; a hanging look to me; of all my boys the most unlike me. He has a d——d Tyburn face, without the benefit of the clergy.

For. Hum! Truly, I don't care to discourage a young man; he has a violent death in his face; but I hope no danger of hanging.

Val. Sir, is this usage for your son? For that old weather-headed fool, I know how to laugh at him; but you, sir—

Sir S. You, sir! and you, sir! Why, who are you, sir?

Val. Your son, sir.

Sir S. That's more than I know, sir; and I believe not.

Val. Faith! I hope not.

Sir S. What, would you have your mother a whore? Did you ever hear the like? did you ever hear the like? Body o' me—

Val. I would have an excuse for your barbarity and unnatural usage.

Sir S. Excuse! Impudence! Why, sirrah, mayn't I do what I please? are not you my slave? did not I beget you? and might not I have chosen whether I would have begot you or no? Oons! who are you? whence came you? what brought you into the world? how came you here, sir? here, to stand here, upon those two legs, and look erect, with that audacious face, eh? Answer me that. Did you come a volunteer into the world? or did I, with the lawful authority of a parent, press you to the service?

Val. I know no more why I came, than you do why you called me. But here I am; and if you don't mean to provide for me, I desire you would leave me as you found me.

Sir S. With all my heart. Come, uncase, strip, and go naked out of the world as you came into it.

Val. My clothes are soon put off; but you must also divest me of my reason, thought, passions, inclinations, affections, appetites, senses, and the huge train of attendants that you begot along with me.

Sir S. Body o' me! what a many-headed monster have I propagated!

Val. I am of myself, a plain, easy, simple creature; and to be kept at small expense: but the retinue that you gave me are craving and invincible; they are so many devils that you have raised, and will have employment.

Sir S. Oons! what had I to do to get children? Can't a private man be born without all these followers; why, nothing under an emperor should be born with appetites; why, at this rate, a fellow that has but a groat in his pocket may have a stomach capable of a ten shilling ordinary.

Jer. Nay, that's as clear as the sun; I'll make oath of it before any justice in Middlesex.

Sir S. Here's a cormorant, too! 'Sheart! this fellow were not born with you? I did not beget him, did I?

Jer. By the provision that's made for you, you might have begot me, too. Nay, and to tell your worship another truth, I believe you did; for I find I was born with those same whoreson appetites, too, that my master speaks of.

Sir S. Why, look you there now! I'll maintain it, that, by the rule of right reason, this fellow ought to have been born without a palate. 'Sheart! what should he do with a distinguishing taste? I warrant, now, he'd rather eat a pheasant than a piece of poor John: and smell, now; why, I warrant, he can smell, and loves perfume above a stink: why, there's it; and music—don't you love music, scoundrel?

Jer. Yes, I have a reasonable good ear, sir, as to jigs and country-dances, and the like. I don't much matter your solos or sonatas; they give me the spleen.

Sir S. The spleen! Ha, ha, ha! A pox confound you! Solos or sonatas! Oons! whose son are you, muckworm?

Jer. I am, by my father, the son of a chairman; my mother sold oysters in winter, and cucumbers in summer: and I came up stairs into the world; for I was born in a cellar.

For. By your looks you shall go up stairs out of the world, too, friend.

Sir S. And if this rogue were anatomized now, and dissected, he has his vessels of digestion and concoction, and so forth, large enough for the inside of a cardinal; this son of a cucumber! These things are unaccountable and unreasonable. Body o'me! why were I not a bear, that my cubs might have lived upon sucking their paws? Nature has been provident only to bears and spiders; the one has its nutriment in its own hands; and the other spins its habitation out of its own entrails.

Val. Fortune was provident enough to supply all the necessities of my nature, if I had my right inheritance.

Sir S. Again! Oons! haven't you four thousand pounds? If I had it again I would not give thee a groat. What, wouldst thou have me turn pelican, and feed thee out of my own vitals. Odsheart! live by your wits; you are always fond of the wits. Now let's see if you have wit enough to keep yourself. Your brother will be in town to-night, or to-morrow morning; and then, look you perform covenants; and so your friend and servant. Come, brother Foresight. [*Exit with Foresight.*

Jer. I told you what your visit would come to.

Val. 'Tis as much as I expected. I did not come to see him; I came to see Angelica; but since she was gone abroad, it was easily turned another way, and at least looked well on my side. What's here? Mrs. Foresight and Mrs. Frail! They are earnest. I'll avoid them. Come this way, and go and inquire when Angelica will return. [*Exit with Jeremy.*

Enter Mrs. Foresight *and* Mrs. Frail.

Mrs. F. What have you to do to watch me? 'Slife! I'll do what I please.

Mrs. For. You will?

Mrs. F. Yes, marry, will I! A great piece of business to go to Covent Garden, to take a turn in a hackney-coach with one's friend!

Mrs. For. Nay, two or three turns, I'll take my oath.

Mrs. F. Well, what if I took twenty? I warrant, if you had been there, it had only been innocent recreation! Lord! where's the comfort of this life, if we can't have the happiness of conversing where we like?

Mrs. For. But can't you converse at home? I own it, I think there's no happiness like conversing with an agreeable man; I don't quarrel at that, nor I don't think but your conversation was very innocent. But the place is public; and to be seen with a man in a hackney-coach is scandalous. What if anybody else should have seen you alight, as I did? How can anybody be happy, while they are in perpetual fear of being seen and censured? Besides, it would not only reflect upon you, sister, but on me.

Mrs. F. Pooh! here's a clutter! Why should it reflect upon you? I don't doubt but you have thought yourself happy in a hackney-coach before now! If I had gone to Knightsbridge, or to Chelsea, or to Spring Gardens, or to Barn Elms, with a man alone, something might have been said.

Mrs. For. Why, was I ever in any of those places? What do you mean, sister?

Mrs. F. Was I? What do you mean?

Mrs. For. You have been at a worse place.

Mrs. F. I at a worse place, and with a man?

Mrs. For. I suppose you would not go alone to the World's-end.

Mrs. F. The World's-end! What, do you mean to banter me?

Mrs. For. Poor innocent! You don't know that there is a place called the World's-end? I'll swear, you can keep your countenance purely! you'd make an admirable player!

Mrs. F. I'll swear you have a great deal of confidence, and, in my mind, too much for the stage.

Mrs. For. Very well; that will appear who has most. You never were at the World's-end?

Mrs. F. No.

Mrs. For. You deny it positively to my face?

Mrs. F. Your face! What's your face?

Mrs. For. No matter for that; it's as good a face as your's.

Mrs. F. Not by a dozen years' wearing. But I do deny it positively to your face, then.

Mrs. For. I'll allow you now to find fault with my face; for, I'll swear, your impudence has put me out of countenance. But look you here now, where did you lose this gold bodkin? Oh! sister, sister!

Mrs. F. My bodkin!

Mrs. For. Nay, 'tis your's; look at it.

Mrs. F. Well, if you go to that, where did you find this bodkin? Oh! sister, sister! sister every way!

Mrs. For. Oh! devil on't! that I could not discover her without betraying myself! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. F. I have heard gentlemen say, sister, that one should take great care, when one makes a thrust in fencing, not to lay open one's self.

Mrs. For. It is very true, sister. Well, since all's out, and, as you say, since we are both wounded, let us do what is often done in duels, take care of one another, and grow better friends than before.

Mrs. F. With all my heart. Well, give me your hand, in token of sisterly secrecy and affection.

Mrs. For. Here it is, with all my heart.

Mrs. F. Well, to tell truth, and speak openly one to another, I'm afraid the world have observed us more than we have observed one another. You have a rich husband, and are provided for: I am at a loss, and have no great stock either of fortune or reputation, and, therefore, must look sharply about me. Sir Sampson has a son that is expected to-night; and, by the account I have heard of his

education, can be no conjurer. The estate, you know, is to be made over to him. Now, if I could wheedle him, sister, eh? you understand me?

Mrs. For. I do; and will help you, to the utmost of my power. And I can tell you one thing that falls out luckily enough; my awkward daughter-in-law, who, you know, is designed to be his wife, is grown fond of Mr. Tattle; now, if we can improve that, and make her have an aversion for the booby, it may go a great way towards his liking you. Here they come together; and let us contrive some way or other to leave them together.

Enter Tattle *and* Miss Prue.

Miss P. Mother, mother, mother, look you here!

Mrs. For. Fie, fie, miss, how you bawl! Besides, I have told you, you must not call me mother.

Miss P. What must I call you, then? are you not my father's wife?

Mrs. For. Madam; you must say madam.

Miss P. Look you here, madam, then, what Mr. Tattle has given me. Look you here, cousin; here's a snuff-box; nay, there's snuff in't: here, will you have any? Oh, good! how sweet it is! Mr. Tattle is all over sweet; his peruke is sweet, and his gloves are sweet, and his handkerchief is sweet, pure sweet, sweeter than roses; smell him, mother—madam, I mean. He gave me this ring for a kiss.

Tatt. Oh, fie! miss; you must not kiss and tell.

Miss P. Yes, I may tell my mother. And he says he'll give me something to make me smell so. Oh! pray, lend me your handkerchief. Smell, cousin; is it not pure? It's better than lavender, mun. I'm resolved I won't let nurse put any more lavender among my clothes, eh! cousin?

Mrs. F. Fie, miss!

Tatt. Oh! madam, you are too severe upon miss; you must not find fault with her pretty simplicity; it becomes her strangely. Pretty miss, don't let them persuade you out of your innocency.

Mrs. For. I wish you don't persuade her out of her innocency.

Tatt. Who, I, madam? Oh, lord! how can your ladyship have such a thought? sure, you don't know me.

Mrs. F. Ah! devil, sly devil! He's as close, sister, as a confessor. He thinks we don't observe him.

Tatt. Upon reputation—Oh, lord! I swear I would not for the world.

Mrs. F. Oh, hang you! who'll believe you? You'll be hanged before you'd confess. We know you—she's very pretty! Lord! ne'er stir; I don't know, but I fancy, if I were a man—

Miss P. How you love to jeer one, cousin!

Mrs. For. Harkye! sister, by my soul, the girl is spoiled already: d'ye think she'll ever endure a great lubberly tarpaulin? 'Gad! I warrant you, she won't let him come near her, after Mr. Tattle.

Mrs. F. On my soul, I am afraid not, eh! filthy creature, that smells all of pitch and tar! Devil take you, you confounded toad! you will supplant the sailor.

Mrs. For. My husband will hang us: he'll think we brought them acquainted.

Mrs. F. Come, faith, let us begone. If my brother Foresight should find us with them, he'd think so, sure enough.

Mrs. For. So he would: but then, the leaving them together is as bad; and he's such a sly devil, he'll never miss an opportunity.

Mrs. F. I don't care; I won't be seen in it. [*Exit.*

Mrs. For. Well, Mr. Tattle, we trust to your discretion. [*Exit.*

Miss P. What makes them go away, Mr. Tattle? What do they mean, do you know?

Tatt. Yes, my dear, I think I can guess; but hang me if I know the reason of it.

Miss P. Come, must not we go too?

Tatt. No, no; they don't mean that.

Miss P. No! what then? What shall you and I do together?

Tatt. I must make love to you, pretty miss; will you let me make love to you?

Miss P. Yes, if you please.

Tatt. Frank, egad! at least. What a plague does Mrs. Foresight mean by this civility? Is it to make a fool of me? or does she leave us together out of good morality, and do as she would be done by. Egad! I'll understand it so. (*Aside.*)

Miss P. Well, and how will you make love to me? Come, I long to have you begin. Must I make love, too? You must tell me how.

Tatt. You must let me speak, miss; you must not speak first. I must ask you questions, and you must answer.

Miss P. What, is it like the catechism? Come, then, ask me.

Tatt. D'ye think you can love me?

Miss P. Yes.

Tatt. Pooh! plague! you must not say yes already. I sha'n't care a farthing for you, then, in a twinkling.

Miss P. What must I say, then?

Tatt. Why, you must say no; or, believe not; or, you can't tell.

Miss P. Why, must I tell a lie, then?

Tatt. Yes, if you'd be well-bred. All well-bred persons lie. Besides, you are a woman; you must never speak what you think: your words must contradict your thoughts; but your actions may contradict your words. So, when I ask you if you can love me, you must say no; but you must love me, too. If I tell you you are handsome, you must deny it, and say, I flatter you; but you must think yourself more charming than I speak you, and like me for the beauty which I say you have, as much as if I had it myself. If I ask you to kiss me, you must be angry; but you must not refuse me. If I ask you for more, you must be more angry, but more complying; and as soon as ever I make you say you'll cry out, you must be sure to hold your tongue.

Miss P. Oh, lord! I swear this is pure! I like it better than our old-fashioned country way of speaking one's mind. And must not you lie too?

Tatt. Hum! Yes; but you must believe I speak truth.

Miss P. Oh, gemini! Well, I always had a great mind to tell lies; but they frighted me, and said it was a sin.

Tatt. Well, my pretty creature, will you make me happy by giving me a kiss?

Miss P. No, indeed; I'm angry at you. (*Runs and kisses him.*)

Tatt. Hold, hold! that's pretty well: but you should not have given it to me, but have suffered me to have taken it.

Miss P. Well, we'll do it again.

Tatt. With all my heart. Now, then, my little angel! (*Kisses her.*)

Miss P. Pish!

Tatt. That's right. Again, my charmer! (*Kisses again.*)

Miss P. Oh, fie! nay, now I can't abide you.

Tatt. Admirable! That was as well as if you had been born and bred in Covent Garden. And won't you shew me, pretty miss, where your bedchamber is?

Miss P. No, indeed, won't I: but I'll run there, and hide myself from you, behind the curtains.

Tatt. I'll follow you.

Miss P. Ah! but I will hold the door with both hands, and be angry; and you shall push me down before you come in.

Tatt. No, I'll come in first.

Miss P. Will you? then I'll be more angry, and more complying.

Tatt. Then I'll make you cry out.

Miss P. Oh! but you sha'n't, for I'll hold my tongue.

Tatt. Oh! my dear, apt scholar!

Miss P. Well, now I'll run, and make more haste than you. [*Exit.*

Tatt. You shall not fly so fast as I'll pursue. [*Exit.*

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Miss, miss, Miss Prue! Come to your father, child. Open the door, miss. I hear you cry husht! Oh, lord! who's there? (*Peeps.*) A man with her! (*Knocks.*) Won't you open the door? I'll come in the back way. [*Exit.*

Enter Tattle *and* Miss Prue.

Miss P. Oh, lord! she's coming: and she'll tell my father. What shall I do now?

Tatt. Plague take her! if she had staid two minutes longer, I should have wished for her coming. (*Aside.*)

Miss P. Oh, dear! what shall I say? Tell me, Mr. Tattle, tell me a lie.

Tatt. There's no occasion for a lie; I could never tell a lie to no purpose. But, since we have done nothing, we must say nothing, I think. I hear her. I'll leave you together, and come off as you can.

[*Thrusts her in, shuts the door, and exit.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*A Room in Foresight's house.*

Enter Valentine, Scandal, *and* Angelica.

Ang. You can't accuse me of inconstancy; I never told you that I loved you.

Val. But I can accuse you of uncertainty, for not telling me whether you did or not.

Ang. You mistake indifference for uncertainty; I never had concern enough to ask myself the question.

Scand. Nor good-nature enough to answer him that did ask you: I'll say that for you, madam.

Ang. What, are you setting up for good-nature?

Scand. Only for the affectation of it, as the women do for ill-nature.

Ang. Persuade your friend that it is all affectation.

Val. I shall receive no benefit from the opinion, for I know no effectual difference between continued affectation and reality.

Enter Sir Sampson Legend, Mrs. Frail, Tattle, Miss Prue, *and* James.

Sir S. Is Ben come? Odso! my son Ben come? Ods! I'm glad on't. Where is he? I long to see him. Now, Mrs. Frail, you shall see my son Ben. Body o' me! he's the hopes of my family. I haven't seen him these three years: I warrant he's grown! Call him in; bid him make haste. I'm ready to cry for joy. [*Exit James.*

Mrs. F. Now, miss, you shall see your husband. (*Aside to Miss P.*)

Miss P. Pish! he shall be none of my husband. (*Aside to Mrs. F.*)

Mrs. F. Hush! Well, he sha'n't: leave that to me. I'll beckon Mr. Tattle to us.

Ang. Won't you stay and see your brother?

Val. We are the twin stars, and cannot shine in one sphere; when he rises, I must set. Besides, if I should stay, I don't know but my father, in good-nature, may press me to the immediate signing the deed of conveyance of my estate; and I'll defer it as long as I can. Well, you'll come to a resolution.

Ang. I cannot. Resolution must come to me, or I shall never have one.

Scand. Come, Valentine, I'll go with you: I have something in my head to communicate to you. [*Exit with Valentine.*

Sir S. What! is my son Valentine gone? What! is he sneaked off, and would not see his brother? There's an unnatural whelp! there's an ill-natured dog! What! were you here, too, madam, and could not keep him? could neither love, nor duty, nor natural affection, oblige him? Odsbud! madam, have no more to say to him; he is not worth your consideration. The rogue has not a drachm of generous love about him! all interest, all interest! He's an undone scoundrel, and courts your estate. Body o' me! he does not care a doit for your person.

Ang. I am pretty even with him, Sir Sampson; for, if ever I could have liked anything in him, it should have been his estate, too.

Sir S. Odsbud! well spoken! and you are a wiser woman than I thought you were.

Ang. If I marry, Sir Sampson, I am for a good estate with any man, and for any man with a good estate: therefore, if I were obliged to make a choice, I declare I'd rather have you than your son.

Sir S. Faith and troth! you are a wise woman; and I'm glad to hear you say so. I was afraid you were in love with a reprobate. Od! I was sorry for you with all my heart. Hang him, mongrel! cast him off. You shall see the rogue shew himself, and make love to some desponding Cadua of fourscore for sustenance. Od! I love to see a young spendthrift forced to cling to an old woman for support, like ivy round a dead oak; faith I do. I love to see them hug and cotton together, like down upon a thistle.

Enter Ben *and* James.

Ben. Where's father?

James. There, sir; his back's towards you. [*Exit.*

Sir S. My son Ben! Bless thee, my dear boy! Body o' me! thou art heartily welcome.

Ben. Thank you, father; and I'm glad to see you.

Sir S. Odsbud! and I'm glad to see thee. Kiss me, boy; kiss me again and again, dear Ben. (*Kisses him.*)

Ben. So, so; enough, father. Mess! I'd rather kiss these gentlewomen.

Sir S. And so thou shalt. Mrs. Angelica, my son Ben.

Ben. Forsooth, if you please! (*Salutes Ang.*) Nay, mistress, I'm not for dropping anchor here; about ship, i'faith! (*Kisses Mrs. F.*) Nay, and you, too, my little cock-boat! so. (*Kisses Miss P.*)

Tatt. Sir, you're welcome ashore.

Ben. Thank you, thank you, friend.

Sir S. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

Ben. Ay, ay! been? been far enough, and that be all. Well, father, and how do all at home? how does brother Dick, and brother Val?

Sir S. Dick! Body o' me! Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Mess! that's true: marry, I had forgot. Dick is dead, as you say. Well, and how? I have a many questions to ask you. Well, you ben't married again, father, be you?

Sir S. No; I intend you shall marry, Ben; I would not marry, for thy sake.

Ben. Nay, what does that signify? An' you marry again, why, then, I'll go to sea again; so there's one for t'other, and that be all. Pray, don't let me be your hindrance; e'en marry, a' God's name, and the wind sit that way. As for my part, mayhap, I have no mind to marry.

Mrs. F. That would be pity, such a handsome young gentleman.

Ben. Handsome! he, he, he! Nay, forsooth, an' you be for joking, I'll joke with you; for I love my jest, an' the ship were sinking, as we said at sea. But I'll tell you why I don't much stand towards matrimony. I love to roam about from port to port, and from land to land; I could never abide to be port-bound, as we call it. Now, a man that is married, has, as it were, d'ye see, his feet in the

bilboes, and, mayhap, mayn't get them out again when he would.

Sir S. Ben is a wag.

Ben. A man that is married, d'ye see, is no more like another man, than a galley-slave is like one of us free sailors: he is chained to an oar all his life; and, mayhap, forced to tug a crazy vessel into the bargain.

Sir S. A very wag! Ben is a very wag! only a little rough; he wants a little polishing.

Mrs. F. Not at all: I like his humour mightily; it is plain and honest. I should like such a humour in a husband extremely.

Ben. Say'n you so, forsooth? Marry, and I should like such a handsome gentlewoman for a bedfellow hugely. How say you, mistress? would you like going to sea? Mess! you're a tight vessel, and well rigged, an' you were but as well manned.

Mrs. F. I should not doubt that, if you were master of me.

Ben. But I'll tell you one thing, an' you come to sea in a high wind, or that lady, you mayn't carry so much sail o' your head. Top and top-gallant, by the mess!

Mrs. F. No! why so?

Ben. Why, an' you do, you may run the risk to be overset; and then you'll carry your keels above water. He, he, he!

Ang. I swear, Mr. Benjamin is the veriest wag in nature; an absolute sea wit.

Sir S. Nay, Ben has parts; but, as I told you before, they want a little polishing. You must not take anything ill, madam.

Ben. No, I hope the gentlewoman is not angry: I mean all in good part: for, if I give a jest, I'll take a jest: and so, forsooth, you may be as free with me.

Ang. I thank you, sir; I am not at all offended. But, methinks, Sir Sampson, you should leave him alone with his mistress. Mr. Tattle, we must not hinder lovers.

Tatt. (*Aside to Miss P.*) Well, miss, I have your promise. [*Exit with Angelica.*

Sir S. Body o' me! madam, you say trne. Look you, Ben, this is your mistress. Come, miss, you must not be shame-faced; we'll leave you together.

Miss P. I can't abide to be left alone. Mayn't my cousin stay with me?

Sir S. No, no. Come, let's away.

Ben. Look you, father! mayhap, the young woman mayn't take a liking to me.

Sir S. I warrant thee, boy! Come, come; we'll begone. I'll venture that. [*Exit with Mrs. F.*

Ben. Come, mistress, will you please to sit down? For, an' you stand a-stern a that'n, we shall never grapple together. Come, I'll haul a chair; there, an' you please you to sit, I'll sit by you.

Miss P. You need not sit so near one; if you have anything to say, I can hear you farther off; I a'n't deaf.

Ben. Why, that's true, as you say, nor I a'n't dumb; I can be heard as far as another. I'll heave off, to please you. (*Sits farther off.*) An' we were a league asunder, I'd undertake to hold discourse with you, an' 'twere not a main high wind, indeed, and full in my teeth. Look you! forsooth, I am, as it were, bound for the land of matrimony; 'tis a voyage, d'ye see, that was none of my seeking; I was commanded by father. How say you, mistress? The short of the thing is, that, if you like me, and I like you, we may chance to swing in a hammock together.

Miss P. I don't know what to say to you; nor I don't care to speak with you at all.

Ben. No! I'm sorry for that. But, pray, why are you so scornful?

Miss P. As long as one must not speak one's mind, one had better not speak at all, I think; and, truly, I won't tell a lie for the matter.

Ben. Nay, you say true in that; it's but a folly to lie: for to speak one thing, and to think just the contrary way, is, as it were, to look one way, and to row another. Now, for my part, d'ye see, I'm for carrying things above board; I'm not for keeping anything under hatches: so, that, if you ben't as willing as I, say so, a God's name! there's no harm done. Mayhap, you may be shame-faced; some maidens, thof they love a man well enough, yet they don't care to tell'n so to's face. If that's the case, why silence gives consent.

Miss P. But I'm sure it is not so, for I'll speak sooner than you shall believe that; and I'll speak truth, though one should always tell a lie to a man; and I don't care, let my father do what he will; I'm too big to be whipped; so I'll tell you plainly, I don't like you, nor love you at all; nor never will, that's more. So, there's your answer for you; and don't trouble me no more, you ugly thing!

Ben. Look yon! young woman, you may learn to give good words, however. I spoke you fair, d'ye see, and civil. As for your love, or your liking, I don't value it of a rope's-end; and, mayhap, I like you as little as you do me. What I said was in obedience to father. 'Gad! I fear a whipping no more than you do. But I tell you one thing, if you should give such language at sea, you'd have a cat-o'-nine-tails laid across your shoulders. Flesh! who are you? You heard t'other handsome young woman speak civilly to me of her own accord. Whatever you think of yourself, 'gad! I don't think you are any more to compare to her, than a can of small beer to a bowl of punch.

Miss P. Well, and there's a handsome gentleman, and a fine gentleman, and a sweet gentleman, that was here, that loves me, and I love him; and if he sees you speak to me any more, he'll thrash your jacket for you, he will, you great sea-calf!

Ben. What! do you mean that fair-weather spark that was here just now? Will he thrash my jacket? Let'n, let'n! But an' he comes near me, mayhap, I may give'n a salt eel for's supper, for all that. What does father mean, to leave me alone, as soon as I come home, with such a dirty dowdy? Sea-calf! I a'n't calf enough to lick your chalked face, you cheese-curd, you! Marry thee! Oons! I'll marry a Lapland witch as soon, and live upon selling contrary winds and wrecked vessels.

Miss P. I won't be called names, nor I won't be abused thus, so I won't! If I were a man (*cries*) you durst not talk at this rate; no, you durst not, you stinking tar-barrel.

Enter Mrs. Foresight *and* Mrs. Frail.

Mrs. For. They have quarrelled, just as we could wish. (*Apart to Mrs. F.*)

Ben. Tar-barrel! Let your sweetheart there call me so, if he'll take your part—your Tom Essence—and I'll say something to him. 'Gad! I'll lace his musk doublet for him. I'll make him smell more like a weasel than a civit-cat, afore I ha' done with'n.

Mrs. For. Bless me! what's the matter, miss? What, does she cry? Mr. Benjamin, what have you done to her?

Ben. Let her cry: the more she cries the less she'll—she has been gathering foul weather in her mouth, and now it rains out at her eyes.

Mrs. For. Come, miss, come along with me; and tell me, poor child!

Mrs. F. Lord! what shall we do? There's my brother Foresight and Sir Sampson coming. Sister, do you take miss down into the parlour, [*Exeunt Mrs. For. and Miss P.*] and I'll carry Mr. Benjamin into my chamber; for they must not know that they are fallen out. Come, sir, will you venture yourself with me? (*Looking kindly on him.*)

Ben. Venture! Mess! and that I will, though it were to sea in a storm. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir Sampson Legend *and* Foresight.

Sir S. I left them together here. What, are

they gone? Ben is a brisk boy: he has got her into a corner. Father's own son, faith! he'll touzle her, and mouzle her. The rogue's sharp-set, coming from sea. If he should not stay for saying grace, old Foresight, but fall to without the help of a parson, eh? Od! if he should, I could not be angry with him; 'twould be but like me, a chip of the old block. Ha! thou'rt melancholic, old prognostication! as melancholic as if thou hadst spilt the salt, or pared thy nails on a Sunday. Come, cheer up; look about thee; look up, old star-gazer! Now is he poring upon the ground for a crooked pin, or an old horse-nail, with the head towards him.

For. Sir Sampson, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

Sir S. With all my heart.

For. At ten o'clock; punctually at ten.

Sir S. To a minute, to a second: thou shalt set thy watch, and the bridegroom shall observe its motions; they shall be married to a minute, go to bed to a minute—

Enter JAMES.

James. Sir, Mr. Scandal desires to speak with you upon earnest business, which must be told you, he says, within this hour, or 'twill be too late.

For. I'll wait on him. Sir Sampson, your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir S. What is this business, friend?

James. Sir, 'tis about your son Valentine: something has appeared to him in a dream, that makes him prophecy. [*Exit.*

Sir S. Hoity-toity! what have I to do with his dreams or his divinations? Body o' me! this is a trick to defer signing the conveyance. I warrant, the devil will tell him, in a dream, that he must not part with his estate. But I'll bring him a parson to tell him that the devil's a liar; or, if that won't do, I'll bring a lawyer that shall out-lie the devil: and so, I'll try whether my blackguard or his shall get the better of the day. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Valentine's Lodgings.*

Enter SCANDAL *and* JEREMY.

Scand. Well, is your master ready? Does he look madly, and talk madly?

Jer. Yes, sir; you need make no great doubt of that: he, that was so near turning poet yesterday morning, can't be much to seek in playing the madman to-day.

Scand. Would he have Angelica acquainted with the design?

Jer. No, sir, not yet. He has a mind to try whether his playing the madman won't make her play the fool, and fall in love with him; or, at least, own that she has loved him all this while, and concealed it.

Scand. I saw her take coach just now with her maid; and I think I heard her bid the coachman drive hither.

Jer. Like enough, sir; for I told her maid this morning, my master was run stark mad, only for love of her mistress. (*Knock.*) I hear a coach stop; if it should be she, sir, I believe he would not see her, till he hears how she takes it.

Scand. Well, I'll try her: 'tis she; here she comes.

Enter ANGELICA *and* JENNY.

Ang. Mr. Scandal, I suppose you don't think it a novelty to see a woman visit a man at his own lodgings in a morning.

Scand. Not upon a kind occasion, madam. But when a lady comes tyrannically to insult a ruined lover, and make manifest the cruel triumphs of her beauty, the barbarity of it something surprises me.

Ang. I don't like raillery from a serious face. (*To Jeremy.*) Pray, tell me what is the matter?

Jer. No strange matter, madam; my master's mad, that's all. I suppose your ladyship has thought him so a great while.

Ang. How d'ye mean, mad?

Jer. Why, faith, madam, he's mad for want of his wits, just as he was poor for want of money. His head is e'en as light as his pockets; and anybody that has a mind to a bad bargain, can't do better than to beg him for his estate.

Ang. If you speak truth, your endeavouring at wit is very unseasonable.

Scand. She's concerned, and loves him! (*Aside.*)

Ang. Mr. Scandal, you can't think me guilty of so much inhumanity as not to be concerned for a man I must own myself obliged to. Pray, tell me the truth.

Scand. Faith! madam, I wish telling a lie would mend the matter. But this is no new effect of an unsuccessful passion.

Ang. (*Aside.*) I know not what to think: yet I should be vexed to have a trick put upon me. May I not see him?

Scand. I am afraid the physician is not willing you should see him yet. Jeremy, go in and inquire. [*Exit Jeremy.*

Ang. Ha! I saw him wink and smile. I fancy a trick. I'll try. (*Aside.*) I would disguise to all the world, sir, a failing, which I must own to you: I fear my happiness depends upon the recovery of Valentine.

Scand. So, this is pretty plain! (*Aside.*) Be not too much concerned, madam; I hope his condition is not desperate. An acknowledgment of love from you, perhaps, may work a cure, as the fear of your aversion occasioned his distemper.

Ang. Say you so? nay, then, I'm convinced; and if I don't play trick for trick, may I never taste the pleasure of revenge! (*Aside.*) Acknowledgment of love! I find you have mistaken my compassion, and think me guilty of a weakness I am a stranger to. Good-nature and humanity oblige me to be concerned for him; but to love, is neither in my power nor inclination.

Scand. Eh! brave woman, i'faith! Won't you see him, then, if he desires it?

Ang. What signifies a madman's desires? Besides, 'twould make me uneasy. If I don't see him, perhaps, my concern for him may lessen. If I forget him, 'tis no more than he has done by himself; and now the surprise is over, methinks I'm not half so sorry as I was.

Scand. So, faith! good-nature works apace; you were confessing just now an obligation to his love.

Ang. But I have considered that passions are unreasonable and involuntary. If he loves, he can't help it; and if I don't love, I cannot help it, no more than he can help his being a man, or I my being a woman; or no more than I can help my want of inclination to stay longer here. [*Exit with Jenny.*

Scand. Humph! An admirable composition, faith! this same womankind.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. What, is she gone, sir?

Scand. Gone! why, she was never here, nor anywhere else; nor I don't know her if I see her, nor you neither.

Jer. Good lack! what's the matter now? Are any more of us to be mad? Why, sir, my master longs to see her; and is almost mad in good earnest with the joyful news of her being here.

Scand. We are all under a mistake. Ask no questions, for I can't resolve you; but I'll inform your master. In the meantime, if our project succeed no better with his father than it does with his mistress, he may descend from his exaltation of madness into the road of common sense, and be content only to be made a fool with other reasonable people. I hear Sir Sampson. You know your cue; I'll to your master. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR SAMPSON LEGEND *and* BUCKRAM.

Sir S. D'ye see, Mr. Buckram, here's the paper signed with his own hand?

Buck. Good, sir! And the conveyance is ready drawn in this bag, if he be ready to sign and seal.

Sir S. Ready! Body o' me! he must be ready: his sham sickness sha'n't excuse him. Oh! here's his sconndrel. Sirrah, where's your master?

Jer. Ah! sir, he's quite gone.

Sir S. Gone! what, he's not dead?

Jer. No, sir; not dead.

Sir S. What, is he gone out of town? run away, eh? has he tricked me? Speak, varlet!

Jer. No, no, sir; he's safe enough, sir, an' he were but as sound, poor gentleman! He is, indeed, here, sir, and not here, sir.

Sir S. Heyday, rascal! do you banter me, sirrah, d'ye banter me? Speak, sirrah! where is he? for I will find him.

Jer. Would you could, sir! for he has lost himself. Indeed, sir, I have almost broke my heart about him. I can't refrain tears when I think on him, sir. I'm as melancholy for him as a passing-bell, sir; or a horse in a pond.

Sir S. A plague confound your similitudes, sir! Speak to be understood; and tell me in plain terms what is the matter with him, or I'll crack your fool's skull.

Jer. Ah! you've hit, sir; that's the matter with him, sir: his skull's cracked, poor gentleman! he's stark mad, sir.

Sir S. Mad!

Buck. What, is he *non compos?*

Jer. Quite *non compos*, sir.

Buck. Why, then, all's obliterated, Sir Sampson. If he be *non compos mentis*, his act and deed will be of no effect; it is not good in law.

Sir S. Oons! I won't believe it; let me see him, sir. Mad! I'll make him find his senses.

Jer. Mr. Scandal is with him, sir: I'll knock at the door. (*Goes to the scene, which opens and discovers* VALENTINE *upon a couch, disorderly dressed;* SCANDAL *near him.*)

Sir S. How now! what's here to do?

Val. Ha! who's that? (*Starting.*)

Scand. For heaven's sake! softly, sir, and gently: don't provoke him.

Val. Answer me; who's that and that?

Sir S. Gadsbobs! does he not know? is he mischievous? I'll speak gently. Val, Val, dost thou not know me, boy? not know thy own father, Val? I am thy own father; and this, honest Brief Buckram, the lawyer.

Val. It may be so—I did not know you—the world is full. There are people that we do know, and people that we do not know; and yet the sun shines upon all alike. There are fathers that have many children; and there are children that have many fathers—'tis strange! but I am honesty, and come to give the world the lie.

Sir S. Body o' me! I know not what to say to him.

Val. Why does that lawyer wear black? Does he carry his conscience without-side? Lawyer, what art thou? dost thou know me?

Buck. Oh, lord! what must I say? Yes, sir.

Val. Thou liest; for I am honesty. 'Tis hard I cannot get a livelihood amongst you. I have been sworn out of Westminster-hall the first day of every term. Let me see—no matter how long—I am honesty, and can't tell: I have very few acquaintance.

Sir S. Body o' me! he talks sensibly in his madness. Has he no intervals?

Jer. Very short, sir.

Buck. Sir, I can do you no service while he's in this condition. Here's your paper, sir. He may do me a mischief, if I stay. The conveyance is ready, sir, if he recovers his senses. [*Exit.*

Sir S. Hold, hold! don't you go yet.

Scand. You'd better let him go, sir; and send for him, if there be occasion: for I fancy his presence provokes him more.

Val. Is the lawyer gone? 'Tis well! then we may drink about without going together by the ears. Heigho! what o'clock is it? My father here! your blessing, sir.

Sir S. He recovers! Bless thee, Val! How dost thou do, boy?

Val. Thank you, sir, pretty well. I have been a little indisposed. Won't you please to sit, sir?

Sir S. Ay, boy! Come, thou shalt sit down by me.

Val. Sir, 'tis my duty to wait.

Sir S. No, no: come, come, sit thee down, honest Val. How dost thee do? Let me feel thy pulse. Oh! pretty well now, Val. Body o' me! I was sorry to see thee indisposed: but I am glad thou art better, honest Val!

Val. I thank you, sir.

Scand. Miracle! the monster grows loving! (*Aside.*)

Sir S. Let me feel thy hand again, Val. It does not shake: I believe thou canst write, Val. Eh, boy? thou canst write thy name, Val? Jeremy, step and overtake Mr. Buckram: bid him make haste back with the conveyance; quick!

[*Exit Jeremy.*

Scand. (*Aside.*) That ever I should suspect such a heathen of any remorse!

Sir S. Dost thou know this paper, Val? I know thou'rt honest, and will perform articles. (*Shews him the paper, but holds it out of his reach.*)

Val. Pray, let me see it, sir; you hold it so far off, that I can't tell whether I know it or not.

Sir S. See it, boy! Ay, ay; why, thou dost see it: 'tis thy own hand, Vally. Why, let me see, I can read it as plain as can be. Look you here: (*reads*) "*The condition of this obligation*"—look you, as plain as can be, so it begins. And, then, at the bottom: "*As witness my hand,* VALENTINE LEGEND," in great letters. Why, 'tis as plain as the nose on one's face. What, are my eyes better than thine? I believe I can read it farther off yet: let me see. (*Stretches his arm as far as he can.*)

Val. Will you please to let me hold it, sir?

Sir S. Let thee hold it, say'st thou? Ay, with all my heart. What matter is it who holds it? What need anybody hold it? I'll put it in my pocket, Val, and then nobody need hold it. (*Puts the paper in his pocket.*) There, Val: it's safe enough, boy. But thou shalt have it as soon as thou hast set thy hand to another paper, little Val.

Enter JEREMY *and* BUCKRAM.

Val. What, is my bad genius here again? Oh! no; 'tis the lawyer with an itching palm; and he's come to be scratched. My nails are not long enough. Let me have a pair of red-hot tongs, quickly, quickly; and you shall see me act St. Dunstan, and lead the devil by the nose.

Buck. Oh, lord! let me be gone. I'll not venture myself with a madman. (*Runs out.*)

Val. Ha, ha, ha! you need not run so fast. Honesty will not overtake you. Ha, ha, ha! the rogue found me to be *in formâ pauperis* presently.

Sir S. Oons! what a vexation is here! I know not what to do or say, or which way to go.

Val. Who's that, that's out of his way? I am honesty, and can set him right. Harkye! friend, the straight road is the worst way you can go. But it is wonderful strange, Jeremy!

Jer. What is it, sir?

Val. That grey hairs should cover a green head—and I make a fool of my father.

For. (*Without.*) Where is he? where is he?

Val. What's here? *Erra pater*, or a bearded sybil? If prophecy comes, honesty must give place. [*Exeunt. Val. and Jer.*

Enter FORESIGHT, MRS. FORESIGHT, *and* MRS. FRAIL.

For. What says he? What did he prophecy? Ah! Sir Sampson! Bless us! how are we?

Sir S. Are we? A plague on your prognostications! Why, we are fools as we used to be. Oons! that you could not foresee that the moon would predominate, and my son be mad! Where are your oppositions, your trines, and your quadrates? Ah! plague on't! that I, who know the world, and men and manners, who don't believe a syllable in the sky and stars, and sun and almanacs, and trash, should be directed by a dreamer, an omen-hunter, and defer business in expectation of a lucky hour! when, body o' me! there never was a lucky hour after the first opportunity. [*Exit.*

For. Ah! Sir Sampson, heaven help your head! This is none of your lucky hour! *Nemo omnibus horis sapit!* What, is he gone, and in contempt of science? I'll stars and unconvertible ignorance attend him!

Scand. You must excuse his passion, Mr. Foresight, for he has been heartily vexed. His son is *non compos mentis;* and, thereby, incapable of making any conveyance in law; so, that all his measures are disappointed.

For. Ah! say you so?

Mrs. F. What, has my sea-lover lost his anchor of hope, then? (*Aside to Mrs. For.*)

Mrs. For. Oh! sister, what will you do with him?

Mrs. F. Do with him! Send him to sea again in the next foul weather. He's used to an inconstant element, and won't be surprised to see the tide turned.

For. Wherein was I mistaken, not to foresee this? (*Considers.*)

Scand. But would you not talk with Valentine? Perhaps you may understand him; I am apt to believe, there is something mysterious in his discourse; and, sometimes, rather think him inspired than mad.

For. You speak with singular good judgment, Mr. Scandal, truly. I am inclining to your Turkish opinion in this matter, and do reverence a man whom the vulgar think mad. Let us go to him.

[*Exit with Scandal.*

Mrs. F. Sister, do you go with them; I'll find out my lover, and give him his discharge, and come to you. [*Exit Mrs. For.*] On my conscience, here he is!

Enter Ben.

Ben. All mad, I think. Flesh! I believe all the calentures of the sea are come ashore, for my part.

Mrs. F. Mr. Benjamin in choler?

Ben. No, I'm pleased well enough, now I have found you. Mess! I have had such a hurricane on your account yonder!

Mrs. F. My account? Pray, what's the matter?

Ben. Why, father came, and found me squabbling with yon chitty-faced thing, as he would have me marry; so he asked what was the matter. He asked in a surly sort of a way. It seems brother Val is gone mad, and so that put'n in a passion; but what did I of know that? what's that to me? So he asked in a surly sort of manner, and, gad! I answered 'en as surlily. What thof he be my father, I a'n't bound prentice to 'en: so, faith, I told'n in plain terms, if I were minded to marry, I'd marry to please myself, not him; and for the young woman that he provided for me, I thought it more fitting for her to learn her sampler, and make dirt-pies, than to look after a husband; for my part, I was none of her man, I had another voyage to make, let him take it as he will.

Mrs. F. So, then, you intend to go to sea again?

Ben. Nay, nay, my mind ran upon you, but I would not tell him so much. So he said, he'd make my heart ache; and if so be that he could get a woman to his mind, he'd marry himself. Gad! says I, an' you play the fool, and marry at these years, there's more danger of your head's aching than my heart. He was woundy angry when I giv'n that wipe, he hadn't a word to say; and so I left'n, and the green girl together; mayhap, the bee may bite, and he'll marry her himself—with all my heart!

Mrs. F. And were you this undutiful and graceless wretch to your father?

Ben. Then why was he graceless first?

Mrs. F. Oh! impiety, how have I been mistaken. What an inhuman merciless creature have I set my heart upon. Oh! I am happy to have discovered the shelves and quicksands that lurk beneath that faithless smiling face!

Ben. Hey-toss! what's the matter now? Why, you ben't angry, be you?

Mrs. F. Oh! see me no more, for thou wert born among rocks, suckled by whales, cradled in a tempest, and whistled to by winds; and thou art come forth with fins and scales, and three rows of teeth, a most outrageous fish of prey.

Ben. Oh, lord! oh, lord! she's mad, poor young woman. Love has turned her senses; her brain is quite overset. Well-a-day! how shall I do to set her to-rights?

Mrs. F. No, no, I am not mad, monster; I am wise enough to find you out. Hadst thou the impudence to aspire at being a husband, with that stubborn and disobedient temper? You, that know not how to submit to a father, presume to have a sufficient stock of duty to undergo a wife? I should have been finely fobbed indeed, very finely fobbed.

Ben. Harkye! forsooth, if so be that you are in your right senses, d'ye see! for aught as I perceive I'm like to be finely fobbed, if I have got anger here upon your account, and you are tacked about already. What d'ye mean? after all your fair speeches and stroking my cheeks, and kissing and hugging, what, would you sheer off so? would you? and leave me aground?

Mrs. F. No, I'll leave you adrift, and go which way you will.

Ben. What, are you false-hearted then?

Mrs. F. Only the wind's changed.

Ben. More shame for you. The wind's changed? It is an ill-wind blows nobody good. Mayhap I have a good riddance on you, if these be your tricks. What, did you mean all this while to make a fool of me?

Mrs. F. Any fool, but a husband.

Ben. Husband! Gad! I would not be your husband, if you would have me, now I know your mind; thof you had your weight in gold and jewels, and thof I loved you never so well.

Mrs. F. Why, canst thou love, Porpus?

Ben. No matter what I can do; don't call names. I don't love you so well as to bear that, whatever I did. I'm glad you shew yourself, mistress: let them marry you as don't know you. Gad! I know you too well, by sad experience; I believe, he, that marries you, will go to sea in a hen-pecked frigate. I believe that, young woman; and mayhap may come to an anchor at Cuckold's Point; so there's a dash for you, take it as you will; mayhap you may hollow after me when I won't come to you. [*Exit.*

Mrs. F. Ha, ha, ha! no doubt on't. (*Sings.*)

"My true love is gone to sea!"

Enter Mrs. Foresight.

Oh! sister, had you come a minute sooner, you would have seen the resolution of a lover. Honest Tar and I are parted; and with the same indifference that we met. On my life, I am half vexed at the insensibility of a brute I despised.

Mrs. For. What, then, he bore it most heroically?

Mrs. F. Most tyrannically; for you see he has got the start of me; and I, the poor forsaken maid, am left complaining on the shore. But I'll tell you a hint that he has given me. Sir Sampson is enraged, and talks desperately of committing matrimony himself. If he has a mind to throw him-

self away, he can't do it more effectually than upon me, if we could bring it about.

Mrs. For. Oh! hang him, old fox! he's too cunning; besides, he hates both you and me. But I have a project in my head for you, and I have gone a good way towards it. I have almost made a bargain with Jeremy, Valentine's man, to sell his master to us.

Mrs. F. Sell him? how?

Mrs. For. Valentine raves upon Angelica, and took me for her; and Jeremy says will take anybody for her that he imposes on him. Now I have promised him mountains, if in one of his mad fits he will bring you to him in her stead, and get you married. Here they come; stand aside a little, and tell me how you like the design.

Enter Scandal *and* Jeremy.

Scand. And have you given your master a hint of their plot upon him? (*To Jeremy.*)

Jer. Yes, sir; he says he'll favour it, and mistake her for Angelica.

Scand. It may make us sport.

Enter Valentine *and* Foresight.

For. Mercy on us!

Val. Hush! interrupt me not; I'll whisper prediction to thee, and thou shalt prophecy. I have told thee what's past, now I'll tell what's to come. Dost thou know what will happen to-morrow? Answer me not, for I will tell thee. To-morrow, knaves will thrive through craft, and fools through fortune; and honesty will go as it did, frost-nipt in a summer-suit. Ask me questions concerning to-morrow.

Scand. Ask him, Mr. Foresight.

For. Pray, what will be done at court?

Val. Scandal will tell you—I am honesty; I never come there.

For. In the city?

Val. Oh! prayers will be said in empty churches, at the usual hours. Yet you will see such zealous faces behind counters, as if religion were to be sold in every shop. Oh! things will go methodically in the city. Husbands and wives will drive distinct trades; and care and pleasure separately occupy the family. But, hold! I must examine you before I go further; you look suspiciously. Are you a husband?

For. I am married.

Val. Poor creature! Is your wife of Covent Garden parish?

For. No; St. Martin in the Fields.

Val. Alas! poor man! his eyes are sunk, and his hands shrivelled; his legs dwindled, and his back bowed. Pray, pray for a metamorphosis. Change thy shape, and shake off age; get thee Medea's kettle, and be boiled anew; come forth, with labouring callons hands, a chine of steel and Atlas' shoulders. Let Taliacotius trim the calves of twenty chairmen, and make thee pedestals to stand erect upon, and look matrimony in the face. Ha, ha, ha! that a man should have a stomach to a wedding-supper, when the pigeons ought rather to be laid to his feet. Ha, ha, ha!

For. His frenzy is very high now, Mr. Scandal.

Scand. I believe it is a spring-tide.

For. Very likely, truly; you understand these matters. Mr. Scandal, I shall be very glad to confer with you about these things which he has uttered. His sayings are very mysterious and hieroglyphical.

Val. Oh! why would Angelica be absent from my eyes so long?

Jer. She's here, sir.

Mrs. For. Now, sister.

Mrs. F. Oh, lord! what must I say?

Scand. Humour him, madam, by all means.

Val. Where is she? Oh! I see her. She comes like riches, health, and liberty, at once, to a despairing, starving, and abandoned wretch. Oh! welcome, welcome!

Mrs. F. How d'ye, sir? can I serve you?

Val. Harkye! I have a secret to tell you: Endymion and the moon shall meet us upon Mount Latmos, and we'll be married in the dead of night. But say not a word. Hymen shall put his torch into a dark lantern, that it may be secret; and Juno shall give her peacock poppy-water, that he may fold his ogling tail; and Argus' hundred eyes be shut, eh? Nobody shall know but Jeremy.

Mrs. F. No, no; we'll keep it secret; it shall be done presently.

Val. The sooner the better; Jeremy, come hither—closer, that none may overhear us. Jeremy, I can tell you news. Angelica is turned nun; and I am turned friar: and yet we'll marry one another in spite of the pope. Get me a cowl and beads, that I may play my part; for she'll meet me two hours hence in black and white, and a long veil to cover the project; and we won't see one another's faces, till we have done something to be ashamed of; and then we'll blush once for all.

Jer. I'll take care and—

Val. Whisper.

Enter Angelica *and* Tattle.

Ang. Nay, Mr. Tattle, if you make love to me, you spoil my design; for I intend to make you my confidant.

Scand. How's this! Tattle making love to Angelica!

Tatt. But, madam, to throw away your person, such a person, and such a fortune, on a madman!

Ang. I never loved him till he was mad; but don't tell anybody so.

Tatt. Tell, madam! alas! you don't know me. I have much ado to tell your ladyship how long I have been in love with you; but, encouraged by the impossibility of Valentine's making any more addresses to you, I have ventured to declare the very inmost passion of my heart. Oh! madam, look upon us both. There you see the ruins of a poor decayed creature! Here, a complete lively figure, with youth and health, and all his five senses in perfection, madam; and to all this, the most passionate lover.

Ang. Oh! fie for shame, hold your tongue. A passionate lover, and five senses in perfection! When you are as mad as Valentine, I'll believe you love me; and the maddest shall take me.

Val. It is enough. Ah! who's there?

Mrs. F. Oh, lord! her coming will spoil all. (*To Jeremy.*)

Jer. No, no, madam; he won't know her; if he should, I can persuade him.

Val. Scandal, who are these? Foreigners? If they are, I'll tell you what I think. Get away all the company but Angelica, that I may discover my design to her. (*Whispers.*)

Scand. I will. I have discovered something of Tattle, that is of a piece with Mrs. Frail. He courts Angelica: if we could contrive to couple them together—Harkye!—(*Whispers.*)

Mrs. F. He won't know you, cousin; he knows nobody.

For. But he knows more than anybody. Oh! niece, he knows things past and to come, and all the profound secrets of time.

Tatt. Look you, Mr. Foresight; it is not my way to make many words of matters, and so I sha'n't say much. But, in short, d'ye see, I will hold you a hundred pounds, now, that I know more secrets than he.

For. How? I cannot read that knowledge in your face, Mr. Tattle. Pray what do you know?

Tatt. Why, d'ye think I'll tell you, sir? Read it in my face! No, sir, it is written in my heart; and safer there, sir, than letters written in juice of lemon, for no fire can fetch it out. I'm no blab, sir.

Val. Acquaint Jeremy with it: he may easily bring it about. They are welcome, and I'll tell them so myself. (*To Scandal.*) What, do you look

strange upon me? Then I must be plain: (*coming up to them*) I am honesty, and hate an old acquaintance with a new face. (*Scandal goes aside with Jeremy.*)

Tatt. Do you know me, Valentine?

Val. You? Who are you? I hope not.

Tatt. I am Jack Tattle, your friend.

Val. My friend! what to do? I'm no married man, and thou canst not lie with my wife. I am very poor, and thou canst not borrow money of me. Then what employment have I for a friend?

Tatt. Ha! a good open speaker, and not to be trusted with a secret.

Ang. Do you know me, Valentine?

Val. Oh! very well.

Ang. Who am I?

Val. You're a woman; one to whom nature gave beauty, when it grafted roses on a briar. You are the reflection of heaven in a pond; and he that leaps at you is sunk. You are all white; a sheet of lovely spotless paper, when you were first born; but you are to be scrawled and blotted by every goose's quill. I know you; for I loved a woman, and loved her so long, that I found out a strange thing; I found out what a woman is good for.

Tatt. Ay, pr'ythee, what's that?

Val. Why, to keep a secret.

Tatt. Oh, lord!

Val. Oh! exceedingly good to keep a secret; for though she should tell, yet she is not believed.

Tatt. Ha! good again, faith.

Jer. I'll do't, sir.

Scand. Mr. Foresight, we had best leave him. He may grow outrageous, and do mischief.

For. I will be directed by you. [*Exit Foresight.*

Jer. (*To Mrs. Frail.*) You'll meet, madam. I'll take care everything shall be ready.

Mrs. F. Thou shalt do what thou wilt; in short, I will deny thee nothing.

Tatt. Madam, shall I wait upon you? (*To Ang.*)

Ang. No; I'll stay with him. Mr. Scandal will protect me. Aunt, Mr. Tattle desires you would give him leave to wait upon you.

Tatt. Pox on't! there's no coming off, now she has said that—Madam, will you do me the honour?

Mrs. For. Mr. Tattle might have used less ceremony. [*Exeunt Mrs. Frail, Mrs. For. and Tattle.*

Scand. Jeremy, follow Tattle. [*Exit Jer.*

Ang. Mr. Scandal, I only stay till my maid comes, and because I have a mind to be rid of Mr. Tattle.

Scand. Madam, I am very glad that I overheard a better reason which you gave to Mr. Tattle; for his impertinence forced you to acknowledge a kindness for Valentine, which you denied to all his sufferings and my solicitations. So, I'll leave him to make use of the discovery; and your ladyship to the free confession of your inclinations.

Ang. Oh! heavens, you won't leave me alone with a madman?

Scand. No, madam; I only leave a madman to his remedy. [*Exit.*

Val. Madam, you need not be very much afraid, for I fancy I begin to come to myself.

Ang. Ay, but if I don't fit you, I'll be hanged. (*Aside.*)

Val. You see what disguises love makes us put on. Gods have been in counterfeited shapes for the same reason; and the divine part of me, my mind, has worn this masque of madness, and this motley livery, only as the slave of love and menial creature of your beauty.

Ang. Mercy on me, how he talks! Poor Valentine!

Val. Nay, faith, now let us understand one another; hypocrisy apart. The comedy draws towards an end; and let us think of leaving acting, and be ourselves; and since you have loved me, you must own, I have at length deserved you should confess it.

Ang. (*Sighs.*) I would I had loved you; for heaven knows, I pity you; and, could I have foreseen the bad effects, I would have striven; but that's too late.

Val. What bad effects? what's too late? My seeming madness has deceived my father, and procured me time to think of means to reconcile me to him, and preserve the right of my inheritance to his estate; which, otherwise, by articles, I must this morning have resigned. And this I had informed you of to-day, but you were gone before I knew you had been here.

Ang. How! I thought your love of me had caused this transport in your soul; which, it seems, you only counterfeited for mercenary ends and sordid interest.

Val. Nay, now you do me wrong; for, if any interest was considered, it was your's; since I thought I wanted more than love to make me worthy of you.

Ang. Then you thought me mercenary; but how am I deluded by this interval of sense, to reason with a madman!

Val. Oh! 'tis barbarous to misunderstand me longer.

Enter Jeremy.

Ang. Oh! here's a reasonable creature; sure he will not have the impudence to persevere! Come, Jeremy, acknowledge your trick, and confess your master's madness counterfeit.

Jer. Counterfeit, madam! I'll maintain him to be as absolutely and substantially mad as any freeholder in Bedlam. Nay, he's as mad as any projector, fanatic, chemist, lover, or poet, in Europe.

Val. Sirrah! you lie; I'm not mad.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! you see he denies it.

Jer. Oh, lord! madam, did you ever know any madman mad enough to own it?

Val. Sot! can't you apprehend?

Ang. Why, he talked very sensibly just now.

Jer. Yes, madam; he has intervals: but you see he begins to look wild again now.

Val. Why, you thick-sculled rascal, I tell you the farce is done, and I'll be mad no longer. (*Beats him.*)

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! is he mad or no, Jeremy?

Jer. Partly, I think; for he does not know his own mind two hours. I'm sure I left him just now in the humour to be mad; and I think I have not found him very quiet at the present. (*Knocking without.*) Who's there? [*Exit.*

Val. Go see, you sot! I'm very glad that I can move your mirth, though not your compassion.

Ang. I did not think you had apprehension enough to be exceptious; but madmen shew themselves most by over-pretending to a sound understanding, as drunken men do by over-acting sobriety. I was half inclining to believe you, till I accidentally touched upon your tender part. But now you have restored me to my former opinion and compassion.

Re-enter Jeremy.

Jer. Sir, your father has sent to know if you are any better yet. Will you please to be mad, sir, or how?

Val. Stupidity! you know the penalty of all I'm worth must pay for the confession of my senses. I'm mad, and will be mad, to everybody but this lady.

Jer. So; just the very reverse of truth. But lying is a figure in speech, that interlards the greatest part of my conversation. Madam, your ladyship's woman. [*Exit.*

Enter Jenny.

Ang. Well, have you been there? Come hither.

Jenny. Yes, madam; Sir Sampson will wait upon you presently. (*Aside to Angelica.*)

Val. You are not leaving me in this uncertainty?

Ang. Would anything but a madman complain

of uncertainty? Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life. Security is an insipid thing; and the overtaking and possessing of a wish, discovers the folly of the chase. Never let us know one another better; for the pleasure of a masquerade is done, when we come to shew our faces. But I'll tell you two things before I leave you; I am not the fool you take me for; and you are mad, and don't know it. [*Exeunt Angelica and Jenny.*

Re-enter Jeremy.

Val. From a riddle you can expect nothing but a riddle. There's my instruction, and the moral of my lesson.

Jer. What, is the lady gone again, sir? I hope you understood one another before she went?

Val. Understood! she is harder to be understood than a piece of Egyptian antiquity, or an Irish manuscript; you may pore till you spoil your eyes, and not improve your knowledge.

Jer. I have heard them say, sir, they read hard Hebrew books backwards. May be, you begin to read at the wrong end.

Val. Yet, while she does not seem to hate me, I will pursue her, and know her, if it be possible, in spite of the opinion of my satirical friend, who says,—

That women are like tricks by slight of hand;
Which, to admire, we should not understand.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I.—*A Room in Foresight's house.*

Enter Angelica *and* Jenny.

Ang. Where is Sir Sampson? Did you not tell me he would be here before me?

Jenny. He's at the great glass in the dining-room, madam, setting his cravat and wig.

Ang. How! I'm glad on't. If he has a mind I should like him, it's a sign he likes me; and that's more than half my design.

Jenny. I hear him, madam.

Ang. Leave me; and, d'ye hear? if Valentine should come, or send, I am not to be spoken with. [*Exit Jenny.*

Enter Sir Sampson Legend.

Sir S. I have not been honoured with the commands of a fair lady a great while. Ods! madam, you have revived me—not since I was five and thirty.

Ang. Why, you have no great reason to complain, Sir Sampson; that's not long ago.

Sir S. Zooks! but it is, madam; a very great while to a man that admires a fine woman as much as I do.

Ang. You're an absolute courtier, Sir Sampson.

Sir S. Not at all, madam. Odsbud! you wrong me: I am not so old neither to be a bare courtier, only a man of words. Come, come; let me tell you, you women think a man old too soon; faith and troth, you do. Come, don't despise fifty; ods! fifty, in a hale constitution, is no such contemptible age!

Ang. Fifty a contemptible age! not at all: a very fashionable age, I think; I assure you, I know very considerable beaux, that set a good face upon fifty. Fifty! I have seen fifty in a side-box, by candle-light, out-blossom five and twenty.

Sir S. Outsides, outsides! a pize take them, mere outsides. Hang your side-box beaux; no, I'm none of those, none of your forced trees, that pretend to blossom in the fall, and bud when they should bring forth fruit. I am of a long-lived race, and inherit vigour. None of my ancestors married till fifty; yet they begot sons and daughters till fourscore. I am of your patriarchs; I, a branch of one of your antediluvian families, fellows that the flood could not wash away. Well, madam, what are your commands? Has any young rogue affronted you, and shall I cut his throat; or—

Ang. No, Sir Sampson, I have no quarrel upon my hands; I have more occasion for your conduct than your courage at this time. To tell you the truth, I'm weary of living single, and want a husband.

Sir S. Madam, you deserve a good husband; and 'twere pity you should be thrown away upon any of these young idle rogues about the town. Od! there's ne'er a young fellow worth hanging; that is, a very young fellow.

Ang. Therefore, I ask your advice, Sir Sampson. I have fortune enough to make any man easy that I can like; if there were such a thing as a young agreeable man, with a reasonable stock of good nature and sense; for I would neither have an absolute wit, nor a fool.

Sir S. Od! you are hard to please, madam: to find a young fellow that is neither a wit in his own eye, nor a fool in the eye of the world, is a very hard task. But, faith and troth, you speak very discreetly. I hate a wit; I had a son that was spoiled among them; a good hopeful lad, till he learned to be a wit, and might have risen in the state. But, a plague on't! his wit ran him out of his money, and now his poverty has run him out of his wits.

Ang. Sir Sampson, as your friend, I must tell you, you are very much abused in that matter; he's no more mad than you are.

Sir S. How, madam! would I could prove it.

Ang. I can tell you how that may be done; but it is a thing that would make me appear to be too much concerned in your affairs.

Sir S. Odsbud! I believe she likes me. (*Aside.*) If I had Peru in one hand, and Mexico in t'other, and the eastern empire under my feet; it would make me only a more glorious victim to be offered at the shrine of your beauty.

Ang. Bless me, Sir Sampson, what's the matter?

Sir S. Od! madam, I love you; and if you would take my advice in a husband—

Ang. Hold, hold! Sir Sampson, I asked your advice for a husband, and you are giving me your consent. I was, indeed, thinking to propose something like it in jest, to satisfy you about Valentine; for if a match were seemingly carried on between you and me, it would oblige him to throw off his disguise of madness, in apprehension of losing me; for, you know, he has long pretended a passion for me.

Sir S. Gadzooks! a most ingenious contrivance, if we were to go through with it. But why must the match only be seemingly carried on? Od! let it be a real contract.

Ang. Oh, fie! Sir Sampson, what would the world say?

Sir S. Say! They would say you were a wise woman, and I a happy man. Od! madam, I'll love you as long as I live, and leave you a good jointure when I die.

Ang. Ay, but that is not in your power, Sir Sampson; for when Valentine confesses himself in his senses, he must make over his inheritance to his younger brother.

Sir S. Od! you're cunning; a wary baggage. Faith and troth, I like you the better. But, I warrant you, I have a proviso in the obligation in favour of myself. Body o' me! I have a trick to turn the settlement upon the issue male of our two bodies begotten. Odsbud! let us find children, and I'll find an estate.

Ang. Will you! Well, do you find the estate, and leave the other to me.

Sir S. Oh! rogue! but I'll trust you. And will you consent? Is it a match, then?

Ang. Let me consult my lawyer concerning this obligation; and if I find what you propose practicable, I'll give you my answer.

Sir S. With all my heart. Come in with me, and I'll lend you the bond. Odso! here's somebody coming. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Tattle *and* Jeremy.

Tatt. Is not that she gone out just now?

Jer. Ay, sir, she's just going to the place of appointment.

Tatt. Egad! thou art a pretty fellow. But I hope you are secret in your nature; private, close, eh?

Jer. Oh! sir, for that, sir, 'tis my chief talent; I'm as secret as the head of Nilus.

Tatt. Ay! who's he, though? A privy counsellor?

Jer. Oh! ignorance! (*Aside.*) A cunning Egyptian, sir, that with his arms could overrun the country, yet nobody could ever find out his headquarters.

Tatt. Close dog! a rare fellow amongst the wenches, I warrant him. The time draws nigh, Jeremy; Angelica will be veiled like a nun, and I must be hooded like a friar, eh, Jeremy?

Jer. Ay, sir; hooded like a hawk, to seize at first sight upon the quarry. It is the whim of my master's madness to be so dressed; and she is so in love with him, she'll comply with anything to please him. Poor lady! I'm sure she'll have reason to pray for me, when she finds what a happy change she has made, between a madman and so accomplished a gentleman.

Tatt. Ay, faith, so she will, Jeremy: you're a good friend to her, poor creature! I swear I do it hardly so much in consideration of myself, as compassion to her.

Jer. 'Tis an act of charity, sir, to save a fine woman with sixty thousand pounds, from throwing herself away.

Tatt. So 'tis, faith! I might have saved several others in my time; but, egad! I could never find in my heart to marry anybody before.

Jer. Well, sir, I'll go and tell her my master's coming; and meet you in half a quarter of an hour, with your disguise, at your own lodgings. You must talk a little madly; she won't distinguish the tone of your voice.

Tatt. No, no; let me alone for a counterfeit. I'll be ready for you. [*Exit Jer.*

Enter Miss Prue.

Miss P. Oh! Mr. Tattle, are you here? I am glad I have found you. I have been looking up and down for you like anything, till I am as tired as anything in the world.

Tatt. Oh! plague; how shall I get rid of this foolish girl? (*Aside.*)

Miss P. Oh! I have pure news, I can tell you pure news; I must not marry the seaman now, my father says so. Why won't you be my husband? You say you love me, and you won't be my husband; and I know you may be my husband now, if you please.

Tatt. Oh! fie, miss! Who told you so, child?

Miss P. Why, my father; I told him that you loved me.

Tatt. Oh! fie, miss! Why did you do so? and who told you so, child?

Miss P. Who! why you did, did not you?

Tatt. Oh! plague! that was yesterday, miss; that was a great while ago, child. I have been asleep since; slept a whole night, and did not so much as dream of the matter.

Miss P. Psha! Oh! but I dreamt that it was so, though.

Tatt. Ay, but your father will tell you, that dreams come by contraries, child. Oh, fie! what, we must not love one another now. Psha! that would be a foolish thing, indeed. Fie, fie! you're a woman now, and must think of a new man every morning, and forget him every night. No, no; to marry is to be a child again, and play with the same rattle always. Oh, fie! marrying is a paw thing.

Miss P. Well, but don't you love me as well as you did last night, then?

Tatt. No, no, child; you would not have me.

Miss P. No? Yes, but I would, though.

Tatt. Psha! but I tell you, you would not. You forget you are a woman, and don't know your own mind.

Miss P. But here's my father, and he knows my mind.

Enter Foresight.

For. Oh! Mr. Tattle, your servant; you are a close man; but, methinks, your love to my daughter was a secret I might have been trusted with; or had you a mind to try if I could discover it by my art? Hum, ha! I think there is something in your physiognomy that has a resemblance of her; and the girl is like me.

Tatt. And so you would infer, that you and I are alike. What does the old prig mean? I'll banter him, and laugh at him, and leave him. (*Aside.*) I fancy you have a wrong notion of faces.

For. How? what? a wrong notion! How so?

Tatt. In the way of art, I have some taking features, not obvious to vulgar eyes, that are indicative of a sudden turn of good fortune in the lottery of wives; and promise a great beauty and great fortune, reserved alone for me, by a private intrigue of destiny, kept secret from the piercing eye of perspecuity, from all astrologers, and the stars themselves.

For. How? I will make it appear that what you say is impossible.

Tatt. Sir, I beg your pardon, I am in haste—

For. For what?

Tatt. To be married, sir—married!

For. Ay, but pray take me along with you, sir.

Tatt. No, sir; it is to be done privately; I never make confidants.

For. Well; but my consent, I mean. You won't marry my daughter without my consent?

Tatt. Who, I, sir? I am an absolute stranger to you and your daughter, sir.

For. Heyday! What time of the moon is this?

Tatt. Very true, sir; and desire to continue so. I have no more love for your daughter, than I have likeness of you: and I have a secret in my heart, which you would be glad to know, and sha'n't know; and yet you shall know it, too, and be sorry for it afterwards. I'd have you know, sir, that I am as knowing as the stars, and as secret as the night. And I'm going to be married just now, yet did not know of it half an hour ago, and the lady stays for me, and does not know of it yet. There's a mystery for you! I know you love to untie difficulties. Or, if you can't solve this, stay here a quarter of an hour, and I'll come and explain it to you. [*Exit.*

Miss P. Oh! father, why will you let him go? Won't you make him to be my husband?

For. Mercy on us! what do these lunacies portend? Alas! he's mad, child, stark wild!

Miss P. What, and must not I have e'er a husband, then? What, must I go to bed to nurse again, and be a child as long as she's an old woman? Indeed, but I won't. For, now my mind is set upon a man, I will have a man some way or other.

For. Oh! fearful! I think the girl's influenced, too. Hussy! you shall have a rod.

Miss P. A fiddle of a rod! I'll have a husband; and if you won't get me one, I'll get one for myself. I'll marry our Robin, the butler; he says he loves me: and he's a handsome man, and shall be my husband: I warrant he'll be my husband, and thank me, too; for he told me so.

Enter Nurse.

For. Did he so? I'll despatch him for it presently! Rogue! Oh! Nurse, come hither.

Nurse. What is your worship's pleasure?

For. Here, take your young mistress, and lock her up presently, till farther orders from me. Not a word, hussy; do what I bid you. No reply: away! and bid Robin make ready to give an account of his plate and linen, d'ye hear? Begone, when I bid you. [*Exeunt Nurse and Miss P.*

Enter MRS. FORESIGHT *and* SCANDAL.

Mrs. For. What's the matter, husband?

For. 'Tis not convenient to tell you now. Mr. Scandal, heaven keep us all in our senses! I fear there is a contagious frenzy abroad. How does Valentine?

Scand. Oh! I hope he will do well again. I have a message from him to your niece Angelica.

For. I think she has not returned since she went abroad with Sir Sampson.

Enter BEN.

Here's Mr. Benjamin; he can tell us if his father be come home.

Ben. Who? Father? Ay, he's come home with a vengeance!

Mrs. For. Why, what's the matter?

Ben. Matter! Why, he's mad.

For. Mercy on us! I was afraid of this.

Ben. And there's a handsome young woman, she, as they say, brother Val went mad for; she's mad, too, I think.

For. Oh! my poor niece, my poor niece! is she gone, too? Well, I shall run mad next.

Mrs. For. Well, but how mad? how d'ye mean?

Ben. Nay, I'll give you leave to guess; I'll undertake to make a voyage to Antigua. No; I mayn't say so, neither; but I'll sail as far as Leghorn, and back again, before you shall guess at the matter, and do nothing else. Mess! you may take in all the points of the compass, and not hit the right.

Mrs. For. Your experiment will take up a little too much time.

Ben. Why, then, I'll tell you: there's a new wedding upon the stocks, and they two are a-going to be married to rights.

Scand. Who?

Ben. Why, father, and—the young woman—I can't hit her name.

Scand. Angelica?

Ben. Ay, the same. [ble!

Mrs. For. Sir Sampson and Angelica? Impossi-

Ben. That may be; but I'm sure it is as I tell you.

Scand. 'Sdeath! it is a jest. I can't believe it.

Ben. Lookye, friend; it is nothing to me, whether you believe it or no. What I say is true, d'ye see; they are married, or just going to be married, I know not which.

For. Well, but they are not mad; that is, not lunatic?

Ben. I don't know what you may call madness, but she's mad for a husband, and he's horn-mad, I think, or they'd never make a match together. Here they come.

Enter SIR SAMPSON LEGEND, ANGELICA, *and* BUCKRAM.

Sir S. Where's this old soothsayer? this uncle of mine elect.—Aha! old Foresight! uncle Foresight! wish me joy, uncle Foresight, double joy, both as uncle and astrologer: here's a conjunction that was not foretold in your Ephemeris. The brightest star in the blue firmament is shot from above; and I'm lord of the ascendant. Od! you're an old fellow, Foresight, uncle I mean; a very old fellow, uncle Foresight; and yet you shall live to dance at my wedding; faith and troth, you shall. Od! we'll have the music of the spheres for thee, old Lilly, that we will; and thou shalt lead up a dance in *via lactea*.

For. I'm thunderstruck! You are not married to my niece?

Sir S. Not absolutely married, uncle; but very near it; within a kiss of the matter, as you see. (*Kisses Angelica.*)

Ang. 'Tis very true, indeed, uncle; I hope you'll be my father, and give me.

Sir S. That he shall, or I'll burn his globes.

Scand. Death and hell! Where's Valentine? [*Exit.*

Mrs. For. This is so surprising—

Sir S. How! What does my aunt say? surprising, aunt? not at all, for a young couple to make a match in winter. Not at all; it's a plot to undermine cold weather, and destroy that usurper of a bed, called a warming-pan.

Mrs. For. I'm glad to hear you have so much fire in you, Sir Sampson.

Ben. Mess! I fear his fire's little better than tinder.

Sir S. Why, you impudent tarpaulin! sirrah, do you bring your forecastle jests upon your father? But I shall be even with you; I won't give you a groat. Mr. Buckram, is the conveyance so worded, that nothing can possibly descend to this scoundrel? I would not so much as have him have the prospect of an estate, though there were no way to come to it but by the north-east passage.

Buck. Sir, it is drawn according to your directions; there is not the least cranny of the law unstopped.

Ben. Lawyer, I believe there's many a cranny and leak unstopped in your conscience. If so be that one had a pump to your bosom, I believe we should discover a foul hold. They say a witch will sail in a sieve; but I believe the devil would not venture aboard your conscience. And that's for you.

Sir S. Hold your tongue, sirrah. How now! who's here?

Enter MRS. FRAIL *and* TATTLE.

Mrs. F. Oh! sister, the most unlucky accident.

Mrs. For. What's the matter?

Tatt. Oh! the two most unfortunate poor creatures in the world we are.

For. Bless us! how so?

Mrs. F. Ah! Mr. Tattle and I, poor Mr. Tattle and I are—I can't speak it out.

Tatt. Nor I. But poor Mrs. Frail and I are—

Mrs. F. Married.

For. Married! how?

Tatt. Suddenly; before we knew where we were, that villain Jeremy, by the help of disguises, tricked us into one another.

For. Why, you told me just now, you went hence, in haste, to be married.

Ang. But I believe Mr. Tattle meant the favour for me, I thank him.

Tatt. I did, as I hope to be saved, madam; my intentions were good. But this is the most cruel thing, to marry, one does not know how, nor why, nor wherefore. The devil take me, if ever I was so much concerned at anything in my life!

Ang. 'Tis very unhappy, if you don't care for one another.

Tatt. The least in the world; that is, for my part, I speak for myself. 'Gad! I never had the least thought of serious kindness; I never liked anybody less in my life. Poor woman! 'Gad! I'm sorry for her, too; for I have no reason to hate her, neither; but I believe I shall lead her a d—d sort of a life.

Mrs. For. He's better than no husband at all—though he's a coxcomb. (*To Mrs. F.*)

Mrs. F. (*To Mrs. For.*) Ay, ay; it's well it's no worse. Nay, for my part, I always despised Mr. Tattle of all things; nothing but his being my husband could have made me like him less.

Tatt. Look you there, I thought as much! Plague on't! I wish we could keep it secret; why,

I don't believe any of this company would speak of it.

Ben. If you suspect me, friend, I'll go out of the room.

Mrs. F. But, my dear, that's impossible; the parson and that rogue Jeremy will publish it.

Tatt. Ay, my dear, so they will, as you say.

Ang. Oh! you'll agree very well in a little time; custom will make it easy for you.

Tatt. Easy! Plague on't! I don't believe I shall sleep to-night.

Sir S. Sleep, quotha! No; why, you would not sleep on your wedding-night? I'm an older fellow than you, and don't mean to sleep.

Ben. Why, there's another match now, as thof a couple of privateers were looking for a prize, and should fall foul of one another. I'm sorry for the young man with all my heart. Look you, friend! if I may advise you, when she's going—for that you must expect; I have experience of her—when she's going, let her go; for no matrimony is tough enough to hold her; and if she can't drag her anchor along with her, she'll break her cable, I can tell you that. Who's here, the madman?

Enter Valentine, Scandal, *and* Jeremy.

Val. No; here's the fool; and if occasion be, I'll give it under my hand.

Sir S. How now?

Val. Sir, I am come to acknowledge my errors, and ask your pardon.

Sir S. What, have you found your senses at last, then? In good time, sir.

Val. You were abused, sir; I never was distracted.

For. How? not mad, Mr. Scandal?

Scand. No, really, sir; I am his witness, it was all counterfeit.

Val. I thought I had reasons—but it was a poor contrivance; the effect has shewn it such.

Sir S. Contrivance! what, to cheat me? to cheat your father? Sirrah, could you hope to prosper?

Val. Indeed, I thought, sir, when the father endeavoured to undo the son, it was a reasonable return of nature.

Sir S. Very good, sir. Mr. Buckram, are you ready? Come, sir, will you sign and seal?

Val. If you please, sir; but first, I would ask this lady one question.

Sir S. Sir, you must ask me leave first. That lady! no, sir; you shall ask that lady no questions till you have asked her blessing, sir; that lady is to be my wife.

Val. I have heard as much, sir; but I would have it from her own mouth.

Sir S. That is as much as to say, I lie, sir; and you don't believe what I say.

Val. Pardon me, sir. But I reflect that I, very lately, counterfeited madness: I don't know but the frolic may go round.

Sir S. Come, chuck! satisfy him, answer him. Come, Mr. Buckram, the pen and ink.

Buck. Here it is, sir, with the deed; all is ready. (*Valentine goes to Angelica.*)

Ang. 'Tis true, you have a great while pretended love to me; nay, what if you were sincere? Still you must pardon me, if I think my own inclinations have a better right to dispose of my person than your's.

Sir S. Are you answered now, sir?

Val. Yes, sir.

Sir S. Where's your plot, sir? and your contrivance now, sir? Will you sign, sir? Come, will you sign and seal, sir?

Val. With all my heart, sir.

Scand. 'Sdeath! you are not mad, indeed? to ruin yourself?

Val. I have been disappointed of my only hope; and he, that loses hope, may part with anything. I never valued fortune but as it was subservient to my pleasure; and my only pleasure was to please this lady: I have made many vain attempts, and find, at last, that nothing but my ruin can effect it; which, for that reason, I will sign to. Give me the paper.

Ang. Generous Valentine! (*Aside.*)

Buck. Here is the deed, sir.

Val. But where is the bond by which I am obliged to sign this?

Buck. Sir Sampson, you have it.

Ang. No, I have it; and I'll use it as I would everything that is an enemy to Valentine. (*Tears the paper.*)

Sir S. How now?

Val. Ah!

Ang. Had I the world to give you, it could not make me worthy of so generous and faithful a passion. Here's my hand; my heart was always your's, and struggled very hard to make this utmost trial of your virtue. (*To Val.*)

Val. Between pleasure and amazement, I am lost: but on my knees I take the blessing.

Sir S. Oons! what is the meaning of this?

Ben. Mess! here's the wind changed again. Father, you and I may make a voyage together now.

Ang. Well, Sir Sampson, since I have played you a trick, I'll advise you how you may avoid such another. Learn to be a good father, or you'll never get a second wife. I always loved your son, and hated your unforgiving nature; and it is hardly more pleasure to me, that I can make him and myself happy, than that I can punish you.

Sir S. Oons! you're a crocodile!

For. Really, Sir Sampson, this is a sudden eclipse.

Sir S. You're an illiterate old fool; and I'm another. The stars are liars; and if I had breath, I'd curse them and you, myself, and all the world.

Tatt. Sir, sir, if you are in all this disorder for want of a wife, I can spare you mine.

Sir S. Confound you and your wife together! [*Exit Sir S. and For.*

Tatt. Oh! are you there, sir? I am indebted to you for my happiness. (*To Jeremy.*)

Jer. Sir, I ask you ten thousand pardons: it was an arrant mistake. You see, sir, my master was never mad, nor anything like it. Then how can it be otherwise?

Val. Tattle, I thank you: you would have interposed between me and heaven, but Providence laid purgatory in your way. You have but justice.

Scand. (*To Ang.*) Well, madam, you have done exemplary justice, in punishing an inhuman father, and rewarding a faithful lover: but there is a third good work, which I, in particular, must thank you for: I was an infidel to your sex, and you have converted me; for now I am convinced that all women are not, like fortune, blind in bestowing favours, either on those who do not merit, or who do not want them.

Ang. It is an unreasonable accusation that you lay upon our sex. You tax us with injustice, only to cover your own want of merit. You would all have the reward of love; but few have the constancy to stay till it becomes your due. How few, like Valentine, would persevere even to martyrdom, and sacrifice their interest to their constancy? In admiring me, you misplace the novelty.

The miracle to-day is, that we find
A lover true; not that a woman's kind. [*Exeunt.*

LOVE MAKES A MAN;

Or, THE FOP's FORTUNE:

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY COLLEY CIBBER.



Act III.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

THE GOVERNOR	CARLOS	PEDRO	ANGELINA
DON DUART	CLODIO	GUSMAN	ELVIRA
DON ANTONIO	SANCHO	ISIDOR	LOUISA
DON CHARINO	MONSIEUR	GUISEPPE	HONORIA
DON LEWIS	JAQUES	SERVANTS	ISABELLA

ACT I.

Scene I.—*A Hall.*

Enter Don Antonio *and* Don Charino.

Ant. Without compliment, my old friend, I shall think myself much honoured in your alliance.

Cha. Sir, you offer fair and nobly; but, since I have but one girl in the world, you won't think me a troublesome old fool, if I endeavour to bestow her to her worth; therefore, if you please, before we shake hands, a word or two by-the-by; for I have some considerable questions to ask you.

Ant. Ask them. [two sons?

Cha. Well, in the first place, you say you have

Ant. Exactly.

Cha. And you are willing that one of them shall marry my daughter Angelina?

Ant. Willing.

Cha. And you are likewise content that the said Angelina shall survey them both, and (with my allowance,) take to her lawful husband which of them

Ant. Content. [she pleases.

Cha. And you farther promise that the person by her and me so chosen, be it elder or younger, shall be your sole heir; that is to say, shall be in a conditional possession of at least three parts of your estate. This you positively promise—

Ant. To perform.

Cha. Why, then, as the last token of my full consent and approbation, I give you my hand.

Ant. There's mine.

Cha. Is it a match?

Ant. A match.

Cha. That's enough: Carlos, the elder, you say, is a great scholar, spends his whole life in the university, and loves his study?

Ant. Nothing more, sir.

Cha. But Clodio, the younger, has seen the world, and is very well known in the court of France; a sprightly fellow, eh?

Ant. Mettle to the back, sir.

Cha. Well, how far either of them may go with my daughter, I can't tell; she'll be easily pleased where I am. (*Knocking.*) Hark! what noise without?

Ant. Odso! 'tis they—they're come. I have expected them these two hours. Well, sirrah, who's without? [*Enter a Servant.*]

Serv. 'Tis Sancho, sir, with a waggon-load of my master's books. [study?

Cha. What, does he always travel with his whole

Ant. Never without them, sir; 'tis his humour.

Enter Sancho, *laden with books.*

San. Pedro, unload part of the library; bid the porter open the great gates, and make room for t'other dozen of carts: I'll be with you presently.

Ant. Ah! Sancho, where's my Carlos? Speak, boy, where didst thou leave thy master?

San. Jogging on, sir, in the highway to knowledge, both hands employed, in his book, and his bridle, sir; but he has sent his duty before him in this letter, sir. (*Gives Ant. the letter.*)

Cha. Pray, sir, what sort of life may your master lead?

San. Life, sir! no prince fares like him; he breaks his fast with Aristotle, dines with Tully, drinks tea at Helicon, sups with Seneca; then walks a turn or two in the milky way, and, after six hours' conference with the stars, sleeps with old Erra Pater.

Cha. Wonderful!

Ant. So, Carlos will be here presently. Here, take the knave in, and let him eat.

San. And drink, too, sir?

Ant. And drink too, sir; and, pray, see your master's chamber ready. (*Knocking.*) Well, sir, who's at the gate?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Monsieur, sir, from my young master, Clodio.

Enter Monsieur.

Ant. Well, Monsieur, what says your master? when will he be here?

Mons. Sire, he vill be here in de less time dan von quarter of de hour; he is not quite tirty mile off.

Ant. And what came you before for?

Mons. Sire, me come to provide de pulville, and de essence for his hair, dat he may approche to your vorshipe vid de reverence, and de belle air.

Ant. What, is he unprovided, then?

Mons. Sire, he was enragé, and did break his bottel d'orangerie, because it vas not de same dat is prepare for Monseigneur le Dauphin.

Ant. Well, sir, if you'll go to the butler, he'll help you to some oil for his hair.

Mons. Sire, me tank you. [*Exit.*

Cha. A very notable spark, this Clodio. What noise is that without?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my young masters are both come.

Ant. That's well! Now, sir, now; now observe their several dispositions.—

Enter Carlos.

Car. My father! sir, your blessing.

Ant. Thou hast it, Carlos; and now, pray, know this gentleman, Charino, sir, my old friend, and one in whom you may have a particular interest.

Car. I'll study to deserve his love, sir.

Cha. Sir, as for that matter, you need not study at all.

Clo. (*Within.*) La Valiere! bid the groom take care our hunters be well rubbed and clothed; they're hot, and have out-stripped the wind.

Cha. Ay, marry, sir, there's mettle in this young fellow.

Enter Clodio.

Clo. Where's my father? Ah! my dear dad—

Ant. Ah! my dear Clody, thou'rt welcome!

Clo. Sir, being my father's friend, I am your most obliged, faithful, humble servant. (*To Cha.*)

Cha. Sir, I—I—I like you.

Clo. Thy hand: I'm your eternal friend.

Cha. Faith! thou art a pretty-humoured fellow.

Clo. Who's that? Pray, sir, who's that?

Ant. Your brother, Clody.

Clo. Odso! I beg his pardon with all my heart. Ha, ha, ha! Did ever mortal see such a book-worm? Brother, how is't?

Car. I'm glad you are well, brother. (*Reads.*)

Clo. What, does he draw his book upon me? Then I will draw my wit upon him. Gad! I'll puzzle him. Hark you! brother; pray, what's Latin for a sword-knot?

Car. The Romans wore none, brother.

Clo. No ornaments upon their swords, sir?

Car. Oh! yes, several; conquest, peace, and honour: an old unfashionable wear.

Clo. Sir, no man in Europe wears a more fashionable sword than I do; he cost me fifty louis-d'ors in Paris. There, sir! feel him—try him, sir.

Car. I have no skill, sir.

Clo. No skill, sir! why, this sword would make a coward fight. Aha! sa, sa! rip—ha! there I had him! (*Fencing.*)

Car. Take heed, you'll cut my clothes, brother.

Clo. Cut them! Ah, ah! No, no; they are cut already, brother, to the grammar rules exactly. Psha! pr'ythee, man, leave off this college air.

Car. No, brother, I think it wholesome, the soil and situation pleasant.

Clo. A put, by Jupiter! he don't know the air of a gentleman, from the air of the country. (*Aside.*) Sir, I mean the air of your clothes; I would have you change your tailor, and dress a little more *en cavalier:* lay by your book, and take out your snuff-box; cock, and look smart, eh?

Cha. Faith! a pretty fellow!

Enter Monsieur.

Mons. Sire, here be de several sort of de jessamine d'orangerie vidout, if you please to make your choice.

Clo. Mum! sir: I must beg pardon for a moment; a most important business calls me aside, which I will despatch with all imaginable celerity, and return to the repitition of my desire to continue, sir, your most obliged, and faithful humble servant. [*Exit.*

Cha. Faith! he's a pretty fellow!

Ant. Now, sir, if you please, since we have got the other alone, we'll put the matter a little closer to him.

Cha. 'Tis to little purpose, I'm afraid: but use your pleasure, sir.

Car. Plato differs from Socrates in this. (*Musing*)

Ant. Come, come, pr'ythee, Carlos, lay them by; let them agree at leisure. What, no hour of interruption?

Car. Man's life, sir, being so short, and then, the way that leads us to the knowledge of ourselves, so hard and tedious, each minute should be precious.

Ant. Ay, but to thrive in this world, Carlos, you must part a little with this bookish contemplation, and prepare yourself for action. If you will study, let it be to know what part of my land's fit for the plough; what for pasture; to buy and sell my stock to the best advantage, and cure my cattle when they are over-grown with labour. This, now, would turn to some account.

Car. This, sir, may be done from what I've read; for what concerns tillage, who can better deliver it, than Virgil in his Georgicks? And for the cure of herds, his Bucolicks are a master-piece; but when his art describes the commonwealth of bees, their industry, their order in going forth, and coming laden home, their strict obedience to their king, his just rewards to such as labour, his punishment, inflicted only on the slothful drone; I'm ravished with it: then I reap, indeed, my harvest, receive the grain my cattle bring me, and there find wax and honey.

Ant. Heyday! Georges, and Blue-sticks, and bees'-wax! What, art thou mad?

Cha. Raving, raving! [from it.

Car. No, sir, the knowledge of this guards me

Ant. But can you find, amongst all your musty manuscripts, what pleasure he enjoys that lies in the arms of a young, rich, well-shaped, healthy bride? Answer me that, eh, sir?

Car. 'Tis frequent, sir, in story; there I read of all kinds of virtuous, and of vicious women; the ancient Spartan dames, the Roman ladies, their beauties, their deformities; and when I light upon a Portia, or a Cornelia, crowned with ever-blooming truth and virtue, with such a feeling I peruse their fortunes, as if I then had lived, and tasted of their lawful, envied love. But when I meet a Messalina, tired and unsated in her foul desires; a Clytemnestra, bathed in her husband's blood; an impious Tullia, whirling her chariot over her father's breathless body, horror invades my faculties. Comparing, then, the numerous guilty with the easy count of

those that die in innocence, I detest and loath them as ignorance or atheism.

Ant. And you do resolve, then, not to make payment of the debt you owe me?

Car. What debt, good sir?

Ant. Why, the debt I paid my father, when I got you, sir, and made him a grandsire; which I expect from you. I won't have my name die.

Car. Nor would I: my laboured studies, sir, may prove, in time, a living issue.

Ant. Very well, sir; and so, I shall have a general collection of all the quiddits from Adam till this time, to be my grand-child.

Car. I'll take my best care, sir, that what I leave mayn't shame the family.

Cha. A sad fellow, this! this is a very sad fellow! (*Aside.*)

Ant. So, in short, you would not marry an empress?

Car. Oh! sir, the closet that contains my chosen books, to me's a glorious court; can I then part with solid constant pleasures, to clasp uncertain vanities? No, sir; he it your care to swell your heap of wealth, marry my brother, and let him get you bodies of your name; I rather would inform it with a soul. I tire you, sir: your pardon and your leave. Lights there! for my study. [*Exit.*

Ant. Was ever man thus transported from the common sense of his own happiness! a stupid wise rogue! I could beat him. Now, if it were not for my hopes in young Clody, I might fairly conclude my name were at a period.

Cha. Ay, ay; he's the match for my money, and my girl's, too, I warrant her. What say you, sir, shall we tell them a piece of our mind?

Ant. This minute, sir; and here comes my young rogue, in the very nick of his fortune.

Enter Clodio.

Clody, a word—

Clo. To the wise is enough. Your pleasure, sir?

Ant. In the meantime, sir, if you please to send your daughter notice of our intended visit. (*To Cha.*)

Cha. I'll do't. Hark you! friend—(*Whispers a Servant.*)

Enter Sancho, *behind.*

San. I doubt my master has found but rough welcome; he's gone supperless into his study; I'd fain know the reason. I must find it out. (*Stands aside.*)

Clo. Sir, you could not have stated anything more agreeable to my inclination; and for the young lady's, sir, if this old gentleman will please to give me a sight of her, you shall see me whip into her's in the cutting of a caper.

Cha. Well, pursue and conquer; though let me tell you, sir, my girl has wit, and will give you as good as you bring; she has a smart way, sir.

Clo. Sir, I will be as smart as she: I have my share of courage; I fear no woman alive, sir, having always found that love and assurance ought to be as inseparable companions as a beau and a snuff-box, or a curate and a tobacco-stopper.

Cha. Faith! thou art a pleasant rogue! Egad! she must like thee.

Clo. I know how to tickle the ladies, sir. In Paris, I had constantly two challenges every morning came up with my chocolate, only for being pleasant company the night before with the first ladies of quality.

Cha. Ah! silly, envious rogues! Pr'ythee, what do you do to the ladies?

San. Positively, nothing. (*Aside.*)

Clo. Why, the truth is, I did make the jades drink a little too smartly; for which, the poor dogs, the princes, could not endure me.

Cha. Why, hast thou really conversed with princes?

Clo. Conversed with them! Why, you shall judge now, you shall judge. Let me see: there was I and Prince Grandmont, Duke de Bongrace, Duke de Bellegrade, (Bellegrade—yes, yes, Jack was there,) Count de l'Esprit, Marshal Bombard, and that pleasant dog, the Prince de Hautenbas. We six, now, were all at supper, all in good humour; champaigne was the word, and wit flew about the room, like a pack of losing cards. Now, sir, there happened to be the self-same number of ladies, (after the fatigue of a ballet, diverting themselves with ratafia and the spleen,) so dull, they were not able to talk, though it were scandalously, even of their best friends. So, sir, after a profound silence, at last, one of them gaped. "Oh, gad!" says she, "would that pleasant dog, Clody, were here, to *badiner* a little." "Eh!" says a second, and stretched. "Ah! *mon Dieu!*" says a third, and waked. "Could not one find him?" says a fourth, and leered. "Oh! burn him!" says a fifth, "I saw him go out with the nasty rakes of the blood again," in a pet. "Did you so?" says a sixth, "*Pardie!* we'll spoil that gang presently," in a passion. Whereupon, sir, in two minutes, I received a billet in four words: "*Chien, nous vous demandons,*" subscribed "Grandmont, Bongrace, Bellegrade, L'Esprit, Bombard, Hautenbas."

Cha. Why, these are the very names of the princes you supped with.

Clo. Every soul of them the individual wife, or sister of every man in the company, split me! Ha,

Cha. and Ant. Ha, ha, ha! [ha, ha!

San. Did ever two old gudgeons swallow so greedily! (*Aside.*) [boy?

Ant. Well, and didst thou make a night on't,

Clo. Yes, egad! and morning, too, sir; for about eight o'clock the next day, slap they all soused upon their knees, kissed round, burned their commodes, drank my health, broke their glasses, and so parted.

Ant. Gad-a-mercy, Clody! Nay, 'twas always a wild young rogue.

Cha. I like him the better for't. You remember the conditions, sir; three parts of your estate to him and his heirs.

Ant. Sir, he deserves it all; 'tis not a trifle shall part them. You see Carlos has given over the world: I'll undertake to buy his birth-right for a shelf of new books.

Cha. Ay, ay; get you the writings ready, with your other son's hand to them; for, unless he signs, the conveyance is of no validity.

Ant. I know it, sir: they shall be ready with his hand in two hours.

Cha. Why, then, come along, my lad; and now I'll shew thee to my daughter.

Clo. I dare be shewn, sir. *Allons!* Hey! *suivons l'amour.* (*Sings.*) [*Exeunt all but Sancho.*

San. How! my poor master to be disinherited, for Monsieur Sa-sa there; and I a looker-on, too! If we have studied our majors and our minors, our antecedents and consequences, to be concluded coxcombs at last, we have made a fair hand on't! I'm glad I know of this roguery, however; I'll take care my master's uncle, old Don Lewis, shall hear of it; for though he can hardly read a proclamation, yet he dotes upon his learning; and if he be that old, rough, testy blade he used to be, we may chance to have a rubber with them first. Here he comes, *profecto.*

Enter Don Lewis.

Lewis. Sancho, where's my boy Carlos? What, is he at it? Is he at it? Deep, deep, I warrant him. Sancho, a little peep now—one peep at him, through the key-hole: I must have a peep.

San. Have a care, sir, he's upon a magical point.

Lewis. What, has he lost anything?

San. Yes, sir, he has lost with a vengeance!

Lewis. But what, what, what sirrah? what is't?

San. Why, his birth-right, sir; he is di—di—dis—disinherited. (*Sobbing.*)

Lewis. Ha! how, when, what, where, who, what dost thou mean?

San. His brother, sir, is to marry Angelina, the great heiress, to enjoy three parts of his father's estate; and my master is to have a whole acre of new books, for setting his hand to the conveyance.

Lewis. This must be a lie, sirrah; I will have it a lie.

San. With all my heart, sir; but here comes my old master and the pickpocket the lawyer; they'll tell you more.

Enter Don Antonio, *and a Lawyer.*

Ant. Here, sir, this paper has your full instructions: pray, be speedy, sir; I don't know but we may couple them to-morrow; be sure you make it firm.

Law. Do you secure his hand, sir, I defy the law to give him his title again. [*Exit.*

San. What think you now, sir?

Lewis. Why, now, methinks, I'm pleased. This is right—I'm pleased—must cut that lawyer's throat, though; must bone him; ay, I'll have him boned and potted.

Ant. Brother, how is't?

Lewis. Oh! mighty well, mighty well! Let's feel your pulse: feverish! (*Whistles.*)

Ant. You are merry, brother.

Lewis. It's a lie.

Ant. How, brother?

Lewis. A d—d lie! I am not merry. (*Smiling.*)

Ant. What are you, then?

Lewis. Very angry.

Ant. Hi, hi, hi! at what, brother?

Lewis. Why, at a very wise settlement I have made lately.

Ant. What settlement, good brother? I find he has heard of it. (*Aside.*)

Lewis. What do you think I have done? I have—this deep head of mine has disinherited my eldest son, because his understanding's an honour to my family, and given it all to my younger, because he's a puppy—a puppy.

Ant. Come, I guess at your meaning, brother.

Lewis. Do you so, sir? Why, then, I must tell you, flat and plain, my boy Carlos must and shall inherit it.

Ant. I say no, unless Carlos had a soul to value his fortune. Harkye! brother, do you know what learning is?

Lewis. What if I don't, sir; I believe it's a fine thing, and that's enough. Though I can speak no Greek, I love and honour the sound of it, and Carlos speaks it loftily; egad! he thunders it out, sir: and let me tell you, sir, if you had ever the grace to have heard but six lines of Hesiod, or Iliad, or any of the Greek poets, ods-heart! it would have made your hair stand an end: sir, he has read such things in my hearing—

Ant. But did you understand them, brother?

Lewis. I tell you, no. What does that signify? The very sound's sufficient comfort to an honest man.

Ant. Fie, fie! I wonder you talk so; you that are old, and should understand.

Lewis. Should, sir! Yes, and do, sir. Sir, I'd have you to know, I have studied; I have run over history, poetry, philosophy.

Ant. Yes, like a cat over a harpsichord; rare music! You have read catalogues, I believe. Come, come, brother, my younger boy is a fine gentleman.

Lewis. A sad dog! I'll buy a prettier fellow in a penny-worth of gingerbread.

Ant. What I propose, I'll do, sir, say you your pleasure. Here comes one I must talk with. Well, brother, what news?

Enter Don Charino.

Cha. Oh! to our wishes, sir; Clody's a right bait for a girl, sir. Noble Don Lewis, I am your humble servant. Come, what say you? Shall I prevail with you to settle some part of your estate upon young Clody?

Lewis. Clody!

Cha. Ay, your nephew, Clody.

Lewis. Settle upon him!

Cha. Ay.

Lewis. Why, look you! I haven't much land to spare, but I have an admirable horse-pond; I'll settle that upon him, if you will.

Ant. Come, let him have his way, sir; he's old and hasty; my estate's sufficient. How does your daughter, sir?

Cha. Ripe and ready, sir; get you the writings ready, my girl shall be here in the morning.

Lewis. Hark you! sir, do you suppose my Carlos shall—

Cha. Sir, I suppose nothing; what I'll do, I'll justify; what your brother does, let him answer.

Ant. That I have already, sir; and so, good-morrow to your patience, brother. [*Exit with Cha.*

Lewis. Sancho!

San. Sir?

Lewis. Fetch me some gunpowder; quick, quick.

San. Sir?

Lewis. Some gunpowder, I say; a barrel—quickly. And, d'ye hear? three-pennyworth of ratsbane. Eh! ay, I'll blow up one, and poison the other.

San. Come, sir, I see what you would be at, and if you dare take my advice, (I don't want wit at a pinch, sir,) e'en let me try if I can fire my master enough with the praises of the young lady, to make him rival his brother; that would blow them up indeed, sir.

Lewis. Psha! impossible! he never spoke six words to any woman in his life, but his bed-maker.

San. So much the better, sir; therefore, if he speaks at all, it's the more likely to be out of the road. Hark! he rings: I must wait upon him. [*Exit.*

Lewis. I can't look my poor boy in the face: but come, Carlos, let them go on, thou shalt not want money to buy thee books yet. That old fool, thy father, and his young puppy, shall not share a groat of mine between them; nay, to plague them, I could find in my heart to fall sick in a pet, give thee my estate in a passion, and leave the world in a fury. [*Exit.*

ACT II.—Scene I.—*A Hall.*

Enter Don Antonio *and* Sancho.

Ant. Sir, he shall have what's fit for him.

San. No inheritance, sir?

Ant. Enough to give him books, and a moderate maintenance: that's as much as he cares for. You talk like a fool, a coxcomb! trouble him with land!

San. Must master Clodio have all, sir?

Ant. All, all: he knows how to use it: he's a man bred in this world; t'other in the skies; his business is altogether above stairs. (*Bell rings.*) Go, see what he wants.

San. A father, I'm sure! [*Exit.*

Ant. What, will none of my rogues come near me now? Oh! here they are. [*Enter Servants and the Cook.*] Well, sir, in the first place, can you procure me a plentiful dinner for about fifty, within two hours? Your young master is to be married this morning; will that spur you, sir?

Cook. Young master, sir! I wish your honour had given me a little more warning.

Ant. Sir, you have as much as I had: I was not sure of it half-an-hour ago.

Cook. Sir, I will try what I can do. Hey! Pedro, Gusman! Come, stir, ho! [*Exit.*

Ant. Butler, open the cellar to all good fellows; if any man offers to sneak away sober, knock him down. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A Library.*—Carlos *discovered.*

Car. (*Noise within.*) What a perpetual noise these people make! I have forgotten to eat and sleep, with reading; all my faculties turn into study.

What a misfortune 'tis in human nature, that the body will not live on that which feeds the mind! How unprofitable a pleasure is eating! Sancho!

Enter Sancho.

San. Did you call, sir?

Car. Pr'ythee, what noise is this?

San. The cooks are hard at work, sir, chopping herbs, and mincing meat, and breaking marrow-bones.

Car. And is it thus at every dinner?

San. No, sir; but we have high doings to-day.

Car. Well, set this folio in its place again; then make me a little fire, and get a manchet; I'll dine alone. Does my younger brother speak any Greek yet, Sancho?

San. No, sir; but he spits French like a magpie, and that's more in fashion.

Car. He steps before me there; I think I read it well enough to understand it, but when I am to give it utterance, it quarrels with my tongue. Again that noise! Pr'ythee, tell me, Sancho, are there any princes to dine here?

San. Some there are as happy as princes, sir: your brother's married to-day. All the country round is invited; not a dog that knows the house, but comes, too: all open, sir.

Car. Pr'ythee, who is it my brother marries?

San. Old Charino's daughter, sir, the great heiress: a delicate creature; young, soft, smooth, fair, plump, and ripe as a cherry!

Car. Is she so fine a creature?

San. Such eyes! such looks! such a pair of pretty plump pouting lips! such softness in her voice! such music, too! and when she smiles, such roguish dimples in her cheeks! such a clear skin! white neck—Ah!

Car. Why, thou art in love, Sancho.

San. Ay, so would you be, if you saw her, sir.

Car. I don't think so.

San. Ods me! sir, sir! here comes the very lady, the bride, your sister that must be, and her father.

Enter Don Charino *and* Angelina.

Stand close, you'll both see and hear, sir.

Car. I ne'er saw any yet so fair; such sweetness in her look, such modesty! If we may think the eye the window to the heart, she has a thousand treasured virtues there.

San. So, the book's gone! (*Aside.*)

Cha. Come, pr'ythee, put on a brisker look. Odsheart! dost thou think, in conscience, that's fit for thy wedding-day?

Ang. Sir, I wish it were not quite so sudden; a little time for farther thought, perhaps, had made it easier to me: to change for ever, is no trifle, sir.

Car. A wonder!

Cha. Look you! his fortune I have taken care of, and his person you have no exceptions to. What, in the name of Venus, would the girl have?

Ang. I never said, of all the world, I made him, sir, my choice: nay, though he be your's, I cannot say I am highly pleased with him, nor yet am averse; but I had rather welcome your commands and him than disobedience.

Cha. Oh! if that be all, madam, to make you easy, my commands are at your service.

Ang. I have done with my objections, sir.

Car. Such understanding in so soft a form! Happy, happy brother! I have gazed too much. Reach me an Ovid! [*Exit with San.*

Cha. I say, put on your best looks, hussy! for here he comes, faith!

Enter Clodio.

Ah! my dear Clody!

Clo. My dear, dear dad! (*Embracing.*) Ha! *ma princesse! êtes vous là donc?* Ah! *Non, non. Je ne m'y connois gueres,* &c. (*Sings.*) Look, look, look o'slyboots! what, she knows nothing of the matter! But you will, child.

Enter Don Antonio *and Lawyer.*

Ant. Well said, Clody! my noble brother, welcome; my fair daughter, I give you joy.

Clo. And so will I too, sir. *Allons! Vivons! Chantons, dansons! Hey! L'autre jour.* (*Sings and dances.*)

Ant. Well said again, boy. Sir, you and your writings are welcome.

Enter Don Lewis.

What, my angry brother! nay, you must have your welcome, too, or we shall make but a flat feast on't.

Lewis. Sir, I am not welcome, nor I won't be welcome, nor nobody's welcome, and you are all a [parcel of—

Cha. What, sir?

Lewis. Miserable wretches! sad dogs!

Ant. Come, pray, sir, bear with him, he's old and hasty: but he'll dine and be good company for [all this.

Lewis. A strange lie, that.

Clo. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Testy! Ha, ha!

Lewis. Don't laugh, my dear rogue! pr'ythee, don't laugh, now; faith! I shall break thy head, if thou dost. [me, dear uncle!

Clo. Gadso! why, then, I find you are angry at

Lewis. Angry at thee, eh, puppy! Why, what, what dost thou see in that lovely hatchet face of thine, that's worth my being out of humour at? Blood and fire, ye dog! get out of my sight, or—

Ant. Nay, brother, this is too far. [w—!

Lewis. Angry at him! a son of a—son's son of a

Cha. Ha, ha! poor, peevish—

Lewis. I'd fain have somebody poison him. (*To himself.*) Ah! that sweet creature! Must this fair flower be cropped to stick up in a piece of rascally earthen-ware? I must speak to her. Puppy, stand out of my way.

Clo. Ha, ha! ay, now for't.

Lewis. (*To Ang.*) Ah—ah—ah! madam—I pity you; you're a lovely young creature, and ought to have a handsome man yoked to you; one of understanding, too. I am sorry to say it, but this fellow's skull's extremely thick; and if he should have a thing shaped like a child, you can make nothing of it but a tailor.

Clo. Ods me! why, you are testy, my dear uncle.

Lewis. Will nobody take that troublesome dog out of my sight? I can't stay where he is. I'll go see my poor boy Carlos. I've disturbed you, madam; your humble servant.

Ant. You'll come again, and drink the bride's health, brother?

Lewis. That lady's health, I may; and, if she'll give me leave, perhaps, sit by her at table, too.

Clo. Ha, ha! b'ye, nuncle.

Lewis. Puppy, good b'ye. [*Exit.*

Ang. An odd-humoured gentleman.

Ant. Very odd, indeed, child; I suppose, in pure spite, he'll make my son Carlos his heir.

Ang. Methinks I would not have a light head, nor one laden with too much learning, as my father says Carlos is; sure, there's something hid in that gentleman's concern for him, that speaks him not so mere a log.

Ant. Come, shall we go and seal, brother? The priest stays for us. When Carlos has signed the conveyance, as he shall presently, we'll then to the wedding, and so to dinner.

Cha. With all my heart, sir.

Clo. Allons, ma chère princesse. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—*A Study.*

Carlos, Don Lewis, *and* Sancho, *discovered.*

Lewis. Nay, you are undone.

Car. Then, I must study, sir, to bear my fortune.

Lewis. Have you no greater feeling?

San. You were sensible of the great book, sir, when it fell upon your head; and won't the ruin of your fortune stir you?

Car. Will he have my books, too?

Lewis. No, no; he has a book, a fine one, too,

called the Gentleman's Recreation; or, the Secret Art of getting Sons and Daughters: such a creature! a beauty in folio! Would thou hadst her in thy study, Carlos, though it were but to new-clasp [her.

San. He has seen her, sir.

Lewis. Well, and—and—

San. He flung away his book, sir.

Lewis. Did he, faith? Would he had flung away his humour, too, and spoken to her.

Car. Must my brother, then, have all?

Lewis. All, all.

San. All that your father has, sir.

Car. And that fair creature, too?

San. Ay, sir.

Lewis. Eh!

Car. He has enough, then. (*Sighing.*)

Lewis. He have her, Carlos! Why, would—would—that is—eh?

Car. May not I see her, sometimes, and call her sister? I'll do her no wrong.

Lewis. I can't bear this. Sheart! I could cry for madness! Flesh and fire! do but speak to her, man.

Car. I cannot, sir, her look requires something of that distant awe, words of that soft respect, and yet such force and meaning, too, that I should stand confounded to approach her, and yet, I long to wish her joy. Oh! were I born to give it, too!

Lewis. Why, thou shalt wish her joy, boy; faith! she is a good-humoured creature, she'll take it [kindly.

Car. Do you think so, uncle?

Lewis. I'll to her, and tell you.

Car. Do, sir. Stay, uncle; will she not think me rude? I would not for the world offend her.

Lewis. 'Fend a fiddle-stick! Let me alone; I'll [—I'll—

Car. Nay, but, sir—dear uncle!

Lewis. A hum, a hum! [*Exit.*

Enter Don Antonio *and Lawyer with a writing.*

Ant. Where's my son?

San. There, sir, casting a figure what chopping children his brother shall have, and where he shall find a new father for himself.

Ant. I shall find a stick for you, rogue, I shall. Carlos, how dost thou do? Come hither, boy.

Car. Your pleasure, sir?

Ant. Nay, no great matter, child; only to put your name here a little, to this bit of parchment. I think you write a reasonable good hand, Carlos.

Car. Pray, sir, to what use may it be?

Ant. Only to pass your title in the land I have, to your brother Clodio.

Car. Is it no more, sir?

Law. That's all, sir.

Ant. No, no, 'tis nothing else. Look you, you shall be provided for, you shall have what books you please, and your means shall come in without your care, and you always shall have a servant to wait on you.

Car. Sir, I thank you; but, if you please, I had rather sign it before the good company below; it being, sir, so frank a gift, 'twill be some small compliment to have it done before the lady, too: there I shall sign it cheerfully, and wish my brother fortune. [thing to me.

Ant. With all my heart, child; it's the same

Car. You'll excuse me, sir, if I make no great stay with you.

Ant. Do as thou wilt, thou shalt do anything thou hast a mind to. [*Exit with Car. and Lawyer.*

San. Now has he undone himself for ever. Odsheart! I'll down into the cellar, and be stark drunk for anger. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.—*A Dining-room.*

Enter Don Charino *with* Angelina, Clodio, Don Lewis, *Ladies, and Priest.*

Cha. Come, let him bring his son's hand, and all's done. Are you ready, sir?

Priest. Sir, I shall despatch them presently, immediately; for, in truth, I am hungry.

Clo. Egad! I warrant you, the priest and I could both fall to without saying grace. Ha! you little rogue! what, you think it long, too?

Ang. I find no fault, sir; better things were well done, than done too hastily. Sir, you look melancholy. (*To Don L.*)

Lewis. Sweet swelling blossom! Ah! that I had the gathering of thee; I would stick thee in the bosom of a pretty young fellow. Ah! thou hast missed a man (but that he is so bewitched to his study, and knows no other mistress than his mind) so far above this feather-headed puppy—

Ant. Can he talk, sir? [to a woman.

Lewis. Like an angel—to himself; the devil a word

Ang. But a little conversation, methinks—

Lewis. Why, so I think, too; but the boy's bewitched, and the devil can't bring him to't: shall I try if I can get him to wish you joy?

Ang. I shall receive it as becomes his sister, sir.

Clo. Look, look! old testy will fall in love by-and-by; he's hard at it, split me!

Cha. Let him alone, she'll fetch him about, I warrant you!

Clo. So, here my father comes? Eh! my brother, too! that's a wonder: broke like a spirit from his cell.

Enter Don Antonio, Carlos, *and the Lawyer.*

Lewis. Odso! here he is; that's he; a little inclining to the lean or so, but his understanding's the fatter for't.

Ant. Come, Carlos, 'twas your desire to see my fair daughter and the good company, and to seal before them all, and give your brother joy.

Cha. He does well; I shall think the better of him as long as I live.

Car. Is this the lady, sir?

Ant. Ay, that's your sister, Carlos.

Car. Forbid it, love! (*Aside.*) Do you not think she'll grace our family? [grace?

Ant. No doubt on't, sir.

Car. Should I not thank her for so unmerited a

Ant. Ay, and welcome, Carlos.

Lewis. Now, my boy; give her a gentle twist by the finger; lay your lips softly, softly, close and plump to her. (*Apart to Car.*)

Car. Pardon a stranger's freedom, lady. (*Salutes Ang.*) Dissolving softness! Oh! the drowning joy! Happy, happy he that sips eternally such nectar down. But you, fair creature, share by far the higher joy; if, as I've read, (nay, now am sure) the sole delight of love lies only in the power to give.

Ang. How near his thoughts agree with mine! this the mere scholar I was told of! (*Aside.*) I find, sir, you have experienced love; you seem acquainted with the passion.

Car. I've had, indeed, a dead pale glimpse in theory, but never saw the enlivening light before.

Ang. Ha! before! (*Aside.*)

Ant. Well, these are very fine compliments, Carlos; but you say nothing to your brother yet.

Car. Oh! yes, and wish him, sir, with any other beauty, (if possible,) more lasting joy than I could taste with her.

Ang. He speaks unhappily.

Clo. Ha! What do you say, brother?

Ant. Nay, for my part, I don't understand him.

Cha. Nor I.

Lewis. Stand clear, I do; and that sweet creature, too, I hope.

Ang. Too well, I fear.

Ant. Come, come, to the writing, Carlos; pr'ythee, leave thy studying, man.

Car. I leave my life first; I study now to be a man; before, what man was, was but my argument; I am now on the proof; I find, I feel myself a man—

Lewis. He has it, he has it! my boy's in for't.

Clo. Come, come, will you—

Lewis. Stand out of the way, puppy.

Car. Whence is it, fair, that while I offer speech

to you, my thoughts want words, my words their free and honest utterance? Why is it thus I tremble at your touch, and fear your frown? Yet should my dearest friend or brother dare to check my vain deluded wishes, oh! I should turn and tear him like an offended lion.

Clo. Come, come, will you sign, brother?

Lewis. Time enough, puppy.

Clo. I say, will you sign, brother?

Car. Away, I have no time for trifles! Room for an elder brother. [way now?

Lewis. Why, did not I bid thee stand out of the

Ant. Ay, but this is trifling, Carlos. Come, come, your hand, man.

Car. Your pardon, sir, I cannot seal yet; had you only shewn me land, I had resigned it free, and proud to have bestowed it to your pleasure; but you have opened to me such a treasure, such unimagined mines of solid joy, that I perceive my temper stubborn now, even to a churlish avarice of love.

Ant. And so you won't part with your title, sir?

Car. Sooner with my soul of reason, be a plant, a beast, a fish, a fly, than yield one foot of land—if she be tied to't.

Lewis. Ah! Carlos. What say you to the scholar now, chicken?

Ang. A wonder! Is this gentleman your brother, sir? (*To Clodio.*)

Clo. Eh! No, my—madam, not quite—that is, he is a little akin by the—Plague on him! would he were buried! I can't tell what to say to him, split

Ant. Positively, you will not seal then, eh? [me!

Car. Neither: I should not blindly say I will not seal. Let me entreat a moment's pause; for, even yet, perhaps, I may. (*Sighing.*)

Ang. Forbid it, fortune!

Ant. Oh! may you so, sir?

Clo. Ay, sir, eh! What, you are come to yourself, I find, 'sheart!

Cha. Ay, ay, give him a little time; he'll think better on't, I warrant you.

Car. Perhaps, fair creature, I have done you wrong, whose plighted love and hope went hand in hand together; but, I conjure you, think my life were hateful after so base, so barbarous an act as parting them: I have no land, no fortune, life, or being, while your necessity of peace requires them.

Cha. Why, ay, there's some civility in this.

Clo. The fellow really talks very prettily.

Car. But if in bare compliance to a father's will, you now but suffer marriage, or what's worse, give it as an extorted bond, imposed on the simplicity of your youth, and dare confess you wish some honest friend would save, or free you from its hard conditions; I then again have land, have life, and resolution, waiting still upon your happier fortune.

Clo. Ha, ha! pert enough, that. Egad! I long to see what this will come to!

Priest. In truth, unless somebody is married presently, the dinner will be spoiled; and, then, nobody will be able to eat it.

Car. Consider, fair one, now's the very crisis of our fate: you cannot have it, sure, to ask, if honour be the parent of my love. If you can love for love, and think your heart rewarded there—

Ang. Need I then speak? To say, I am far from hating you—I would say more, but there is nothing fit for me to say.

Cha. I'll bear it no longer.

Ang. On this you may depend, I cannot like that marriage was proposed me.

Car. How shall my soul requite this goodness?

Cha. Beyond patience! This is downright insolence, roguery, villany, treachery! Part them!

Ang. Part them!

Clo. Ay, ay; part them, part them!

Lewis. Doll, dum, dum! (*Sings, and draws in their defence.*)

Cha. Call an officer! I'll have them forced asunder.

Ang. Nay, then, I'm reduced to take protection here. (*Goes to Carlos.*)

Car. Oh! ecstacy of heart! transporting joy!

Lewis. Lorro, dorrol, loll! (*Sings and dances.*)

Cha. A plot! a plot against my honour! Murder, treason, gunpowder! I'll be revenged. [*Exit.*

Ant. Carlos, I say, forego the lady.

Car. Never, while I have sense of being, life, or motion.

Clo. You won't! Gadso! What, then, I find I must lug out upon this business. *Allons!* the lady, sir.

Lewis. Lorro, dorrol, loll! (*Presenting his point to Clodio.*)

Car. Hold, uncle! Come, brother, sheath your anger. I'll do my best to satisfy you all: but, first, I would entreat a blessing here.

Ant. Out of my doors! thou art no son of mine. [*Exit.*

Car. I am sorry I have lost a father, sir. For you, brother, since once you had a seeming hope, in lieu of what you've lost, half of my birthright—

Clo. No halves; no halves, sir; the whole lady.

Car. Why, then, the whole, if you like the terms. [quick.

Clo. What terms? what terms? Come, quick,

Car. The first is this: (*snatches Don L.'s sword*) win her, and wear her; for, on my soul, unless my body fail, my mind shall never yield thee up a thought in love.

Lewis. Gramercy! Carlos, to him, boy! Egad! this love has made a man of him.

Car. This is the first good sword I ever poised in anger yet; 'tis sharp, I'm sure; if it but hold my putting home, I shall so hunt your insolence! I feel the fire of ten strong spirits in me: wert thou a native fencer, in so fair a cause, I thus should hold thee at the worst defiance.

Clo. Look you! brother, take care of yourself, I shall certainly be in you the first thrust; but if you had rather, dy'e see, we'll talk a little calmly about this business. [a coward, too.

Car. Away, trifler! I would be loth to prove thee

Clo. Coward! why then really, sir, if you please, midriff's the word, brother; you are a son of a w—. *Allons!* (*They fight, and Clodio is disarmed.*)

Car. There, sir, take your life, and mend it.

Ang. Are you wounded, sir?

Car. Only in my fears for you; how shall we bestow us, uncle?

Lewis. Positively, we are not safe here, this lady being an heiress. Follow me.

Car. Good angels guard us. [*Exeunt with Angelina.*

Clo. Gadso! I never fenced so ill in all my life; never in my life, split me!

Enter Monsieur.

Mons. Sire, here be de trompete, de hauteboy, de musique, de maiter danser, dat deseer to know if you sal be please to have de masque begin.

Clo. Ha! What does this puppy say now?

Mons. Sire, de musique.

Clo. Why ay—that's true—but tell them—plague on them, tell them, they are not ready tuned.

Mons. Sire, dare is all tune, all prepare.

Clo. Ay! Why then, tell them that my brother's wise again, and has spoiled all, and I am bubbled, and so I sha'n't be married till next time: but I have fought with him, and he has disarmed me; and so he won't release the land, nor give me my mistress again; and I—I am done, that's all. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Don Charino, Don Antonio, *Officers, and Servants.*

Cha. Officer, do your duty: I say, seize them all.

Ant. Carry them this minute before a ——. How now! What all fled?

Cha. Ha! my girl! my child! my heiress! I am abused! I am cheated! I am robbed! I am ravished, murdered, and flung into a ditch!

Ant. Who let them out? Which way went they, villains?

Serv. Sir, we had no order to stop them; but they went out at the door not six minutes ago.

Cha. I'll pursue them with bills, warrants, actions, writs, and malice: I'm a lawyer, sir; they shall find I understaod ruin.

Ant. Nay, they shall be found, sir. Run you to the port, sirrah, see if any ships are going off, and bring us notice immediately.

[*Exeunt Officers and Servants.*

Enter SANCHO, *drunk.*

San. Ban, ban, Ca-caliban. (*Sings.*)

Ant. Here comes a rogue, I'll warrant, knows the bottom of all! Where's my son, villain?

San. Son, sir!

Cha. Where's my daughter, sirrah?

San. Daughter, sir!

Cha. Ay, my daughter, rascal!

San. Why, sir, they told me just now, sir—that she's—she's run away.

Ant. Dog, where's your master?

San. My master! why, they say he is—

Ant. Where, sirrah?

San. Why, he is—he is—gone along with her.

Ant. Death! you dog, discover him, or—

San. Sir, I will—I will.

Ant. Where is he, villain?

San. Where, sir? Why, to be sure he is—he is—upon my soul, I don't know, sir.

Ant. No more trifling, rascal!

San. If I do, sir, I wish this may be my poison. (*Drinks.*)

Ant. Death! you dog, get out of my house, or I'll.—So sir, have you found him?

Re-enter Servant with CLODIO, *and* MONSIEUR.

Clo. Ay, sir, have you found them?

Serv. Yes, sir, I had a sight of them; but they were just got on board a small vessel before I could overtake them.

Cha. Death and furies!

Ant. Whither were they bound, sirrah?

Serv. Sir, I could not discover that: but they were full before the wind, with a very smart gale.

Ant. What shall we do, brother? [them.

Clo. Be as smart as they, sir; follow them, follow

Cha. Send to the port this moment, and secure a ship; I'll pursue them through all the elements.

Clo. I'll follow you by the northern star.

Ant. Run to the port again, rogue; hire a ship, and tell them they must hoist sail immediately.

[*Exit Servant.*

Clo. And you rogue, run to my chamber, fill up my snuff-box—cram it hard, you dog, and be here again before you get thither. [*Exit Monsieur.*

Ant. What, will you take nothing else, boy?

Clo. Nothing, sir, but snuff and opportunity—we're in haste. *Allons!* hey! *Je vole.* [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.—SCENE I.—*Lisbon.*

Enter ELVIRA, DON DUART, *and Governor.*

Elv. Dear brother, let me entreat you, stay; why will you provoke your danger?

Duart. Madam, my honour must be satisfied.

Elv. That's done already, by the degrading blow you gave him.

Gov. Pray, niece, what is it has incensed him?

Elv. Nothing but a needless quarrel.

Gov. I am sorry for him. To whom is all this fury, nephew? [pose me.

Duart. To you, sir, or any man that dares op-

Gov. Come, you are too boisterous, sir; and this vain opinion of your courage, taken on your late success in duelling, makes you daily shunned by men of civil conversation. For shame, leave off these senseless brawls; if you are valiant, as you would be thought, turn out your courage to the wars; let your king and country be the better for't.

Duart. Yes, so I might be a general. Sir, no man living shall command me.

Gov. Sir, you shall find that here in Lisbon I will: I'm every hour followed with complaints of your behaviour from men of almost all conditions; and my authority, which you presume will bear you out, because you are my nephew, no longer shall protect you now: expect your next disorder to be punished with as much severity as his, that is a stranger to my blood.

Duart. Punish me! You, nor your office, dare not do't. Fire and furies! I'm tutored here like a mere school-boy! Women shall judge of injuries in honour. For you, sir—I was born free, and will not curb my spirit, nor is it for your authority to tempt it: give me the usage of a man of honour, or 'tis not your government shall protect you. [*Exit.*

Gov. I am sorry to see this, niece, for your sake.

Elv. 'Would he were not my brother. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter DON MANUEL, ANGELINA, *and Sailors.*

Man. Divide the spoil amongst you: this fair captive I only challenge for myself.

Sail. Sir, she's your's; you fought, and well deserve her. [*Exeunt Sailors.*

Enter Governor.

Gov. Noble Don Manuel! welcome to Lisbon. I see you are fortunate: for I presume that's some uncommon prize.

Man. She is, indeed, lord governor: these ten years I have known the seas, and many rough engagements there; but never saw so small a bark so long defended with such incredible valour; and by two men scarcely armed too.

Gov. Is't possible!

Man. Nay, and scarcely had we secured our hard-won prize, before an Algerine grappled us; when the same two, dreading to see this lovely creature made a prize to infidels, gallantly boarded her; but instantly—

Ang. Alas!

Gov. What then, sir?

Man. She quitted us, and crowding all the sail she could, escaped our slower vessel.

Gov. And carried those brave gentlemen away—

Man. No, my lord; for as they stood upon the deck disarmed and ready to be fettered, on a sudden (the younger taking first from this fair maid a farewell only with his eyes) both leaped into the sea.

Gov. 'Tis wonderful, indeed.

Man. Had not our own safety hindered (at that time another ship pursuing us) I would have taken them up, and with their lives they should have had their liberty.

Ang. Too late, alas! they're lost! I am now friendless, miserable, and a slave.

Man. Take comfort, fair one; perhaps you yet again may see them; they were not quite a league from shore, and with such strength and courage broke through the rolling waves, they could not fail of life and safety.

Ang. In that last hope, I brook a wretched being; but if they're dead, my woes will find so many doors to let out life, I shall not long survive them; but—

Gov. Alas! poor lady! misery but weeps the more when she is gazed on.—I leave you—your servant, sir.— [*Exit.*

Man. Now, my fair captive, though I confess you beautiful, yet give me leave to own my heart has long been in another's keeping; therefore, the favour I am about to ask, you may at least hear with safety.

Ang. This has engaged me, sir, to hear.

Man. These three years have I honourably loved a noble lady; her name Louisa, the beauteous

niece of great Ferrara's Duke: sole mistress of herself and me, who long have languished in a hopeless constancy. Now, I would a while entreat your leave to recommend you, as her companion, to this lady's favour; and (as I'm sure you'll soon be near her closest thoughts) if you can think upon the honest courtesies I hitherto have shewn your modesty, and, in your happy talk, but name with any mark of favour, me, or my unwearied love, 'twould be a generous act would fix me ever grateful to its memory.

Ang. Such poor assistance, sir, as one distressed like me can give, shall willingly be paid.

Man. I'll study to deserve this goodness: for the present, think my poor house your own; at night I'll wait upon you to the lady, till when I am your guard.

Ang. You have bound me to your service.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Church.—The Vespers supposed to be just ended, several walking out,* CARLOS *and* DON LEWIS *rising near* LOUISA *and* HONORIA. *Louisa observing Carlos.*

Hon. Come, madam, shall we walk out? The crowd's pretty well over now.

Lou. But then that melancholy softness in his look! (*Aside.*)

Hon. Cousin! Donna Louisa!

Lou. Even in his devotions too, such graceful adorations—so sweet a—(*Aside.*)

Hon. Cousin, will you go?

Lou. Psha! time enough. Pr'ythee, let's walk a little this way.

Car. To what are we reserved?

Lewis. For no good, I'm afraid. My ill luck don't use to give over when her hand's in. One misfortune generally comes galloping in upon the back of another. Drowning we have escaped miraculously; would the fear of hanging were over too; our being so strangely saved from one, smells d—y rank of the other. Though I am obliged to thee, Carlos, for what life I have, and I'll thank thee for't, if ever I set foot upon my estate again: 'faith, I were just gone; if thou hadst not taken me upon thy back the last hundred yards, by this time I had been food for herrings and mackerel. But 'tis pretty well as it is; for there is not much difference between starving and drowning.

Car. These are light wants to me. Oh! I could wish the fate that saved us from the ocean's fury, in kinder pity of our love's distress, had buried us in one wave embracing.

Lou. How tenderly he talks! This were indeed a lover! I'll have him dogged. Jaques! (*Whispers Jaques.*)

Lewis. A most unhappy loss, indeed! But come, don't despair, boys; the ship that took us was a Portuguese, of Lisbon too, I believe; who knows but some way or other we may hear of her yet?

Car. Have I not cause? Were not my force of faith superior to my hopeless reason, I could not bear the insults of my fortune.

Lewis. Why, now, would not this make any one weep, to hear a young man talk so finely, when he is almost famished?

Lou. Did you observe those strangers that have walked by us!

Hon. Not much; but what of them?

Lou. Did you hear nothing of their talk?

Hon. I think I did; one of them, the younger, seemed concerned for a lost mistress.

Lou. Ay, but so near, so tenderly concerned; his looks as well as words, speaking an inward grief, that could not flow from every common passion. I must know more of him.

Hon. What do you mean?

Lou. Must speak to him.

Hon. By no means.

Lou. Why, you see they are strangers, I believe in some necessity.

Hon. Consider.

Lou. I hate it—sir—sir—

Lewis. Would you speak with me, madam?

Lou. If you please, with your friend—not to in-

Car. Your pleasure, lady? [terrupt you, sir.

Lou. You seem a stranger, sir.

Car. A most unfortunate one.

Lou. If I am not deceived, in want: pardon my freedom. If I have erred, as freely tell me so; if not, as earnest of your better fortune, this trifle sues for your acceptance. (*Gives him money.*)

Lewis. Take it, boy.

Car. A bounty so unmerited, and from a hand unknown, fills me with surprise and wonder. But give me leave, in honesty, to warn you, lady, of a too heedless purchase; for if you mean it as a bribe to any evil you would have me practice, be not offended, if I dare not take it.

Lou. You are too scrupulous; I have no hard designs upon your honesty—only thus: be wise and cautious, if you should follow me; I am observed; farewell. Jaques! Will you walk, consin?

[*Exit with Honoria.*

Lewis. Let's see:—Odsheart! follow her, man. Why, 'tis all gold!

Car. Dispose it as you please.

Lewis. I'll first have a better title to't—no, 'tis all thine, boy. I hold a hundred pistoles she's some great fortune in love with you. I say, follow her; since you have lost one wife before you had her, I'd have you make sure of another before you lose her.

Car. Fortune, indeed, has dispossessed her of my person; but her firm title to my heart, not all the subtle arts or laws of love can shake or violate.

Lewis. Pr'ythee, follow her now; methinks I'd fain see thee in bed with somebody before I die.

Car. Be not so poor in thought; let me entreat you rather to employ them, sir, with mine, in search of Angelina's fortune.

Lewis. Well, dear Charles, don't chide me now; I do love thee, and will follow thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Street.*

Enter DON ANTONIO *and* DON CHARINO.

Ant. You heard what the sailor said, brother; such a ship has put in here, and such persons were taken in it. Therefore, my advice is, immediately to get a warrant from the government, to search and take them up, wherever we can find them.

Cha. Sir, you must not tell me—I won't be choused out of my daughter; I shall expect her sir; if not, I'll take my course; I know the law —(*Walks about.*)

Ant. You really have a great deal of dark wit, brother; but if you know any course better than a warrant to search for her, in the name of wisdom, take it; if not, here's my oath, and your's, and—how now, where's Clody? Oh! here he comes—

Enter CLODIO, *searching his pockets.*

How now? what's the matter, boy?

Clo. Ay, it's gone, split me!

Ant. What's the matter? (*Louder.*)

Clo. The best joint in Christendom.

Ant. Clody!

Clo. Sir, I have lost my snuff-box.

Ant. Psha! a trifle; get thee another, man.

Clo. Sir, 'tis not to be had—besides, I dare not shew my face at Paris without it. What do you think her grace will say to me?

Cha. Well, upon second thoughts, I am content to search.

Clo. I have searched all my pockets fifty times over, to no purpose.

Cha. Pockets!

Clo. It's impossible to fellow it, but in Paris: I'll go to Paris, split me! (*Aside.*)

Cha. Paris! Why, you don't suppose my daughter's there, sir?

Clo. I don't know but she may, sir: but I am sure they make the best joints in Europe there.

Cha. Joints! My son-in-law, that should have been, seems strangely altered for the worse. But come, let's to the governor.

Ant. Come along, Clody. [*Exit with Charino.*

Clo. Sir, I must look a little; I'll follow you presently. My poor, pretty box! Ah! plague o' my sea voyage!

Enter a Page hastily, with a flambeau.

Page. By your leave, sir, my master's coming; pray, sir, clear the way.

Clo. Ha! why, thou art pert, my love; pr'ythee, who is thy master, child?

Page. The valiant Don Duart, sir, nephew to the governor of Lisbon.

Clo. Well, child; and what, does he eat every man he meets?

Page. No, sir; but he challenges every man that takes the wall of him, and always sends me before to clear the way.

Clo. Ha! a pretty harmless humour that! Is this he, child? You may look as terrible as you please; I must banter you, split me! (*Aside.*)

Enter Don Duart, *stalking up to Clodio.*

Duart. Do you know me, sir?

Clo. Heigho! (*Looks carelessly on him.*)

Duart. Do you know me, sir?

Clo. You did not see my snuff-box, sir, did you?

Duart. Sir, in Lisbon, no man asks me a question covered. (*Strikes off Clodio's hat.*) Now, you know me.

Clo. Perfectly well, sir—Hi, hi! I like you mightily.—You are not a bully, sir?

Duart. You are saucy, friend.

Clo. Ay, it's a way I have, after I'm affronted. Thou art really the most extraordinary—humph!—that ever I met with. Now, sir, do you know me? split me!

Duart. Know thee! take that, peasant! (*Strikes him, and both draw.*)

Clo. I can't, upon my soul, sir. *Allons!* now we shall come to a right understanding. (*They fight.*) *Allons!* to our better acquaintance, sir—Ha, ha! (*Don D. falls.*) he has it! never pushed better in my life, never in my life, split me!

Page. Oh! my master's killed! help, ho! murder! help!

Clo. Eh! why, faith, child, that's very true, as thou sayest; and so, the devil take the hindmost. [*Exit.*

Enter Officers.

1 *Off.* How now! Who's that cries murder?

Page. Oh! my master's murdered! some of you follow me: this way he took; let's after him. Help! murder! help! [*Exit.*

2 *Off.* 'Tis Don Duart.

1 *Off.* So, pride has got a fall; he has paid for't now; you have met with your match, 'faith, sir. Come, let's carry the body to the surgeon's: you pursue the murderer; I'll warrant him some civil gentleman. Ye need not make too much haste; for if he does escape, 'tis no great matter. Come along. [*Exeunt with the body.*

Enter Carlos *and* Don Lewis.

Lewis. Come along, Carlos; I'm sure 'tis she, by their description; and if that brawny dog, the captain has played her no foul play, she sha'n't want ransom, if all my estate can purchase it.

Car. Now, fortune guide us! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Jaques *and Bravoes.*

Jaques. That's he, the tallest: be sure you spare his person; only force him into this chair, and carry him as directed.

1 *Brav.* What must be done with the old fellow?

Jaques. We must have him too, lest he should dog the other, and be troublesome. If he won't come quietly, bring him any how. Follow softly; we shall snap them as they turn the corner. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Clodio, *hastily.*

Clo. Ah, pox of their noses! the dogs have smelt me out! What shall I do? If they take me, I shall be hanged, split me. Ha! a door open! 'faith I'll in at a venture. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Bravoes, with Carlos *in a chair; some hauling in* Don Lewis.

Lewis. Oh, my poor boy, Carlos! Carlos! help! murder! [used.

1 *Brav.* Hold your peace, fool, if you'd be well

Lewis. Sir, I will not hold my peace. Dogs, rogues, villains, help, murder!

1 *Brav.* Nay, then, by your leave, old gentleman. So, bring him along.

Lewis. Aw, aw, aw! (*They gag him.*) [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.—*A Chamber.*—Elvira *and* Isabella.

Elv. Is not my brother come home yet?

Isa. I have not seen him, madam.

Elv. Go, send and seek him; go all of ye every where: I'll not rest till your return; take away your lights too; for my devotions are written in my heart, and I shall read them without a taper.

[*Exit Isabella.*

Enter Clodio, *stealing in.*

Clo. Ah, poor Clody! what will become of thee? Thy condition, I'm afraid, is but very indifferent. Followed behind, stopped before, and beset on both sides! Ah, pox o'my wit! I must be bantering, must I? But let me see—where am I? An odd sort of a house, this; all the doors open, and nobody in't; no noise, no whisper, no dog stirring!

Elv. Who's that?

Clo. Ha! a woman's voice! [Julia!

Elv. Who are you? Who waits there? Stephano!

Clo. Gadso! 'tis the lady of the house: she can't see my unfortunate face, however. 'Faith, I'll e'en make a grave speech, tell her my case, and beg her protection.

Elv. Speak! what are you?

Clo. Madam, a most unfortunate young gentleman.

Elv. I am sure you are a man of most ill manners, to press thus boldly to my private chamber. Whither would you? What want you?

Clo. Gracious madam, hear me; I am a stranger most unfortunate, and my distress has made me rudely press for your protection: if you refuse it, madam, I am undone for ever, by—I say, madam, I am utterly undone—'Twas coming, 'faith! (*Aside.*)

Elv. Alas! his fear confounds him. What is't pursues you, sir?

Clo. An outcry of officers; the law's at my heels, madam, though justice I'm not afraid of.

Elv. How could you offend the one and not the other?

Clo. Being provoked, madam, by the insolence of my enemy, in my own defence, I just now left him dead in the street. I am a very young man, madam, and I would not willingly be hanged in a strange country, methinks; which I certainly shall be, unless your tender charity protects me. Egad! I have a rare tongue! I have a rare tongue, 'faith! (*Aside.*)

Elv. Poor wretch, I pity him!

Clo. Madam, your house is now my only sanctuary, my altar; therefore, I beg you, upon my knees, madam, take pity of a poor bleeding victim.

Elv. Are you a Castilian?

Clo. No, madam, I was born in—in—in—what d'ye call 'um—in—

Elv. Nay, I ask not with purpose to betray you; were you ten thousand times a Spaniard, the nation we Portuguese most hate, in such distress, I yet would give you my protection.

Clo. May I depend upon you, madam? Am I safe?

Elv. Safe as my power, my word, or vow can make you. Enter that door, which leads you to a closet; should the officers come, as you expect, they owe such reverence to my lodgings, they'll search no farther than my leave invites them.

Clo. D'ye think, madam, you can persuade them?

Elv. Fear not; I'll warrant you; away!

Clo. The breath of gods, and eloquence of angels, go along with you. (*Retires.*)

Elv. Alas! who knows but that the charity I afford this stranger, perhaps, my brother, elsewhere, may stand in need of? How he trembles! I hear his breath come short, hither. Be of comfort, sir, once more I give you my solemn promise for your safety.

Enter Officers, ISABELLA, *Page, and* PEDRO.

Page. Oh! madam, madam! my master's killed.

Elv. What sayest thou?

Pedro. Your brother, madam, my master, young Don Duart's dead; he just now quarrelled with a gentleman, who unfortunately killed him in the street.

Elv. Ah, me!

1 *Off.* We are informed, madam, that the murderer was seen to enter this house, which made us press into it, to apprehend him.

Clo. Eh! Why, what the devil! Am I safer than I would be now? Exactly: I have nicked the house to a hair: just so I did at Paris, too, when I took a lodging at a bailiff's, that had three writs against me. This d—d closet, too, has ne'er a chimney to creep out at. Ah, poor Clody! (*Retires.*)

Elv. Oh, my unhappy brother! such an end as this, thy haughty mind did long since prophecy; and to increase my misery, thy wretched sister wilfully must make a breach of what she has vowed, or thou wilt fall unrevenged. (*Aside.*)

Enter Governor and Servants.

Gov. Where's my unhappy niece? Alas! your brother lies at a surgeon's yonder, past all recovery. Reproof comes now too late—he's dead! he's dead!

Elv. It shall be so; I'll take the lighter evil of the two, and keep the solemn vow to which just heaven was witness: the wounds of perjury never can be cured; but justice may again overtake the murderer, when no rash vows protect him. (*Aside.*)

Gov. Take comfort, niece.

Elv. Oh, forbear! Search for the murderer, and take order for my brother's funeral, while I shut out the offensive day, and here in solitude indulge my sorrow; therefore, I beg my nearest friends, and you, my lord, for some few days, to spare your charitable visits.

Gov. I grieve for your misfortune, niece; but since you'll have it so, we take our leave. Farewell. [*Exit with Servants, &c.*

Clo. Eh! what, are they gone away without me; and by her contrivance too? Gadso!

Elv. Whoever thou art, to whom I've given means of life, to let thee see with what religion I have kept my vow, come fearless forth, while night's thy friend, and pass unknown.

Clo. If this is not love, the devil's in't! (*Aside.*)

Elv. Fly with the utmost speed, where I may never see thee more.

Clo. Ay, that's her modesty. (*Aside.*)

Elv. And let that charitable faith thou hast found in me, persuade thee to atone thy crime by penitence.

Clo. Poor soul! I may find a better way to thank thee for't.

Elv. You are at the door now; farewell for ever. [*Exit.*

Clo. Which is as much as to say, what would I give to see you again. All in good time, child. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—*Louisa's House.*

Enter LOUISA *and* JAQUES.

Lou. Were they both seized?

Jaq. Both, madam, and will be here immediately. I ran before, to give your ladyship notice.

Lou. You know my orders; when they are entered, bar all the doors; and, on your lives, let every one be mute, as I directed. I must retire a while. [*Exit.*

Enter Bravoes, who let CARLOS *out of the chair, while others throw down* DON LEWIS, *gagged and bound.*

Car. So, gentlemen, you find I've not resisted you; but now, pray, let me know my crime? Why have you brought me hither? Where am I? if in prison, look in my face, perhaps you have mistaken me for another. [*Jaques holds up his lanthorn, nods, and exit with the rest.*] You seem not to know me, sir. All dumb, and vanished! My fortune's humorous; she sports with me.

Lewis. Aw, aw! [you?

Car. What's here? a fellow prisoner! Who are

Lewis. Aw, aw!

Car. Do you speak no other language?

Lewis. Aw, aw, aw! (*Louder.*)

Car. Nay, that's the same.

Lewis. Oh! (*Sighing.*)

Car. Poor wretch! I am afraid he would speak if he could.—[*Enter* JAQUES, *who releases* DON LEWIS.]—Sure they think I walk in my sleep, and won't speak, for fear of waking me.

Lewis. Sir, your humble servant; and now my tongue's at liberty, pray, will you do me the favour to shew me the way home again? What a plague, are you all dumb? [*Exit Jaques.*] Well, sir, and pray what are—Carlos! ah! my dear boy!

Car. My uncle! Nay then my fortune has not quite forsaken me! How came you hither, sir?

Lewis. Faith, like a corpse into a church, boy, with my heels foremost; but, pr'ythee, how didst thou come?

Car. You saw the man that seized us: they forced me into a chair, and brought me.

Lewis. Well, but what is all this for? What would they have? [formed of.

Car. That we must wait their pleasure to be in-

Lewis. The sons of w— won't speak neither. Heyday! what's to be done now?

Enter JAQUES *and Servants, with a banquet.*

Car. More riddles yet; I dream, sure. (*Jaques invites Don Lewis to take his chair.*)

Lewis. For me? Sir, your most humble servant. (*Sits.*) Carlos, sit down, boy. Ha, ha, ha! a parcel of silly dumb dogs! Is this all the business? Puppies! did they think I would not come to supper, without being brought neck and heels to't.

Car. Amazement all! What can it end in?

Lewis. Never trouble thy head, pr'ythee: fall to, man. Delicate food, truly. Here—Dumb! pr'ythee, give us a glass of wine, to wet the way a little. Come, Carlos, here's, here's—honest Dumb's health to thee. (*Drinks.*) Dumb's a very honest fellow, 'faith.

Car. What harmony's this? (*A flourish.*)

Lewis. Rare music indeed; let's eat and hear it. Mighty fine, truly—I have not made a heartier meal a great while. (*Jaques offers a night-cap and gown to Don Lewis.*) Well, and what's to do now, lad? For me, boy? Odso! we lie, here, do we?—mighty well that again, 'faith; (for I was just thinking to go home, but that I had ne'er a lodging;) nay, I always said honest Dumb knew how to make his friends welcome. Well, but it's time enough yet; sha'n't we crack a bottle first? Carlos is melancholy. (*Jaques shakes his head.*) What, that's as much as to say, If I won't go, I shall be carried. Sir, your humble servant. (*Puts on the gown.*) Well, Carlos, good night, since they won't

let me have a mind to stay any longer. I'll give a pistole, though, to know what this will come to! Dumb, come along. [*Exit with Jaques.*

Car. I'm buried in amazement. (*Music is heard.*) Ha! more music! (DON LEWIS *appears above.*)

Lewis. So, at last, I have groped out a window, that will let me into the secret; now if any foul play should happen, I am pretty near the street too, and can bawl out murder! to the watch. But, mum, the door opens.—[*Enter* LOUISA.]—Eh! ah! what dull rogues were we not to suspect this before? Dumb's a sly dog: 'tis she, 'faith—tum, dum, dum. Here will be fine work presently! toll, dum, di, dum. Now I shall see what mettle my boy's made of; tum, dum, dum.

Lou. You seem amazed, sir.

Car. Your pardon, lady, if I confess it raises much my wonder, why a stranger, friendless, and unknown, should meet, unmerited, such floods of courtesy: for, if I mistake not, once this day before, I've tasted of your beauty. [you, sir.

Lou. I have forgotten that; but I confess I saw

Car. Why then was I forced hither? If you relieve me only from a soft compassion of my fortune, you could not think but such humanity might, on the slightest hint, have drawn me to be grateful.

Lou. I own I could not trust you to my fortune; I knew not but some other might have seen you—besides, methought you spoke less kind to me before.

Car. If my poor thanks were offered in too plain a dress, (as I confess I'm little practised in the rules of graced behaviour,) rather think me ignorant than rude, and pity what you cannot pardon.

Lou. How could you charge yourself with such a thought? I scarce can think 'tis in your nature to be rude—at least to our sex.

Car. 'Twere more unpardonable there.

Lou. Nay, now you are too strict on the other side; for there may happen times, when what the world calls rudeness, a woman might be brought to pardon; seasons, when even modesty were ignorance—Pray be seated, sir; nay, I'll have it so. Suppose yourself the man so loved, where could you find, at such a time, excuses for your modesty?

Car. If I could love again, my eyes would tell her; if not, I would not seem to understand her.

Lou. Alas! you have too poor a sense of woman's love. Think you we have no invention? You would not understand her! how would you avoid it? When even her slightest look would speak too plain for that excuse; if not, she'd press you still with plainer, stronger proofs; her life, her fortune, should be your's: for where a woman loves, such gifts as these are trifles. (*Gives him jewels.*)

Car. Is't possible! can there be such a woman?

Lou. Fie, I could chide you now; you would not sure be thought so slow of apprehension.

Car. I would not willingly be thought so vain, or so uncharitable, to suppose there could be such an one.

Lou. Nay, now you force me to forsake my sex, and tell you plain—I cannot speak it—yet you must know, I am this creature so reduced for you.

Car. Monstrous! (*Aside, and rising.*)

Lou. What is't you start at?

Car. Not for your beauty; though I confess you fair to a perfection; but when that beauty fades, (as time leaves none unvisited) what charm shall then secure my love? Your riches? No, an honest mind's above the bribes of fortune: for though distressed, a stranger, and in want, I thus return them thankless. Be modest, and be virtuous, I'll admire you; all good men will adore you, and when your beauty and your fortune are no more, will still deliver down your name revered to ages.

Lou. Oh! say you will be mine, and make your own conditions. If you suspect my temper, bind me by the most sacred tie, and let my love, my person, and my fortune, lawfully be your's.

Car. Madam, I'll be at once sincere, and tell you, 'tis impossible that we should ever meet in love.

Lou. Impossible! Oh! why?

Car. Because my love, my vows, my faith, are given to another: therefore, since you find I dare be honest, be early wise, and now release me to my

Lou. I cannot part with you. [fortune.

Car. You must! I cannot with my reason.

Lou. Ungrateful! Will you go? Take heed! for you have proved I am not mistress of my temper.

Car. I see it, and am sorry, but needed not this threat to drive me; for still I dare be just, and force myself away. [*Exit.*

Lou. Oh, torture! left! refused! despised! Have I thrown off my pride for this! Oh, insupportable! If I am not revenged, may all the—well.

Lewis. What a plague, are all these fine things come to nothing, then! Poor soul! she's in great heat truly. Ah, silly rogue! Now could I find in my heart to put her into good humour again; I have a great mind, 'faith—Od! she's a hummer. A strange mind, I haven't had such a mind a great while—Eh!—ay; I'll do't, faith—if she does but stay now; ah! if she does but stay! (*As he is getting from the balcony, Louisa is speaking to Jaques.*)

Lou. Who waits there?—[*Enter* JAQUES.]—Where's the stranger?

Jaq. Madam, I met him just now walking hastily about the gallery.

Lou. Are all the doors fast?

Jaq. All barred, madam.

Lou. Put out all your lights too, and on your lives let no one ask or answer him any question: but be you still near to observe him. [*Exit Jaques.* Ah! (*Don Lewis drops down.*)

Lewis. Odso, my back!

Lou. Bless me, who's this? what are you?

Lewis. Not above fifty, madam.

Lou. Whence come you? what's your business?

Lewis. Finishing.

Lou. Who shewed, who brought you hither?

Lewis. Dumb, honest Dumb. [away.

Lou. Will you begone, sir? I have no time to fool

Lewis. Yes, but you have! what, don't I know?

Lou. Pray, sir, who? What is't you take me for?

Lewis. A delicate piece of work, truly, but not finished; you understand me.

Lou. You are mad, sir!

Lewis. I say, don't you be so modest; for there are times, do you see, when even modesty is ignorance. Pray be seated, madam—nay, I'll have it so.—Ah! (*Mimics her behaviour to Carlos.*)

Lou. Confusion! have I exposed myself to this wretch, too!—had witness to my folly—nay, I deserve it.

Lewis. So, so, I shall bring her to terms presently. (*Aside.*) You have a world of pretty jewels here, madam; but where a woman loves, such gifts as these are trifles. (*Mimics again.*)

Lou. Insupportable! within there!

Enter Bravoes and JAQUES.

Lewis. Eh! (*Rising.*)

Jaq. Did your ladyship call, madam?

Lewis. I don't like her looks, 'faith. (*Aside.*)

Lou. Here, take this fool, let him be gagged, tied neck and heels, and locked into a garret; away with him!

Lewis. Dumb, Dumb! Help, Dumb, Dumb! stand by me, Dumb! A pox of my finishing, aw, aw! (*They gag him, and carry him off.*)

Lou. The insolence of this fool was more provoking than the other's scorn; but I shall yet find ways to measure my revenge. [*Exit.*

Enter CARLOS *in the dark.*

Car. What can this woman mean? The doors all barred; the lights put out; the servants mute: would the worst would shew itself. Ha! yonder's a light; I'll follow it, and provoke my fortune. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Room.*

Enter ANGELINA, *with a light.*

Ang. I cannot like this house; for now, as going to my rest, my ears were alarmed with the cries of one that called for help; I've seen strange faces too, that carry guilt and terror in their looks; and yet the officer that placed me here, appeared of honest thought. What can this mean? No matter what, since nothing but the loss of him I love, can worse befall me! Hark, what noise? Is the door fast? Ah! (*Going to shut the door.*)

Enter CARLOS *and* JAQUES, *listening.*

Car. Ha, another lady! and alone!

Ang. Ha, that voice! My Carlos—Oh!

Car. 'Tis she! my long lost love, my living Angelina! (*Embraces her.*)

Jaq. Say you so, sir? this shall to my lady. [*Exit.*

Ang. Oh! let me hold you ever thus, lest fate again should part us.

Car. 'Twere death indeed to part; but from so hard a separation, thus again to meet, is life restored.

Ang. Oh! I were happy, blessed above my sex, could but my plain simplicity of love deserve your kind endearments.

Enter JAQUES *and* LOUISA *at a distance.*

Jaq. They are there.

Lou. Leave me. [*Exit Jaques, and Louisa listens.*

Ang. I cannot bear to see you thus: for my sake don't despond: for while you seem in hope, I shall easily be cheerful.

Car. Oh! thou engaging softness! thy courage has revived me; no, we'll not despair; the guardian power that hitherto has saved us, may now protect and fix us happy.

Lou. Ha! so near acquainted. (*Aside.*)

Car. And yet our safety bids us part this moment. How came you hither?

Ang. The officer, that made me captive, proved a worthy man, and placed me here, as a companion to the lady of this dwelling.

Car. Ha! to what end?

Ang. He said, to be the advocate of his successless love; for he confessed he wooed her honourably. [tale.

Car. Is't possible? Oh! I could tell thee such a

Ang. You amaze me; pray what is it?

Car. This is no time: let it suffice, the doors are barred against me; this moment I am a prisoner to her fury; if thou canst help me to any means of safety, or escape, ask me no questions, but be quick, and tell me.

Ang. Now you frighten me; but here, through my apartment, leads a passage to the garden, at the lower end you'll find a mount; if you dare drop from thence, I'll shew you; but can't you say when I may hope again to see you?

Car. About an hour hence walking in the garden, ready for your escape; for if I live, I'll come provided with the means to make it sure.

Ang. You will not fail.

Car. If I survive, depend on me; till when, may heaven support thy innocence!

Ang. Follow me. [*Exeunt hastily.*

Lou. Are you so nimble, sir? Who waits there?—[*Enter* JAQUES.]—Run, take help, and stop the stranger; he is now making his escape through the garden;—fly.—[*Exit Jaques.*]—Revenge, like a viper, gnaws upon my quiet, and I must change its food, or leave my being; no, if I forego a second time that dear support, my pride, may I become as miserable as that wretch, that destined fool he dotes on. Ha! she is returned; yonder she passes; with what assured contentment in her looks!—

Re-enter JAQUES.

Now, have you brought him?

Jaq. Madam, we made what haste we could, but the gentleman reached the mount before us, and escaped over the garden wall.

Lou. Escaped, villain! Durst thou tell me so?

Jaq. If your ladyship had called me a little sooner, we had taken him. Who the devil is this stranger? (*Aside.*)

Lou. Fool that I am, I betray myself to my own servants! Well, 'tis no matter; go. [*Exit Jaques.* He has not left me hopeless yet; an hour hence he promised to be here again; and if he keep his word, he yet, at least in my revenge, shall prove me woman. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter DON DUART, *disguised, with a Servant.*

Duart. Where did you find him?

Serv. Hard by, sir, at a house of entertainment; he's now coming forth; that's he.

Enter CLODIO.

Duart. I scarce remember him; I would not willingly mistake. I'll observe him.

Clo. So! now if I can but pick up an honest fellow, to crack one bottle, I think I shall finish the day as smartly as the Grand Signior—Hold! let me see, what has my hasty refreshment cost me here;—umb—umb—umb—(*Counts his money.*) Seven pistoles, by Jupiter.

Duart. 'Tis the same. Leave me. [*Exit Servant.*] Your servant, sir.

Clo. Sir, your humble servant.

Duart. Pardon a stranger's freedom, sir; but when you know my business—

Clo. Sir, if you'll take a bottle, I shall be proud of your acquaintance; and if I don't do your business before we part, I'll knock under the table.

Duart. Sir, I shall be glad to drink with you; but at present, am incapable of sitting to it.

Clo. Why then, sir, you shall only drink as long as you can stand; we'll have a bottle here, sir. Hey, Madona! (*Calls.*)

Duart. A very frank humoured gentleman; I'll know him farther. (*Aside.*) I presume, sir, you are not of Portugal?

Clo. No, sir; I am a kind of a—what d'ye call'em—a sort of a here—and—there; I am a stranger no where.

Duart. Have you travelled far, sir?

Clo. My tour of Europe, or so, sir; I came this summer from Rome.—[*Enter a Servant with wine.*]—So, so! here's the wine! Come, sir, to our better acquaintance. 'Faith, I like you mightily. *Allons!*

Duart. I find, sir, you have taken a taste of all the countries you have travelled through; but I presume your chief amusement has lain among the ladies. You fared well in France, I hope?

Clo. Yes, 'faith, as far as my pocket would go: but no money, no mademoiselle; no ducat, no dutchess; no pistole, no princess. By the way, let me tell you, your Lisbonites are held up at a pretty smart rate, too.

Duart. But, pray, sir, among all your adventures, has no particular lady's merit encouraged you to advance your own fortune by marriage?

Clo. Sir, I have been so near marriage, that my wedding-day has been come, but it was never over yet; split me!

Duart. How so, sir?

Clo. Why, the priest, the bride, and the dinner, were all ready dressed, 'faith; but before I could fall to, my elder brother, sir, comes me in, with a d—d long stride, and a sharp stomach, says a short grace, and whipped her up like an oyster.

Duart. You had ill fortune, sir.

Clo. Sir, fortune is not much in my debt; for you

must know, sir, though I lost my wife, I have escaped hanging here in Lisbon. [sir.

Duart. That I know you have; be not amazed, *Clo.* Eh! what the devil! have I been all this while treating an officer, that has a warrant against me. Pray, sir, if it be no offence—may I beg the favour to know who you are?

Duart. Let it suffice, I own myself your friend: I am your debtor, sir. You fought a gentleman they call Don Duart—I knew him well; he was a proud insulting fellow, and my mortal foe: but you killed him, and I thank you; nay, I saw you do it fairly too; and for the action, I desire you will command my sword or fortune.

Clo. Pray, sir, is there no joke in all this?

Duart. Sir, you may trust to my sincerity; I ask for no return, but to be informed how I may do you service. (*Offers him a purse.*)

Clo. Sir, your health; I take your word, though I decline your money. I'll give you information presently. (*Drinks.*) Pray, sir, do you know the gentleman's sister that I fought with? That is, do you know what reputation, what fortune she has?

Duart. I know her fortune to be worth above twelve thousand pistoles; her reputation yet unsullied; but, pray sir, why may you ask this?

Clo. Now, I'll tell you, sir—twelve thousand pistoles, you say?

Duart. I speak the least, sir.

Clo. Why, this very lady, after I had killed her brother, gave me the protection of her house; hid me in her closet, while the officers came to search for me; and, as soon as their backs were turned, poor soul! hurried me out at a private door, with tears in her eyes, 'faith! Now, sir, what think you? Is not this hint broad enough for a man to make love upon?

Duart. Confusion! (*Aside.*)

Clo. Look you, sir, now, if you dare, give me a proof of your friendship; will you do me the favour to carry a letter to her?

Duart. Let me consider, sir—Death and fire! is all her height of sorrow but dissembled then? but this requires my farther search. (*Aside.*) May I depend on this for truth, sir?

Clo. Why, sir, you don't suppose I banter a lady of her quality!

Duart. D——n! (*Aside.*) Well, sir, I'll take your letter; but first let me be well acquainted with my errand.

Clo. Sir, I'll write this moment; if you please, we'll step into this house here, and finish the business over another bottle.

Duart. With all my heart.

Clo. Allons! Entrez. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*Louisa's House.*

LOUISA *and* JAQUES *discovered.*

Lou. Is the lady seized?

Jaq. Yes, madam, and half dead with the fright.

Lou. Let them be ready to produce her, as I directed. When the stranger's taken, bring me immediate notice: 'tis near his time: away! [*Exit Jaques.*] Had he not loved another, methinks I could have borne this usage—Hark, what noise! they have him sure! How now!—

Enter JAQUES.

Jaq. Madam, the gentleman is taken.

Lou. Bring him in. Revenge, I thank thee now.—[*Enter* CARLOS.]—So, sir, you are returned, it seems; you can love, then! You have a heart, I find, though not for me! Perhaps you came to seek a worthier mistress here; 'twould be uncharitable to disappoint your love. I'll help your search: if she be here, be sure she's safe. Open that door there. (*Door opens, and discovers two Bravoes with* ANGELINA; *a handkerchief on her neck, which they hold ready to strangle her.*) Now, sir, is this

Car. My Angelina! [the lady?

Lou. If you approach, she dies.

Ang. Oh, miserable meeting!

Lou. Now let me see you smile, and rudely throw me from your arms; now scorn my love, my passion, and my fortune. [innocence.

Car. Oh, cruelty of fate! that could betray such

Lou. What, not a word to soften yet thy obstinate aversion! thou wretched fool! thus to provoke thy ruin. End her. (*To the Bravoes.*)

Car. Oh, hold! for pity hold, and hear me.

Lou. I've learned from you to use my pity. On one condition yet she lives an hour, but if refused—

Car. Name not a refusal, be it danger, death, or tortures, anything that life can do to save her.

Lou. Presuming fool! were I inclined to save her life, (which, by my hopes of peace, I do not mean,) canst thou believe this insolent concern for her to my face would not provoke my vengeance?

Car. Yet hold! if revenge alone can save your fury, at least misplace it not; mine was the offence, be mine the punishment.

Lou. How he disarms my anger! But must my rival triumph then?

Ang. Charge me not with such abhorred ingratitude: be witness, heaven, I'll for ever serve you, court you, and confess you my preserver.

Car. For pity, yet resolve, and force your temper to a moment's pause. See at your feet my humbled scorn imploring, crushed, and prostrate, like a vile slave, that falls below your last contempt, and trembling begs for mercy.

Lou. He buries my revenge in blushes. Release the lady—go. [*Exeunt Bravoes.*] And now farewell my follies, and my mistaken love: love long and happily; forgive my follies past, and you have overpaid me. (*Joins their hands.*)

Car. My Angelina! do I then live to hold thee thus? But first let's kneel and pay our thanks to heaven, and this our kind preserver.

Lou. Nay, now you give me a confusion. (*Raises them.*) But if you dare trust me with the story of your love's distress, as far as my fortune can, command it freely, to supply your present wants, or any future means proposed to give you lasting happiness.

Car. Eternal rounds of never ending peace reward your wondrous bounty! But I have been too busy in my joy; I almost had forgot my friendly uncle, the ancient gentleman that first came hither with me; how have you disposed of him?

Lou. I think he's here, and safe. Who waits there?—[*Enter* JAQUES.]—Release the gentleman above, and tell him that his friends desire him. [*Exit Jaques.*] You'll pardon, sir, the treatment I have shewn him; he made a little too merry with my folly, which, I confess, at that time, something too far incensed me.

Car. He's old and cheerful, apt to be free; but he'll be sorry when his humour gives offence.

Enter DON LEWIS, JAQUES *bowing to him.*

Lewis. Pr'ythee, honest Dumb, don't be so ceremonious! I tell thee it's very well as it is—only my jaws ache a little: but as long as we're all friends, it's no great matter. My dear Carlos, I must buss thee, 'faith! Madam, your humble servant. I beg your pardon, d'ye see: you understand me. [*Exit Jaques.*

Lou. I hope we are all friends, sir.

Lewis. I hope we are, madam: I am an honest old fellow, 'faith; though now and then I am a little odd, too.

Car. Here's a stranger, uncle.

Lewis. What, my little blossom! my gilliflower! my rose! my pink! my tulip! 'faith, I must smell thee. (*Salutes Angelina.*) Od! she's a delicate nosegay! Well, 'faith, I am heartily joyed to see thee, child.

Ang. I thank you, sir; and wish I may deserve your love: our fortune, once again, is kind; but how it comes about—

Lewis. Does not signify three-pence; when fortune pays me a visit, I seldom trouble myself to know which way she came. I tell you, I am glad to see you. *Enter* JAQUES.

Jaq. Madam, here's the lord governor come to wait upon your ladyship.

Lou. At this late hour! What can his business be? Desire his lordship to walk in.

Enter Governor.

Gov. Pardon, madam, this unreasonable visit.

Lou. Your lordship does me honour.

Gov. At least, I hope, my business will excuse it. Some strangers, here below, upon their offered oaths, demanded my authority to search your house for a lost young lady, to whom the one of them affirms himself the father: but the respect I owe your ladyship, made me refuse their search, till I had spoken with you.

Ang. It must be they. Now, madam, your protection, or we yet are lost.

Lou. Be not concerned. Would you avoid them?

Car. No, we must be found: let them have entrance. We have an honest cause, and would provoke its trial.

Lou. Conduct the gentlemen without. [*Exit Jaques.*] My lord, I'll answer for their honesty; and, as they are strangers, where the law's severe, must beg you'd favour and assist them.

Gov. You may command me, madam; though there's no great fear; for having heard the most that they could urge against them, I found in their complaints more spleen and humour, than any just appearance of a real injury.

Enter DON CHARINO, DON ANTONIO, *and* CLODIO.

Cha. I'll have justice.

Ant. Don't be too hot, brother.

Cha. I demand justice.

Gov. That's the lady, sir, I told you of.

Clo. Ay, that's she, my lord, I am witness.

Car. My father! Sir, your pardon and your blessing.

Ant. Why, truly, Charles, I begin to be a little reconciled to the matter: I wish you well, though I can't join you together; for my friend and brother here, is very obstinate, and will admit of no satisfaction; but, however, heaven will bless you in spite of his teeth.

Cha. This is all contrivance—roguery! I am abused! I say, deliver my daughter! she is an heiress, sir; and to detain her is a rape in law, sir, and I'll have you all hanged; therefore, no more delays, sir; for I tell you beforehand, I am a wise man, and 'tis impossible to trick me.

Ant. I say, you are too positive, brother; and when you learn more wisdom, you'll have some.

Cha. I say, brother, this is mere malice, when you know, in your own conscience, I have ten times your understanding; for you see I am quite of another opinion; and so, once more, my lord, I demand justice against that ravisher. [violence?

Gov. Does your daughter, sir, complain of any

Cha. Your lordship knows young girls never complain when the violence is over: he has taught her better, I suppose.

Ang. (*To Cha. kneeling.*) Sir, you are my father, who bred me, cherished me, gave me my affections, taught me to keep them hitherto within the bounds of honour and of virtue, let me conjure you, by the chaste love my mother bore you, when she preferred, to her mistaken parents' choice, her being your's without a dower, not to bestow my person where those affections ne'er can follow: I cannot love that gentleman more than a sister ought.

Clo. No! that's very odd.

Ang. But here my heart's subdued, even to the last compliance with my fortune: he, sir, has nobly wooed and won me, and I am only his, or miserable.

Cha. Get up again.

Gov. Come, sir, be persuaded; your daughter has made an honourable and happy choice: this severity will but expose yourself and her.

Cha. My lord, I don't want advice: I'll consider with myself, and resolve upon my own opinion.

Enter JAQUES.

Jaq. My lord, here's a stranger without inquires for your lordship, and for a gentleman that calls himself Clodio.

Clo. Hey! *Ah! mon cher ami.*—[*Enter* DON DUART, *disguised.*]—Well, what news, my dear? Has she answered my letter?

Duart. There, sir—This to your lordship. (*Gives him a letter, and whispers.*)

Gov. Married to-night! and to this gentleman, sayest thou? I'm amazed.

Duart. Here is her choice, my lord.

Clo. (*Reading the letter.*) Um—um—*charms—irresistible—excuse—so soon—passion—blushes—consent—provision—children—settlement—marriage.* If this is not plain, the devil's in't.—Hold! here's more, 'faith. (*Reads to himself.*)

Gov. 'Tis very sudden—But give my service, I'll wait upon her.

Clo. Ha, ha, ha! poor soul! I'll be with her presently; and, 'faith, since I have made my own fortune, I'll e'en patch up my brother's too. Harkye! my dear dad that should have been—this business is all at an end; for, look you, I find your daughter's engaged; and, to tell you the truth, so am I, 'faith. If my brother has a mind to marry her, let him; for I shall not, split me! And now, gentlemen and ladies, if you will do me the honour to grace mine and the Lady Elvira's wedding, such homely entertainment as my poor house affords, you shall be all heartily welcome to.

Duart. Thy house! ha, ha! Well said, puppy.

Clo. Ha! old Testy!

Cha. What dost thou mean, man? (*To Clo.*)

Gov. 'Tis even so, I can assure you, sir; I have, myself, an invitation from the lady's own hand, that confirms it: I know her fortune well, and am surprised at it. [to reconcile us all.

Ang. Blessed news! This seems a forward step

Cha. If this be true, my lord, I have been thinking to no purpose; my design is all broken to pieces.

Ant. Come, brother, we'll mend it as well as we can; and since that young rogue has rudely turned tail upon your daughter, I'll fill up the blank with Carlos's name, and let the rest of the settlement stand as it was.

Cha. Hold! I'll first see this wedding, and then give you my final resolution. [the way.

Clo. Come, ladies, if you please, I will shew you

Lou. Sir, we wait upon you.

Cha. This wedding's an odd thing.

Duart. Ha, ha! if it should be a lie, now! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Elvira's Apartment.*

Enter ELVIRA *and Servant.*

Elv. Are the officers ready? [ders.

Serv. Yes, madam, and know your ladyship's or-

Elv. Now justice shall uncloud my fame, and see my brother's death revenged.

Enter CLODIO, *Governor*, DON ANTONIO, ANGELINA, CARLOS, DON CHARINO, *and* DON LEWIS.

Clo. Well, madam, you see I'm punctual—you've nicked your man, 'faith—I'm always critical—to a minute: you'll never stay for me. Ladies and gentlemen, I desire you'll do me the honour of being better acquainted here. My lord—

Gov. 'Give you joy, madam.

Clo. Nay, madam, I have brought you some near relations of my own, too—this Don Antonio, who will shortly have the honour to call you daughter.

Ant. The young rogue has made a pretty choice, 'faith.

Clo. This Don Charino, who was very near having the honour of calling me son; this my wife that should have been; this my elder brother; and this my noble uncle, Don Choleric Snapshorto de Testy.

Lewis. Puppy!

Clo. Peevish.

Lewis. Madam, I wish you joy with all my heart; but, truly, I can't much advise you to marry this gentleman; because, in a day or two, you'll really find him extremely shocking: those that know him, generally give him the title of Don Dismallo Thickskullo de Halfwitto.

Clo. Well said, nuncle. Ha, ha!

Enter a Servant and Don Duart, *as a Priest.*

Serv. Madam, the priest is come.

Elv. Let him wait, we have no occasion yet.

Gov. You have surprised us, madam, by this sudden marriage.

Elv. I may yet surprise you more, my lord.

Gov. Sir, don't you think your bride looks melancholy?

Clo. Ay, poor fool, she's modest; but I have a cure for that.—Well, my princess, why that demure look, now?

Elv. I was thinking, sir—

Clo. I know what you think of—you don't think at all—you don't know what to think—you neither see, hear, feel, smell, nor taste: you haven't the right use of one of your senses—in short, you have it. Now, my princess, have not I nicked it?

Elv. I am sorry, sir, you know so little of yourself, or me. Within there! Seize him! (*Several Officers rush in, who seize Clodio, and bind him.*)

Duart. Ha!

Gov. What can this mean? [already?

Clo. Gad me! what, is my deary in her frolics

Elv. And now, my lord, your justice on that murderer.

Gov. How, madam! [

Clo. That b—, my fortune!

Lewis. Madam, upon my knees, I beg you don't carry the jest too far; but if there be any real hopes of his having a halter, let's know it in three words, that I may be sure at once for ever, that no earthly thing but a reprieve can save him. (*Aside to Elv.*)

Ant. Pray, madam, who accuses him?

Elv. His own confession, sir.

Cha. Of murder, say you, madam?

Elv. The murder of my brother.

Duart. She is innocent, and well has disappointed my revenge. (*Aside.*)

Lewis. So, now I am a little easy; the puppy will be hanged.

Gov. Give me leave, madam, to ask you yet some farther questions.

Clo. Ay, I shall be hanged, I believe.

Cha. Nay, then, 'tis time to take care of my daughter; for I am convinced that my friend Clody is disposed of; and so, without compliment, do you see, children, heaven bless you together. (*Joins Carlos and Angelina's hands.*) [ought.

Car. This, sir, is a time unfit to thank you as we

Ant. Well, brother, I thank you, however. Carlos is an honest lad, and well deserves her; but poor Clody's ill fortune I could never have suspected.

Lewis. Why, you would be positive, though you know, brother, I always told you Dismal would be hanged.—(*Aside.*) I must plague him a little, because the dog has been pert with me.—Clody, how dost thou do? Ha! why you are tied!

Clo. I hate this old fellow, split me! (*Aside.*)

Lewis. Thou hast really made a sad blunder here, child, to invite so many people to a marriage-knot; and instead of that, it is like to be one under the left ear.

Clo. I'd fain him die. (*Aside.*)

Lewis. Well, my dear, I'll provide for thy going off, however. Let me see; you'll only have occasion for a nosegay, a pair of white gloves, and a coffin. Look you; take you no care about the surgeons; you shall not be anatomized: I'll get the body off with a wet finger—(*aside*) though, methinks, I'd fain see the inside of the puppy, too.

Clo. Oh! rot him! I can't bear this. (*Aside.*)

Lewis. Well, I won't trouble you any more now, child; if I am not engaged, I dont know but I may come to the tree, and sing a stave or two with thee; nay, I'll rise on purpose—though you will hardly suffer before twelve o'clock, neither—ay, just about twelve—about twelve you'll be turned off.

Clo. Oh! curses consume him! (*Aside.*)

Gov. I am convinced, madam, the fact appears too plain.

Lewis. Yes, yes; he'll suffer.

Gov. What says the gentleman? Do you confess the fact, sir!

Clo. Will it do me any good, my lord?

Gov. Perhaps it may, if you can prove it was not done in malice.

Clo. Why, then, to confess the truth, my lord, I did pink him, and am sorry for't; but it was none of my fault, split me!

Elv. Now, my lord, your justice.

Duart. Hold, madam! that remains in me to give; for know, your brother lives, and happy in the proof of such a sister's virtue. (*Discovers himself.*)

Elv. My brother! Oh! let my wonder speak my joy. (*Clodio and his friends seem surprised.*)

Gov. Don Duart living and well! How came this strange recovery?

Duart. My body's health the surgeon has restored; but here's the true physician of my mind: the hot distempered blood, which lately rendered me offensive to mankind, his just, resenting sword let forth, which gave me leisure to reflect upon my follies past; and, by reflection, to reform.

Elv. This is indeed a happy change!

Gov. Release the gentleman. [this a little.

Clo. Here, Testy, pr'ythee, do so much as untie

Lewis. Why, so I will, sirrah! I find thou hast done a mettled thing; and I don't know whether it's worth my while to be shocked at thee any longer.

Elv. I ask your pardon for the wrong I have done you, sir; and blush to think how much I owe you, for a brother thus restored.

Clo. Madam, your very humble servant; it is mighty well as it is.

Duart. We are, indeed, his debtors both; and, sister, there's but one way now of being grateful: for my sake, give him such returns of love as he may yet think fit to ask, or you with modesty can answer.

Clo. Sir, I thank you; and when you don't think it impudence in me to wish myself well with your sister, I shall beg leave to make use of your friendship.

Duart. This modesty commends you, sir.

Ant. Sir, you have proposed like a man of honour; and if the lady can but like of it, she shall find those among us, that will make up a fortune to deserve her.

Car. I wish my brother well; and as I once offered him to divide my birth-right, I'm ready still to put my words into performance.

Lewis. Nay, then, since I find the rogue's no longer like to be an enemy to Carlos, as far as a few acres go, I'll be his friend too.

Duart. Sister!

Elv. This is no trifle, brother: allow me a convenient time to think, and if the gentleman continues to deserve your friendship, he shall not much complain I am his enemy.

Lewis. So, now it will be a wedding again, 'faith!

Car. Come, my Angelina,
Our bark, at length, has found a quiet harbour,
And the distressful voyage of our loves
Ends not alone in safety, but reward.
Now we unlade our freight of happiness,
Of which, from thee alone my share's deriv'd;
For all my former search in deep philosophy,
Not knowing thee, was a mere dream of life:
But love, in one soft moment, taught me more
Than all the volumes of the learn'd could reach;
Gave me the proof, when nature's birth began,
To what great end th' Eternal form'd a man. [*Exeunt.*

THE MAN OF THE WORLD;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY CHARLES MACKLIN.



Act III.—Scene I.

CHARACTERS.

LORD LUMBERCOURT	MELVILLE	LADY RODOLPHA LUMBERCOURT
SIR PERTINAX MACSYCOPHANT	COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE	CONSTANTIA
EGERTON	SERGEANT EITHERSIDE	BETTY HINT
SIDNEY	LADY MACSYCOPHANT	SERVANTS

ACT I.—Scene I.—*A Library.*

Enter Betty *and* Sam.

Betty. The postman is at the gate, Sam; pray step and take in the letters. [Betty.

Sam. John the gardener is gone for them, Mrs.

Betty. Bid John bring them to me, Sam: tell him I am here in the library.

Sam. I'll send him to your ladyship in a crack. [*Exit.*

Enter Nanny.

Nanny. Miss Constantia desires to speak to you, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. How is she now?—any better, Nanny?

Nanny. Something; but very low-spirited still. I verily believe it is as you say.

Betty. O! I would take my book oath of it. I cannot be deceived in that point, Nanny.—Ay, ay, her business is done: she is certainly breeding, depend upon it.

Nanny. Why, so the housekeeper thinks too.

Betty. Nay, I know the father, the man that

Nanny. The deuce you do! [ruined her.

Betty. As sure as you are alive, Nanny; or I am greatly deceived; and yet—I can't be deceived neither. Was not that the cook that came galloping so hard over the common just now?

Nanny. The same: how very hard he galloped! he has been but three quarters of an hour, he says, coming from Hyde-Park Corner.

Betty. And what time will the family be down?

Nanny. He has orders to have dinner ready by five; there are to be lawyers, and a great deal of company here: he fancies there is to be a private wedding to-night, between our young Master Charles, and Lord Lumbercourt's daughter, the Scotch lady; who, he says, is just come post from Bath, in order to be married to him.

Betty. Ay, ay, Lady Rodolpha. Nay, like enough, for I know it has been talked of a good while: well, go tell Miss Constantia that I will be with her immediately.

Nanny. I shall, Mrs. Betty. [*Exit.*

Betty. So!—I find they all believe the impertinent creature is breeding—that's pure! it will soon reach my lady's ears, I warrant.

Enter John.

Well, John, ever a letter for me? [Constantia.

John. No, Mrs. Betty; but here is one for Miss

Betty. Give it me.—Hum! my lady's hand.

John. And here is one, which the postman says is for my young master; but it's a strange direction. (*Reads.*) *To Charles Egerton, Esq.*

Betty. O! yes, yes; this is for Master Charles, John; for he has dropped his father's name of Macsycophant, and has taken up that of Egerton: the parliament has ordered it. [Betty?

John. The parliament!—pr'ythee, why so, Mrs.

Betty. Why, you must know, John, that my lady, his mother, was an Egerton, by her father; she stole a match with our old master, for which all her family, on both sides, have hated Sir Pertinax, and the whole crew of the Macsycophants, ever since; and so, John, my lady's uncle, Sir Stanley Egerton, dying an old bachelor, and, as I said before, mortally hating our old master, and all the crew of the Macsycophants, left his whole estate to Master Charles, who was his godson; but on condition that he should drop his father's name of Macsycophant, and take up that of Egerton; and that is the reason, John, why the parliament has made him change his name.

John. I am glad that Master Charles has got the estate, however; for he is a sweet-tempered gentleman.

Betty. As ever lived. But come, John; as I know you love Miss Constantia, and are fond of being where she is, I will make you happy; you shall carry this letter to her.

John. Shall I, Mrs. Betty? I am very much obliged to you. Where is she?

Betty. In the housekeeper's-room, settling the

dessert. Give me Mr. Egerton's letter, and I'll leave it on the table in his dressing-room: I see it is from his brother Sandy.—So; now go and deliver your letter to your sweetheart, John.

John. That I will; and I am much beholden to you for the favour of letting me carry it to her; for though she should never have me, yet I shall always love her, and wish to be near her, she is so sweet a creature.—Your servant, Mrs. Betty. [*Exit.*

Betty. Your servant, John. Ha, ha, ha! poor fellow, he perfectly doats on her; and daily follows her about with nosegays and fruit, and the first of every thing in the season.—Ay, and my young master, Charles, too, is in as bad a way as the gardener:—in short, every body loves her, and that's one reason why I hate her. For my part, I wonder what the deuce the men see in her—a creature that was taken in for charity; I'm sure she's not so handsome. I wish she was out of the family once; if she was, I might then stand a chance of being my lady's favourite myself; ay, and perhaps of getting one of my young masters for a sweetheart, or at least the chaplain; but as to him, there would be no such great catch if I should get him. I will try for him, however; and my first step shall be to tell the doctor all I have discovered about Constantia's intrigues with her spark at Hadley.—Yes, that will do; for the doctor loves to talk with me—loves to hear me talk, too; and I verily believe—he, he, he! that he has a sneaking kindness for me; and this story will make him have a good opinion of my honesty, and that, I am sure, will be one step towards—O! bless me, here he comes, and my young master with him. I'll watch an opportunity to speak to him as soon as he is alone; for I will blow her up, I am resolved, as great a favourite, and as cunning as she is. [*Exit.*

Enter Egerton *and* Sidney.

Sid. Nay, dear Charles, but why are you so impetuous? Why do you break from me abruptly?

Eger. (*With great warmth.*) I have done, sir; you have refused. I have nothing more to say upon the subject. I am satisfied.

Sid. (*With a glow of tender friendship.*) Come, come, correct this warmth; it is the only weak ingredient in your nature, and you ought to watch it carefully. Because I will not abet an unwarrantable passion by an abuse of my sacred character, in marrying you beneath your rank, and in direct opposition to your father's hopes and happiness, you blame me, you angrily break from me, and call me unkind.

Eger. (*With tenderness and conviction.*) Dear Sidney, for my warmth I stand condemned; but, for my marriage with Constantia, I think I can justify it upon every principle of filial duty, honour, and worldly prudence.

Sid. Only make that appear, Charles, and you know you may command me.

Eger. (*With great filial regret.*) I am sensible how unseemly it appears in a son to descant on the unamiable passions of a parent; but, as we are alone, and friends, I cannot help observing, in my own defence, that when a father will not allow the use of reason to any of his family; when his pursuit of greatness makes him a slave abroad, only to be a tyrant at home; when a narrow partiality to Scotland, on every trivial occasion, provokes him to enmity even with his wife and children, only because they give a national preference where they think it most justly due; and when, merely to gratify his own ambition, he would marry his son into a family he detests; (*great warmth*) sure, Sidney, a son thus circumstanced, (from the dignity of human reason, and the feelings of a loving heart) has a right, not only to protest against the blindness of a parent, but to pursue those measures that virtue and happiness point out.

Sid. The violent temper of Sir Pertinax, I own, cannot be defended on many occasions; but still—your intended alliance with Lord Lumbercourt—

Eger. (*With great impatience.*) O! contemptible!—a trifling, quaint, haughty, voluptuous, servile tool! the mere lacquey of party and corruption; who, for the prostitution of nearly thirty years, and the ruin of a noble fortune, has had the despicable satisfaction, and the infamous honour, of being kicked up and kicked down, kicked in and kicked out, just as the insolence, compassion, or convenience of leaders predominated: and now, being forsaken by all parties, his whole political consequence amounts to the power of franking a letter, and the right honourable privilege of not paying a tradesman's bill.

Sid. Well, but dear Charles, you are not to wed my lord, but his daughter.

Eger. Who is as disagreeable to me for a companion, as her father for a friend or an ally.

Sid. What, her Scotch accent, I suppose, offends you.

Eger. No, upon my honour, not in the least; I think it entertaining in her: but, were it otherwise, in decency, and indeed in national affection, being a Scotchman myself, I can have no objection to her on that account:—besides, she is my near relation.

Sid. So I understand. But pray, Charles, how came Lady Rodolpha, who I find was born in England, to be bred in Scotland?

Eger. From the dotage of an old, formal, obstinate, stiff, rich, Scotch grandmother; who, upon a promise of leaving this grandchild all her fortune, would have the girl sent to her to Scotland, when she was but a year old; and there has she been ever since, bred up with this old lady, in all the vanity and unlimited indulgence that fondness and admiration could bestow on a spoiled child, a fancied beauty, and a pretended wit: (*in a tone of friendly affection*) and is this a woman fit to make my happiness? this the partner that Sidney would recommend to me for life? to you, who best know me, I appeal.

Sid. Why, Charles, it is a delicate point, unfit for me to determine; besides, your father has set his heart upon the match.

Eger. (*Impatiently.*) All that I know—but still I ask and insist upon your candid judgment—is she the kind of woman that you think could possibly contribute to my happiness? I beg you will give me an explicit answer.

Sid. The subject is disagreeable; but, since I must speak, I do not think she is.

Eger. (*In a start of friendly rapture.*) I know you do not; and I am sure you never will advise [the match.

Sid. I never will—I never will.

Eger. (*With a start of joy.*) You make me happy; which, I assure you, I never could be with your judgment against me in this point.

Sid. But pray, Charles, suppose I had been so indiscreet as to have agreed to marry you to Constantia, would she have consented, think you?

Eger. That I cannot say positively; but I suppose so. [ject, then?

Sid. Did you never speak to her upon that sub-

Eger. In general terms only; never directly requested her consent in form: (*he starts into a warmth of amorous resolution*) but I will this very moment, for I have no asylum from my father's arbitrary design, but my Constantia's arms. Pray do not not stir from hence; I will return instantly. I know she will submit to your advice; and I am sure you will persuade her to my wish, as my life, my peace, my earthly happiness, depend on my Constantia. [*Exit.*

Sid. Poor Charles! he little dreams that I love Constantia too; but to what degree I knew not myself, till he importuned me to join their hands. Yes, I love; but must not be a rival, for he is dear to me as fraternal affinity.

Enter Betty.

Betty. (*Running up to Sidney.*) I beg pardon for

my intrusion, sir. I hope, sir, I don't disturb your reverence.

Sid. Not in the least, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. I humbly beg you will excuse me, sir; but I wanted to break my mind to your honour, about a scruple that lies upon my conscience; and indeed I should not have presumed to trouble you, sir, but that I know you are my young master's friend, and my old master's friend, and, indeed, a friend to the whole family; (*curtsying very low*) for, to give you your due, sir, you are as good a preacher as ever went into a pulpit.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! do you think so, Mrs. Betty?

Bet. Ay, in truth do I; and as good a gentleman, too, as ever came into a family, and one that never gives a servant a bad word, nor that does any one an ill turn, neither behind their back nor before their face.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! why, you are a mighty well-spoken woman, Mrs. Betty; and I am mightily beholden to you for your good character of me.

Bet. Indeed, it is no more than you deserve, and what all the world and all the servants say of you.

Sid. I am much obliged to them, Mrs. Betty; but, pray, what are your commands with me?

Betty. Why, I'll tell you, sir;—to be sure, I am but a servant, as a body may say, and every tub should stand upon its own bottom; but—(*she looks about cautiously*) my young master is now in the china-room, in close conference with Miss Constantia. I know what they are about, but that is no business of mine; and, therefore, I made bold to listen a little; because, you know, sir, one would be sure, before one took away anybody's reputation.

Sid. Very true, Mrs. Betty; very true, indeed.

Betty. O! heavens forbid that I should take away any young woman's good name, unless I had a good reason for it; but, sir, (*with great solemnity*) if I am in this place alive, as I listened with my ear close to the door, I heard my young master ask Miss Constantia the plain marriage question; upon which I started and trembled, nay, my very conscience stirred within me so, that I could not help peeping through the key-hole.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! and so your conscience made you peep through the key-hole, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. It did, indeed, sir; and there I saw my young master upon his knees—lord bless us! and what do you think he was doing?—kissing her hand as if he would eat it; and protesting and assuring her he knew that you, sir, would consent to the match; and then the tears ran down her cheeks [as fast—

Sid. Ay!

Betty. They did indeed. I would not tell your reverence a lie for the world.

Sid. I believe it, Mrs. Betty; and what did Constantia say to all this?

Betty. Oh!—Oh! she is sly enough; she looks as if butter would not melt in her mouth; but all is not gold that glitters; smooth water, you know, sir, runs deepest. I am sorry my young master makes such a fool of himself; but, um—take my word for it, he is not the man; for, though she looks as modest as a maid at a christening,—(*hesitating*)—yet—ah!—when sweethearts meet, in the dusk of the evening, and stay together a whole hour, in the dark grove, and embrace, and kiss, and weep at parting—why, then, you know, sir, it is easy to guess all the rest. [manner?

Sid. Why did Constantia meet anybody in this

Betty. (*Starting with surprise.*) O! heavens! I beg, sir, you will not misapprehend me; for, I assure you, I do not believe they did any harm; that is, not in the grove; at least not when I was there; and she may be honestly married for aught I know. O! lud, sir, I would not say an ill thing of Miss Constantia for the world. I only say that they did meet in the dark walk; and all the servants observe that Miss Constantia wears her stays very loose, looks very pale, is sick in the morning and after dinner; and, as sure as my name is Betty Hint, something has happened that I won't name; but, nine months hence, a certain person in this family may ask me to stand godmother; for I think I know what's what, when I see it, as well as ano- [ther.

Sid. No doubt you do, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. (*Going and returning.*) I do, indeed, sir; and so, your servant, sir. But I hope your worship won't mention my name in this business; or that you had an item from me.

Sid. I shall not, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. For, indeed, sir, I am no busybody, nor do I love fending nor proving; and I assure you sir, I hate all tittling and tattling, and gossiping, and backbiting, and taking away a person's good [name.

Sid. I observe you do, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. I do, indeed, sir. I am the farthest from it in the world.

Sid. I dare say you are. [servant.

Betty. I am indeed, sir; and so your humble

Sid. Your servant, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. (*Aside, in great exultation.*) So! I see he believes every word I say—that's charming. I'll do her business for her, I'm resolved. [*Exit.*

Sid. What can this ridiculous creature mean by her dark walk, her private spark, her kissing, and all her slanderous insinuations against Constantia, whose conduct is as unblameable as innocence itself? I see envy is as malignant in a paltry waiting wench, as in the vainest or most ambitious lady of the court. It is always an infallible mark of the basest nature; and merit in the lowest, as well as in the highest station, must feel the shaft of envy's constant agents—falsehood and slander. [*Exit.*

ACT II.—SCENE I.—*A Library.*

Enter CONSTANTIA *and* EGERTON.

Con. Mr. Sidney is not here, sir.

Eger. I assure you I left him, and begged he would stay till I returned.

Con. His prudence, you see, sir, has made him retire; therefore we had better defer the subject till he is present; in the meantime, sir, I hope you will permit me to mention an affair that has greatly alarmed and perplexed me: I suppose you guess

Eger. I do not upon my word. [what it is?

Con. That is a little strange. You know, sir, that you and Mr. Sidney did me the honour of breakfasting with me this morning in my little study.

Eger. We had that happiness, madam.

Con. Just after you left me, upon opening my book of accounts, which lay in the drawer of the reading-desk, to my great surprise, I there found this case of jewels, containing a most elegant pair of ear-rings, a necklace of great value, and two bank-bills in this pocket-book, the mystery of which, sir, I presume, you can explain?

Eger. I can.

Con. They were of your conveying, then?

Eger. They were, madam.

Con. I assure you, they startled and alarmed me.

Eger. I hope it was a kind of alarm, such as blushing virtue feels, when with her hand, she gives her heart and last consent.

Con. It was not, indeed, sir.

Eger. Do not say so, Constantia: come, be kind at once; my peace and worldly bliss depend upon this moment.

Con. What would you have me do?

Eger. What love and virtue dictate.

Con. O! sir, experience but too severely proves, that such unequal matches as ours, never produce aught but contempt and anger in parents, censure from the world, and a long train of sorrow and repentance in the wretched parties; which is but too often entailed upon their hapless issue.

Eger. But that, Constantia, cannot be our case: my fortune is independent and ample; equal to luxury and splendid folly. I have a right to choose the partner of my heart.

Con. But I have not, sir; I am a dependant on

my lady—a poor, forsaken, helpless orphan: your benevolent mother found me, took me to her bosom, and there supplied my parental loss, with every tender care, indulgent dalliance, and with all the sweet persuasion that maternal fondness, religious precept, polished manners, and hourly example could administer—she fostered me: (*weeps*) and shall I now turn viper, and with black ingratitude sting the tender heart that thus hath cherished me? shall I seduce her house's heir, and kill her peace? No; though I loved to the mad extreme of female fondness; though every worldly bliss, that woman's vanity or man's ambition could desire, followed the indulgence of my love, and all the contempt and misery of this life, the denial of that indulgence, I would discharge my duty to my benefactress—my earthly guardian, my more than parent.

Eger. My dear Constantia, your prudence, your gratitude, and the cruel virtue of your self-denial, do but increase my love, my admiration, and my misery.

Con. Sir, I must beg you will give me leave to return these bills and jewels.

Eger. Pray do not mention them: sure my kindness and esteem may be indulged so far without suspicion or reproach: I beg you will accept of them; nay, I insist.

Con. I have done, sir; my station here is to obey. I know, sir, they are gifts of a virtuous mind; and mine shall convert them to the tenderest and most grateful use.

Eger. Hark! I hear a coach; it is my father. Dear girl, retire and compose yourself. I will send my lady and Sidney to you; and by their judgment we will be directed: will that satisfy you?

Con. I can have no will but my lady's. With your leave, I will retire; I would not see her in this confusion.

Eger. Dear girl, adieu! [*Exit Constantia.*

Enter Sam.

Sam. Sir Pertinax and my lady are come, sir; and my lady desires to speak with you in her own room.—Oh! here she is, sir. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Macsycophant.

Lady M. (*In great confusion and distress.*) Dear child, I am glad to see you; why did not you come to town yesterday, to attend the levee? your father is incensed to the utmost at your not being there.

Eger. (*With great warmth.*) Madam, it is with extreme regret I tell you, that I can be no longer a slave to his temper, his politics, and his scheme of marrying me to this woman; therefore, you had better consent at once to my going out of the kingdom, and my taking Constantia with me; for without her I never can be happy.

Lady M. As you regard my peace, or your own character, I beg you will not be guilty of so rash a step. You promised me you never would marry her without my consent. I will open it to your father. Pray, dear Charles, be ruled: let me prevail.

Sir P. (*Without, in great anger.*) Sir, wull ye do as ye are bid, and haud your gab, you rascal! You are so full of gab, you scoundrel! Take the chesnut gelding, return to town directly, and see what is become of my Lord Lumbercourt.

Lady M. Here he comes. I will get out of his way; but, I beg, Charles, while he is in this ill-humour, that you will not oppose him, let him say what he will: when his passion is a little cool, I will return, and try to bring him to reason; but do not thwart him.

Eger. Madam, I will not. [*Exit Lady M.*

Sir P. (*Without.*) Here, you Tomlins, where is my son Egerton?

Tom. (*Without.*) In the library, sir.

Sir P. (*Without.*) As soon as the lawyers come, be sure bring me word.

Enter Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Weel, sir! vary weel! vary weel! are nat ye a fine spark? are ye nat a fine spark, I say? Ah! you are a—So you wou'd not come up till the levee?

Eger. Sir, I beg your pardon; but I was not very well; besides, I did not think my presence there was necessary.

Sir P. (*Snapping him up.*) Sir, it was necessary; I tauld you it was necessary: and sir, I must now tell you that the whole tenor of your conduct is most offensive.

Eger. I am sorry you think so, sir; I am sure I do not mean to offend you.

Sir P. I care not what you intend. Sir, I tell you, you do offend. What is the meaning of this conduct, sir?—Neglect the levee!—'death, sir, you—what is your reason, I say, for thus neglecting the levee, and disobeying my commands?

Eger. (*With a stifled, filial resentment.*) Sir, I am not used to levees; nor do I know how to dispose of myself; nor what to say or do in such a situation.

Sir P. (*With a proud, angry resentment.*) Zounds! sir, do you nat see what others do? gentle and simple, temporal and spiritual, lords, members, judges, generals, and bishops; aw crowding, bustling, and pushing foremost intill the middle of the circle, and there waiting, watching, and striving to catch a look or a smile fra the great mon, which they meet wi' an amicable reesibility of aspect—a modest cadence of body, and a conciliating co-operation of the whole mon; which expresses an officious promptitude for his service, and indicates that they luock upon themselves as the suppliant appendages of his power, and the enlisted Swiss of his poleetical fortune; this, sir, is what you ought to do; and this, sir, is what I never once omitted for this five-and-thraty years, let who would be minister.

Eger. (*Aside.*) Contemptible!

Sir P. What is that you mutter, sir? [to you.

Eger. Only a slight reflection, sir, not relative

Sir P. Sir, your absenting yoursel fra the levee at this juncture is suspeecious; it is looked upon as a kind of disaffection, and aw your countrymen are highly offended at your conduct. For this, sir, they do not look upon you as a friend or weel-wisher either to Scotland or Scotchmen.

Eger. (*With a quick warmth.*) Then, sir, they wrong me, I assure you; but, pray, sir, in what particular can I be charged, either with coldness or offence to my country?

Sir P. Why, sir, ever since your mother's uncle, Sir Stanley Egerton, left you his three thousand pounds a-year, and that you have, in compliance with his will, taken up the name of Egerton, they think you are grown proud; that you have estranged yourself fra the Macsycophants; have associated with your mother's family—with the opposeetion; and with those who do not wish well to Scotland: besides, sir, the other day, in a conversation, at dinner, at your cousin Campbell M'Kenzie's, before a whole table full of your ain relations, did you not publicly wish a total extinguishment to aw party, and of aw national distinctions whatever, relative to the three kingdoms? (*With great anger.*) And, you blockhead! was that a prudent wish before so many of your ain countrymen? or was it a filial language to hold before me?

Eger. Sir, with your pardon, I cannot think it unfilial or imprudent. (*With a most patriotic warmth.*) I own I do wish, most ardently wish, for a total extinction of all party; particularly, that those of English, Irish, and Scotch, might never more be brought into contest or competition; unless, like loving brothers, in generous emulation for one common cause.

Sir P. How, sir! do you persist? What! would you banish aw party, and aw distinction between English, Irish, and your ain countrymen? [sir.

Eger. (*With great dignity of spirit.*) I would,

Sir P. Then d—n you, sir; you are nae true Scot. Ay, sir, you may look as angry as you will, but again, I say, you are nae true Scot.

Eger. Your pardon, sir; I think he is the true Scot and the true citizen, who wishes equal justice to the merit and demerit of every subject of Great Britain; amongst whom I know but of two distinctions. [those?

Sir P. Weel, sir, and what are those—what are

Eger. The knave and the honest man.

Sir P. Psha! rideeculous!

Eger. And he who makes any other, let him be of the north, or of the south—of the east, or of the west—in place, or out of place, is an enemy to the whole, and to the virtues of humanity.

Sir P. Ay, sir, this is your brother's impudent doctrine; for the which I have banished him for ever fra my presence, my heart, and my fortune. Sir, I will have no son of mine, because truly he has been educated in an English seminary, presume, under the mask of candour, to speak against his native land, or against my principles. Scotchmen, sir, Scotchmen, wherever they meet throughout aw the globe, should unite, and stick together, as it were, in a political phalanx. However, nae mair of that now; I will talk at large to you about that anon. In the meanwhile, sir, notwithstanding your contempt of my advice, and your disobedience till my commands, I will convince you of my paternal attention till your welfare, by my management of this voluptuary, this Lord Lumbercourt, whose daughter you are to marry. You ken, sir, that the fellow has been my patron above these five-and-thraty [years.

Eger. True, sir.

Sir P. Vary weel. And now, sir, you see, by his prodigality, he is become my dependant; and, accordingly, I have made my bargain with him: the devil a baubee he has in the world but what comes through these clutches; for his whole estate, which has three impleecit boroughs upon it—mark!—is now in my custody at nurse; the which estate, on my paying off his debts, and allowing him a life-rent of five thousand pounds per annum, is to be made over till me for my life, and at my death is to descend till ye and your issue. The peerage of Lumbercourt, you ken, will follow of course. So, sir, you see, there are three impleecit boroughs, the whole patrimony of Lumbercourt, and a peerage at one slap. Why, it is a stroke—a hit—a hit. Zounds! sir, a mon may live a century, and not make sic an hit again.

Eger. It is a very advantageous bargain indeed, sir; but what will my lord's family say to it.

Sir P. Why, mon, he cares not if his family were aw at the devil, so his luxury is but gratified: only let him have his race-horse to feed his vanity; his barridan to drink drams with him, scrat his face, and burn his periwig, when she is in her maudlin hysterics; and three or four discontented patriotic dependants, to abuse the ministry, and settle the affairs of the nation, when they are aw intoxicated; and then, sir, the fellow has aw his wishes, and aw his wants, in this world and the next.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Lady Rodolpha is come, sir.

Sir P. And my lord? [servants say.

Tom. Not yet, sir; he is about a mile behind, the

Sir. P. Let me know the instant he arrives.

Tom. I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir P. Step you out, Charles, and receive Lady Rodolpha; and I desire you will treat her with as much respect and gallantry as possible; for my lord has hinted that you have been very remiss as a lover. Adzooks! Charles, you should administer a whole torrent of flattery till her; for a woman ne'er thinks a mon loves her, till he has made an idiot of her understanding by flattery: flattery is the prime bliss of the sex, the nectar and ambrosia of their charms, and you can ne'er gi' 'em o'er muckle on't; so, there's a guid lad, gang and mind your flattery. [*Exit Egerton.*] Ah! I must keep a devilish tight hand upon this fellow. Ah! I am frightened out of my wits, lest his mother's family should seduce him to desert to their party, which would totally ruin my whole scheme, and break my heart. A fine time of day for a blockhead to turn patriot—when the character is exploded, marked, proscribed! Why, the common people, the vary vulgar, have found out the jest, and laugh at a patriot now-a-days, just as they do at a conjurer, a magician, or any other impostor in society.

Enter TOMLINS *and* LORD LUMBERCOURT.

Tom. Lord Lumbercourt. [*Exit.*

Lord L. Sir Pertinax, I kiss your hand.

Sir P. Your lordship's most devoted.

Lord L. Why, you stole a march upon me this morning; gave me the slip, Mac; though I never wanted your assistance more in my life. I thought you would have called upon me.

Sir P. My dear lord, I beg ten millions of pardons for leaving town before you; but ye ken that your lordship, at dinner yesterday, settled it that we should meet this morning at the levee.

Lord L. That I acknowledge, Mac; I did promise to be there, I own.

Sir P. You did, indeed; and accordingly I was at the levee, and waited there till every soul was gone; and seeing you did not come, I concluded that your lordship was gone before.

Lord L. Why, to confess the truth, my dear Mac, those old sinners, Lord Freakish, General Jolly, Sir Anthony Soaker, and two or three more of that set, laid hold of me last night at the opera; and, as the General says, "from the intelligence of my head this morning," I believe we drank pretty deep ere we parted; ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! nay, if you were with that party, my lord, I do not wonder at not seeing your lordship at the levee.

Lord L. The truth is, Sir Pertinax, my fellow let me sleep too long for the levee. But I wish I had seen you before you left town; I wanted you dreadfully.

Sir P. I am heartily sorry that I was not in the way; but on what account did you want me?

Lord L. Ha, ha, ha! a cursed awkward affair; and—ha, ha, ha!—yet, I can't help laughing at it, neither, though it vexed me confoundedly.

Sir P. Vexed you, my lord? Zounds! I wish I had been with you! But, for heaven's sake! my lord, what was it that could possibly vex your lordship?

Lord L. Why, that impudent, teasing, dunning, rascal, Mahogany, my uphosterer: you know the

Sir P. Perfectly, my lord. [fellow?

Lord L. The impudent scoundrel has sued me up to some d—d kind of a—something or other in the law, that I think they call an execution.

Sir P. The rascal!

Lord L. Upon which, sir, the fellow, by way of asking pardon—ha, ha, ha!—had the modesty to wait on me two or three days ago, to inform my honour—ha, ha, ha!—as he was pleased to dignify me, that the execution was now ready to be put in force against my honour; but that, out of respect to my honour, as he had taken a great deal of my honour's money, he would not suffer his lawyer to serve it, till he had first informed my honour; because he was not willing to affront my honour—ha, ha, ha!—a son of a w——!

Sir P. I never heard of so impudent a dog.

Lord L. Now, my dear Mac—ha, ha, ha!—as the scoundrel's apology was so very satisfactory, and his information so very agreeable, I told him that, in honour, I thought that my honour could not do less than to order his honour to be paid immediately.

Sir P. Vary weel, vary weel! you were as complaisant to the scoundrel till the full, I think, my lord.

Lord L. You shall hear, you shall hear, Mac: so sir, with great composure, seing a smart oaken cudgel that stood very handily in a corner of my dressing-room, I ordered two of my fellows to hold the rascal, and another to take the cudgel, and re-

turn the scoundrel's civility with a good drubbing, as long as the stick lasted.

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! admirable! as good a stroke of humour as ever I heard of. And, did they drub him, my lord?

Lord L. Most liberally, most liberally, sir; and there I thought the affair would have rested, till I should think proper to pay the scoundrel; but this morning, just as I was stepping into my chaise, my servants about me, a fellow called a tipstaff, stepped up, and begged the favour of my footman, who thrashed the upholsterer, and of the two that held him, to go along with him upon a little business to my Lord Chief Justice.

Sir P. The devil!

Lord L. And, at the same instant, I, in my turn, was accosted by two other very civil scoundrels; who, with a most insolent politeness, begged my pardon, and informed me that I must not go into my own chaise!

Sir P. How, my lord, not into your ain carriage?

Lord L. No, sir; for that they, by order of the sheriff, must seize it, at the suit of a gentleman—one Mr. Mahogany, an upholsterer.

Sir P. An impudent villain!

Lord L. It is all true, I assure you; so you see, my dear Mac, what a d—d country this is to live in, where noblemen are obliged to pay their debts just like merchants, cobblers, peasants, or mechanics: is not that a scandal, dear Mac, to this nation?

Sir P. My lord, it is not only a scandal, but a national grievance.

Lord L. Sir, there's not a nation in the world has such a grievance to complain of.

Sir P. Vary true, my lord, vary true; and it is monstrous that a man of your lordship's condition is not entitled to run one of these mechanics through the body when he is impertinent about his money; but our laws shamefully, on these occasions, make no distinction of persons amongst us.

Lord L. A vile policy, indeed, Sir Pertinax. But, sir, the scoundrel has seized upon the house, too, that I furnished for the girl I took from the opera.

Sir P. I never heard of sic an a scoundrel!

Lord L. Ay, but what concerns me most, I am afraid, my dear Mac, that the villain will send down to Newmarket, and seize my string of horses.

Sir P. Your string of horses? Zounds! we must prevent that at all events, that would be sic a disgrace. I will despatch an express to town directly, to put a stop till the rascal's proceedings.

Lord L. Pr'ythee do, my dear Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. O! it shall be done, my lord.

Lord L. Thou art an honest fellow, Sir Pertinax, upon honour!

Sir P. O! my lord, is is my duty to oblige your lordship to the utmost stretch of my abeelity.

Enter Tomlins.

Tom. Colonel Toper presents his compliments to you, sir; and having no family down with him in the country, he and Captain Hardbottle, if not inconvenient, will do themselves the honour of taking a family dinner with you.

Sir P. They are two of our militia-officers: does your lordship know them?

Lord L. By sight only. [our business.

Sir P. I am afraid, my lord, they will interrupt

Lord L. Not at all: I should be glad to be acquainted with Toper; they say he's a jolly fellow.

Sir P. O! devilish jolly, devilish jolly; he and the Captain are the two hardest drinkers in the country.

Lord L. So I have heard: let us have them by all means, Mac; they will enliven the scene. How far are they from you?

Sir P. Just across the meadows; not half a mile, my lord; a step, a step.

Lord L. O! let's have the jolly dogs, by all means.

Sir P. My compliments, I shall be proud of their company. [*Exit Tomlins.*] Guif ye please, my lord, we will gang and chat a bit with the women; I have not seen Lady Rodolpha since she returned fra the Bath. I long to have a little news from her about the company there.

Lord L. O! she'll give you an account of them, I warrant you. (*A very loud laugh without.*)

Lady R. (*Without.*) Ha, ha, ha! weel, I vow, cousin Egerton, you have a vast deal of shrewd humour. But, Lady Macsycophant, which way is Sir Pertinax?

Lady M. (*Without.*) Straight forward, madam.

Lord L. Here the hairbrain comes: it must be her by the noise.

Lady R. (*Without.*) Allons, gude folks; fallow me—*sans ceremonie.*

Enter Lady Rodolpha, Lady Macsycophant, Egerton, *and* Sidney.

Lady R. (*Running up to Sir P.*) Sir Pertinax, your most devoted, most obsequious, most obedient vassal. (*Curtsies very low.*)

Sir P. (*Bowing ridiculously low.*) Lady Rodolpha, down till the ground, my congratulations and duty attend you; and I should rejoice to kiss your ladyship's footsteps.

Lady R. (*Curtsying very low.*) Oh! Sir Pertinax, your humeelity is most sublimely complaisant; at present unanswerable; but I shall intensely study to return it fifty fald.

Sir P. Your ladyship does me singular honour. Weel, madam; ha! you look gaily; weel, and how, how is your ladyship after your jaunt till Bath?

Lady R. Never better, Sir Pertinax; as weel as youth, health, riotous spirits, and a careless, happy heart can make me.

Sir P. I am mightily glad till hear it, my lady.

Lord L. Ay, ay; Rodolpha is always in spirits, Sir Pertinax. *Vive la bagatelle* is the philosophy of our family: ha, Rodolpha, ha?

Lady R. Traith it is, my lord; and upon honour, I am determined it shall never be changed with my consent. Weel, I vow—ha, ha, ha! *Vive la bagatelle* would be a most brilliant motto for the chariot of a belle of fashion. What say you till my fancy, Lady Macsycophant? [commend it, madam.

Lady M. It would have novelty, at least, to re-

Lady R. Which of aw charms is the most delightful that can accompany wit, taste, love, or friendship; for novelty I take to be the true *je ne scai quoi* of all worldly bliss. Cousin Egerton, should not you like to have a wife with *vive la bagatelle* upon her wedding chariot?

Eger. O! certaioly, madam.

Lady R. Yes, I think it would be quite out of the common, and singularly ailegant.

Eger. Indisputably, madam; for, as a motto is a word to the wise, or rather a broad hint to the whole world of a person's taste and principles, *vive la bagatelle* would be most expressive, at first sight, of your ladyship's characteristic.

Lady R. (*Curtsies.*) Oh! Maister Egerton, you touch my very heart with your approbation: ha, ha, ha! that is the vary spirit of my intention, the instant I commence bride. Weel, I am immensely proud that my fancy has the approbation of so sound an understanding, and so polished a taste, as that of the all-accomplished (*curtsies*) Mr. Egerton.

Sir P. Weel, but, Lady Rodolpha, I wanted to ask your ladyship some questions about the company at the Bath; they say you had aw the world there.

Lady R. O, yes! there was a vary great mob there indeed, but vary little company. Aw *canaille*, except our ain party. The place was crowded with your little purse-proud mechanics; an odd kind of queer-looking animals, that have started intill fortune fra lottery-tickets, rich prizes at sea, gambling in 'Change-alley, and sic like caprices of fortune; and away they aw crowd to the Bath, to learn genteelity, and the names, titles, intrigues, and *bon-mots* of us people of fashion—ha, ha, ha!

Lord L. Ha, ha, ha! I know them; I know the things you mean, my dear, extremely well. I have

observed them a thousand times, and wondered where the devil they all came from—ha, ha, ha!

Lady M. Pray, Lady Rodolpha, what were your diversions at Bath?

Lady R. Guid traith, my lady, the company were my diversion; and better nae human follies ever afforded—ha, ha, ha! sic an a mixture, and sic oddities!—ha, ha, ha! a perfect gallimaufry. Lady Kunegunda M'Kenzie and I used to gang about till every part of this human chaos, on purpose to reconnoitre the monsters, and pick up their frivolities—ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! why that must have been a high entertainment till your ladyship.

Lady R. Superlative and inexhaustible, Sir Pertinax—ha, ha, ha! Madam, we had in one group, a peer and a sharper, a duchess and a pinmaker's wife; a boarding-school miss and her grandmother; a fat parson, a lean general, and a yellow admiral—ha, ha, ha! aw speaking together, and bawling and wrangling in fierce contention, as if the fame and fortune of aw the parties were to be the issue of the conflict. [object of their contention?

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! pray, madam, what was the

Lady R. O! a vary important one, I assure you; of no less consequence, madam, than how an odd trick at whist was lost, or might have been saved.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady R. In another party, Sir Pertinax—ha, ha, ha! we had what was called the cabinet council, which was composed of a duke and a haberdasher, a red-hot patriot and a sneering courtier, a discarded statesman and his scribbling chaplain, with a busy, bawling, muckle-headed prerogative lawyer; all of whom were every minute ready to gang together by the luggs, about the in and the out meenistry—ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! weel, that is a droll motley cabinet, I wow. Vary whimsical, upon honour! But they are all great politicians at Bath, and settle a meenistry there with as much ease as they do the tune of a country dance.

Lady R. Then, Sir Pertinax, in a retired part of the room, in a by-corner, snug, we had a Jew and a bishop.

Sir P. A Jew and a bishop! ha, ha! a devilish guid connection that: and pray, my lady, what were they about?

Lady R. Why, sir, the bishop was striving to convert the Jew; while the Jew, by intervals, was slyly picking up intelligence fra the bishop, about the change in the meenistry, in hopes of making a stroke in the stocks.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! admirable! admirable! I honour the smouse! ha! it was devilish clever of him, my lord, devilish clever! The Jew distilling the bishop's brains.

Lord L. Yes, yes; the fellow kept a sharp look-out. I think it was a fair trial of skill on both sides, Mr. Egerton.

Eger. True, my lord; but the Jew seems to have been in the fairer way to succeed.

Lord L. O! all to nothing, sir—ha, ha, ha! Well, child, I like your Jew and your bishop much. It's devilish clever. Let us have the rest of the history, pray, my dear.

Lady R. Guid traith, my lord, the sum total is, that there we aw danced, and wrangled, and flattered, and slandered, and gambled, and cheated, and mingled, and jumbled together, even like the animal assembly in Noah's ark.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord L. Ha, ha, ha! Well, you are a droll girl, Rodolpha; and, upon my honour—ha, ha, ha! you have given us as whimsical a sketch as ever was hit off. What say you, Mr. Sidney?

Sid. Upon my word, my lord, the lady has made me see the whole assembly in distinct colours.

Lady R. O! Maister Sidney, your approbation makes me as vain as a reigning toast before her looking-glass.

Enter Tomlins.

Tom. Colonel Toper and Captain Hardbottle are come, sir.

Sir P. O! vary weel. Dinner directly.

Tom. It is ready, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir P. My lord, we attend your lordship.

Lord L. Lady Mac, your ladyship's hand if you please. [*Exit with Lady M.*

Sir P. And here, Lady Rodolpha, is an Arcadian swain that has a hand at your ladyship's devotion.

Lady R. (*Giving her hand to Egerton.*) And I, sir, have one at his. There, sir; as to hearts, ye ken, cousin, they are not brought into the account of human dealings now-a-days.

Eger. O! madam, they are mere temporary baubles, especially in courtship; and no more to be depended upon than the weather, or a lottery-ticket.

Lady R. Ha, ha, ha! twa excellent similies, I vow, Mr. Egerton. Excellent! for they illustrate the vagaries and inconstancy of my dissipated heart, as exactly as if you had meant to describe it.

[*Exit with Egerton.*

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! what a vast fund of spirits and guid humour she has, Maister Sidney!

Sid. A great fund, indeed, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Come, let us till dinner. Ah! by this time to-morrow, Maister Sidney, I hope we shall have every thing ready for you to put the last hand till the happiness of your friend and pupil; and then, sir, my cares will be over for this life; for as to my other son, I expect nae guid of him, nor should I grieve, were I to see him in his coffin: but this match—O! it will make me the happiest of aw human beings. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*A Library.*

Enter Sir Pertinax *and* Egerton.

Sir P. (*In warm resentment.*) Zounds! sir, I will not hear a word about it: I insist upon it you are wrong; you should have paid your court till my lord, and not have scrupled swallowing a bumper or twa, or twenty till oblige him.

Eger. Sir, I did drink his toast in a bumper.

Sir P. Yes, you did; but how, how? just as a bairn takes physic; with aversions and wry faces, which my lord observed: then, to mend the matter, the moment that he and the Colonel got intill a drunken dispute about religion, you slyly slunged away.

Eger. I thought, sir, it was time to go, when my lord insisted upon half-pint bumpers.

Sir P. Sir, that was not levelled at you, but at the Colonel, in order to try his bottom; but they aw agreed that you and I should drink out of sma' glasses. [to drink any more.

Eger. But, sir, I beg pardon: I did not choose

Sir P. But, zoons! sir, I tell you there was a necessity for your drinking more.

Eger. A necessity! in what respect, pray, sir?

Sir P. Why, sir, I have a certain point to carry, independent of the lawyers, with my lord, in this agreement of your marriage; about which I am afraid we shall have a warm squabble; and therefore I wanted your assistance in it.

Eger. But how, sir, could my drinking contribute to assist you in your squabble?

Sir P. Yes, sir, it would have contributed—and greatly have contributed to assist me.

Eger. How so, sir?

Sir P. Nay, sir, it might have prevented the squabble entirely; for as my lord is proud of you for a son-in-law, and is fond of your little French songs, your stories, and your bon-mots, when you are in the humour; and guin you had but staid, and been a little jolly, and drank half a score bumpers with him, till he had got a little tipsy, I am sure, when we had him in that mood, we might have settled the point as I could wish it amongourselves,

before the lawyers came: but now, sir, I do not ken what will be the consequence.

Eger. But when a man is intoxicated, would that have been a seasonable time to settle business, sir?

Sir P. The most seasonable, sir: for sir, when my lord is in his cups, his suspicion is asleep, and his heart is aw jollity, fun, and guid fellowship; and, sir, can there be a happier moment than that for a bargain, or to settle a dispute with a friend? What is it you shrug up your shoulders at, sir?

Eger. At my own ignorance, sir: for I understand neither the philosophy, nor the morality of your doctrine.

Sir P. I know you do not, sir: and, what is worse, you never will understand it, as you proceed: in one word, Charles, I have often told you, and now again I tell you, once for aw, that the manœuvres of pliability are as necessary to rise in the world, as wrangling and logical subtlety are to rise at the bar: why you see, sir, I have acquired a noble fortune, a princely fortune; and how do you think I raised it?

Eger. Doubtless, sir, by your abilities.

Sir P. Doubtless, sir, you are a blockhead: nae, sir, I'll tell you how I raised it: sir, I raised it—by booing, (*bows ridiculously low*) by booing: sir, I never could stand straight in the presence of a great mon, but always booed, and booed, and booed—as it were by instinct.

Eger. How do you mean by instinct, sir?

Sir P. How do I mean by instinct! Why, sir, I mean by—by—by the instinct of interest, sir, which is the universal instinct of mankind. Sir, it is wonderful to think what a cordial, what an amicable—nay, what an infallible influence booing has upon the pride and vanity of human nature. Charles, answer me sincerely, have you a mind to be convinced of the force of my doctrine by example

Eger. Certainly, sir. [and demonstration?

Sir P. Then, sir, as the greatest favour I can confer upon you, I'll give you a short sketch of the stages of my booing, as an excitement, and a landmark for you to boo by, and as an infallible nostrum for a man of the world to rise in the world.

Eger. Sir, I shall be proud to profit by your experience.

Sir P. Vary weel, sir; sit ye down then, sit you down here. (*They sit down.*) And now, sir, you must recall to your thoughts, that your grandfather was a mon, whose penurious income of captain's half-pay was the sum total of his fortune; and, sir, aw my provision fra him was a modicum of Latin, an expertness in arithmetic, and a short system of worldly counsel; the principal ingredients of which were, a persevering industry, a rigid economy, a smooth tongue, a pliability of temper, and a constant attention to make every mon well pleased with himself.

Eger. Very prudent advice, sir.

Sir P. Therefore, sir, I lay it before you. Now, sir, with these materials, I set out a raw-boned stripling fra the North, to try my fortune with them here in the south; and my first step in the world was a beggarly clerkship in Sawney Gordon's counting-house, here, in the city of London; which you'll say afforded but a barren sort of a prospect.

Eger. It was not a very fertile one, indeed, sir.

Sir P. The reverse, the reverse: weel, sir, seeing myself in this unprofitable situation, I reflected deeply; I cast about my thoughts morning, noon, and night, and marked every mon, and every mode of prosperity; at last, I concluded that a matrimonial adventure, prudently conducted, would be the readiest gait I could gang for the bettering of my condition; and accordingly I set about it. Now, sir, in this pursuit, beauty! beauty! ah! beauty often struck my een, and played about my heart: and fluttered, and beat, and knocked, and knocked: but the devil an entrance I ever let it get: for I observed, sir, that beauty is, generally,—a proud, vain, saucy, expensive, impertinent sort of a commodity.

Eger. Very justly observed.

Sir P. And therefore, sir, I left it to prodigals and coxcombs, that could afford to pay for it; and, in its stead, sir, mark!—I looked out for an ancient, weel-jointured, superannuated dowager; a consumptive, toothless, phthisicy, wealthy widow; or a shrivelled, cadaverous piece of deformity, in the shape of an izzard, or an appersi-and—or, in short, ainything, ainything that had the siller—the siller—for that, sir, was the north star of my affections. Do you take me, sir? was nae that right?

Eger. O! doubtless, doubtless, sir.

Sir P. Now, sir, where do you think I ganged to look for this woman with the siller? nae, till court, nae till playhouses or assemblies; nae, sir, I ganged till the kirk, till the anabaptist, independent, Bradlonian, and Muggletonian meetings; till the morning and evening service of churches and chapels of ease, and till the midnight, melting, conciliating love feasts of the methodists; and there, sir, at last, I fell upon an old, slighted, antiquated, musty maiden, that looked—ha, ha, ha! she looked just like a skeleton in a surgeon's glass case. Now, sir, this miserable object was religiously angry with herself and aw the world; had nae comfort but in metaphysical visions and supernatural deliriums—ha, ha, ha! Sir, she was as mad—as mad as a Bedlamite.

Eger. Not improbable, sir: there are numbers of poor creatures in the same condition.

Sir P. O! numbers—numbers. Now, sir, this cracked creature used to pray, and sing, and sigh, and groan, and weep, and wail, and gnash her teeth constantly, morning and evening, at the tabernacle in Moorfields. And as soon as I found she had the siller, aha! guid traith, I plumped me down upon my knees, close by her—cheek by jowl—and prayed, and sighed, and sung, and groaned, and gnashed my teeth as vehemently as she could do for the life of her; ay, and turned up the whites of mine een, till the strings awmost cracked again. I watched her motions, handed her till her chair, waited on her home, got most religiously intimate with her in a week; married her in a fortnight, buried her in a month; touched the siller; and with a deep suit of mourning, a melancholy port, a sorrowful visage, and a joyful heart, I began the world again; (*rises*) and this, sir, was the first boo, that is the first effectual boo, I ever made till the vanity of human nature. Now, sir, do you understand this doctrine?

Eger. Perfectly well, sir. [

Sir P. Ay, but was it not right? was it not ingenious, and weel hit off?

Eger. Certainly, sir: extremely well.

Sir P. My next boo, sir, was till your ain mother, whom I ran away with fra the boarding-school; by the interest of whose family I got a guid smart place in the treasury; and, sir, my vary next step was intill parliament; the which I entered with as ardent and as determined an ambition as ever agitated the heart of Cæsar himself. Sir, I booed, and watched, and hearkened, and ran about, backwards and forwards, and attended, and dangled upon the then great mon, till I got intill the vary bowels of his confidence; and then, sir, I wriggled and wrought, and wriggled, till I wriggled myself among the very thick of them. Ha! I got my snack of the clothing, the foraging, the contracts, the lottery tickets, and aw the political bonuses; till at length, sir, I became a much wealthier man than one half of the golden calves I had been so long a booing to: and was nae that booing to some purpose?

Eger. It was indeed, sir.

Sir P. But are you convinced of the guid effects and of the utility of booing?

Eger. Thoroughly, sir.

Sir P. Sir, it is infallible. But, Charles, ah! while I was thus booing, and wriggling, and raising this princely fortune, ah! I met with many

heart-sores and disappointments fra the want of literature, eloquence, and other popular abeeleties. Sir, guin I could but have spoken in the house, I should have done the deed in half the time; but the instant I opened my mouth there they aw fell a laughing at me; aw which deficiencies, sir, I determined, at any expense, to have supplied by the polished education of a son, who I hoped would one day raise the house of Macsycophant till the highest pitch of ministerial ambition. This, sir, is my plan: I have done my part of it; Nature has done her's; you are popular, you are eloquent; aw parties like and respect you: and now, sir, it only remains for you to be directed—completion follows.

Eger. Your liberality, sir, in my education, is an obligation I shall ever remember with the deepest filial gratitude.

Sir P. Vary weel, sir: but, Charles, have you had any conversation yet with Lady Rodolpha, about the day of your marriage; your liveries, your equipage; or your domestic establishment?

Eger. Not yet, sir. [vary wrong.

Sir P. Poh! why there again, now, you are wrong;

Eger. Sir, we have not had an opportunity.

Sir P. Why, Charles, you are vary tardy in this business.

Lord L. (*Sings without, flushed with wine.*)
"*What have we with day to do?*"

Sir P. O! here comes my lord.

Lord L. "*Sons of care, 'twas made for you.*"

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT, *drinking a dish of coffee*; TOMLINS *waiting.*

"*Sons of care, 'twas made for you.*" Very good coffee, indeed, Mr. Tomlins. "*Sons of care, 'twas made for you.*" Here, Mr. Tomlins. [dish?

Tom. Will your lordship please to have another

Lord L. No more, Mr. Tomlins. [*Exit Tomlins.*] Ha, ha, ha! my host of the Scotch pints, we have had warm work.

Sir P. Yes, you pushed the bottle about, my lord, with the joy and vigour of a bacchanal.

Lord L. That I did, my dear Mac; no loss of time with me: I have but three motions, old boy—charge, toast, fire—and off we go. Ha, ha, ha! that's my exercise.

Sir P. And fine warm exercise it is, my lord; especially with the half-pint glasses.

Lord L. Zounds! it does execution point blank: ay, ay, none of your pimping acorn glasses for me, but your manly, old English half-pint bumpers, my dear; they try a fellow's stamina at once: but where's Egerton?

Sir P. Just at hand, my lord; there he stands.

Lord L. My dear Egerton.

Eger. Your lordship's most obedient.

Lord L. I beg pardon, I did not see you. I am sorry you left us so soon after dinner: had you staid, you would have been highly entertained. I have made such examples of the commissioner, the captain, and the colonel.

Eger. So I understand, my lord.

Lord L. But, Egerton, I have slipped from the company for a few moments, on purpose to have a little chat with you. Rodolpha tells me she fancies there is a kind of demur on your side, about your marriage with her.

Sir P. A demur! how so, my lord?

Lord L. Why, as I was drinking my coffee with the women just now, I desired they would fix the wedding night, and the etiquette of the ceremony; upon which the girl burst into a loud laugh, telling me she supposed I was joking, for that Mr. Egerton had never yet given her a single glance or hint upon the subject.

Sir P. My lord, I have been just now talking to him about his shyness to the lady.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Counsellor Plausible is come, sir, and Sergeant Eitherside. [very evening, my lord.

Sir P. Why then we can settle the business this

Lord L. As well as in seven years; and, to make the way as short as possible, pray, Mr. Tomlins, present your master's compliments and mine to Lady Rodolpha, and let her ladyship know we wish to speak with her directly. [*Exit Tomlins.*] He shall attack her this instant, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Ay, this is doing business effectually, my lord.

Lord L. O! I will pit them in a moment, Sir Pertinax; that will bring them into the heat of the action at once, and save a great deal of awkwardness on both sides. O, here your dulcinea comes, sir.

Enter LADY RODOLPHA, *singing.*

Lady R. Weel, Sir Pertinax, I attend your commands; and your's, my paternal lord.

Lord L. Why then, my filial lady, we are to inform you that the commission for your ladyship and this enamoured cavalier, commanding you to serve your country, jointly and inseparably, in the honourable and forlorn hope of matrimony, is to be signed this very evening.

Lady R. This evening, my lord!

Lord L. This evening, my lady. Come, Sir Pertinax, let us leave them to settle their liveries, wedding suits, carriages, and all their amorous equipage for the nuptial campaign.

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! excellent, excellent! Weel, I vow, my lord, you are a great officer: this is as guid a manœuvre to bring on a rapid engagement as the ablest general of them a' could have started.

Lord L. Ay, ay! leave them together; they'll soon come to a right understanding, I warrant you; or the needle and loadstone have lost their sympathy. [*Exit with Sir Pertinax.*

Eger. (*Aside.*) What a dilemma am I in!

Lady R. (*Aside.*) Why, this is downright tyranny! it has quite damped my spirits; and my betrothed, yonder, seems planet-struck, too, I think.

Eger. (*Aside.*) A whimsical situation, mine.

Lady R. (*Aside.*) Ha, ha, ha! methinks we look like a couple of cautious generals, that are obliged to take the field, but neither of us seems willing to come till action. [dress her.

Eger. (*Aside.*) I protest I know not how to ad-

Lady R. (*Aside.*) He will nae advance, I see: what am I to do in this affair? guid traith, I will even do, as I suppose many brave heroes have done before me; clap a guid face on the matter; and so conceal an aching heart under a swaggering countenance. Sir, as we have, by the commands of our guid fathers, a business of some little consequence to transact, I hope you will excuse my taking the liberty of recommending a chair till you, for the repose of your body, in the embarrassed deliberation of your perturbed spirits.

Eger. (*Greatly embarrassed.*) Madam, I beg your pardon. (*Hands her a chair, then one for himself.*) Please to sit, madam.

Lady R. (*Aside.*) Ah! he's resolved not to come too near till me, I think. [hem!

Eger. (*Aside.*) A pleasant interview this—hem,

Lady R. (*Aside, mimics him to herself.*) Hem! he will not open the congress, I see: then I will. (*Very loud.*) Come, sir, when will you begin?

Eger. (*Greatly surprised.*) Begin! what, madam?

Lady R. To make love till me.

Eger. Love, madam!

Lady R. Ay, love, sir. Why, you have never said a word till me on the subject, nor cast a single glance at me, nor heaved one tender sigh, nor even secretly squeezed my loof. Now, sir, th'of our fathers are so tyrannical as to dispose of us without the consent of our hearts, yet you, sir, I hope, have more humanity than to think of marrying me without administering some of the preliminaries usual on those occasions.

Eger. Madam, I own your reproach is just; I shall, therefore, no longer disguise my sentiments; but fairly let you know my heart.

Lady R. (*Starts up, and runs to him.*) That's

right, that is right, cousin! but sit you down, sit you down again. (*They sit.*) I shall return your frankness and your passion, cousin, with a melting tenderness, equal till the amorous enthusiam of an ancient heroine.

Eger. Madam, if you will hear me—

Lady R. But remember, you must begin with fervency, and a most rapturous vehemency; for you are to consider, cousin, that our match is nae to arise fra the union of hearts, and a long decorum of ceremonious courtship, but is instantly to start at once, out of necessity, or mere accident. Ha, ha, ha! like a match in an ancient romance, where, you ken, cousin, the knight and the damsel are mutually smitten and dying for each other at first sight, or by an amorous sympathy, before they exchange a single glance. So, now cousin, with the true romantic entbusiasm, you are to suppose me the lady of the enchanted castle; and you—ha, ha, ha! you are to be the knight of the sorrowful countenance; ha, ha, ha! and, upon honour, you look the character admirably, ha, ha, ha!

Eger. Trifling creature! (*Aside.*)

Lady R. Come, sir, why do you nae begin to ravish me with your valour, your vows, your knight-errantry, and your amorous frenzy? Nay, nay, nay! guin you do nae begin at once, the lady of the enchanted castle will vanish in a twinkling.

Eger. Lady Rodolpha, I know your talent for raillery well; but at present, in my case, there is a kind of cruelty in it.

Lady R. Raillery! upon honour, cousin, you mistake me quite and clean. I am serious, very serious; ay, and I have cause to be serious; nay, I will submit my case even to yourself. (*Whines.*) Can any puir lassie be in a mair lamentable condition, than to be sent four hundred miles, by the command of a positive grandmother, to marry a man who, I find, has nae mair affection for me than if I had been his wife these seven years?

Eger. Madam, I am extremely sorry—

Lady R. (*Cries and sobs.*) But it is vary weel, cousin: I see your unkindness and aversion plain enough; and, sir, I must tell you fairly, you are the ainly man that ever slighted my person, or that drew tears fra these een. But it is vary weel, it's vary weel; I will return till Scotland to-morrow morning, and let my grandmother know how I hae been affronted by your slights, your contempts, and your aversions.

Eger. If you are serious, madam, your distress gives me a deep concern; but affection is not in our power; and you will forgive me when I tell you, I can never have that honour which is intended me, by a connexion with your ladyship.

Lady R. (*Starting up.*) How, sir; are you serious? And so you persist in slighting me?

Eger. I beg your pardon, madam; but I must be explicit, and at once declare, that I never can give my hand, where I cannot give my heart.

Lady R. (*In great anger.*) Why, then, sir, I must tell you, that your declaration is sic an affront as nae woman of spirit can, or ought to bear; and here I make a solemn vow, never to pardon it but on one condition.

Eger. If that condition be in my power, madam—

Lady R. (*Snaps him up.*) Sir, it is in your power.

Eger. Then, madam, you may command me.

Lady R. Why, then, sir, the condition is this—you must here give me your word and honour, that nae importunity, command, or menace of your father; in fine, that nae consideration whatsoever, shall induce you to take me, Rodolpha Lumbercourt, to be your wedded wife.

Eger. I most solemnly promise I never will.

Lady R. And I, sir, most solemnly and sincerely (*curtsies*) thank you for—(*curtsies*) your resolution, and your agreeable aversion; ha, ha, ha! for you have made me as happy as a puir wretch reprieved in the vara instant of intended execution.

Eger. Pray, madam, how am I to understand all this?

Lady R. (*With frankness, and a reserve of manners.*) Why, sir, your frankness and sincerity demand the same behaviour on my side; therefore, without further disguise or ambiguity, know, sir, that I myself (*with a deep sigh*) am as deeply smitten with a certain swain, as I understand you are with your Constantia.

Eger. Indeed, madam!

Lady R. (*With an amiable, soft, tender sincerity.*) O! sir, notwithstanding a' my shew of courage and mirth, here I stand as errant a trembling Thisbe as ever sighed or mourned for her Pyramus: and, sir, a' my extravagant levity and ridiculous behaviour in your presence now, and ever since your father prevailed upon mine to consent till this match, has been a premeditated scheme to provoke your gravity and guid sense intill a cordiai disgust, and a positive refusal.

Eger. But, madam, if I may presume so far, pray, who is your lover?

Lady R. Why, in that too, I shall surprise you perhaps more than ever. In the first place, he is a beggar, and in disgrace with an unforgiving father; and, in the next place, he is (*curtsies*) your ain brother. So you see, cousin Charles, th'of I cou'd nae mingle affections with you, I have nae ganged out of the family. But now, sir, let me ask one question; pray, how is your mither affected in this business?

Eger. She knows of my passion; and will, I am sure, be a friend to the common cause.

Lady R. Ah! that's lucky. Our first step, then, must be to take her advice upon our conduct, so as to keep our fathers in the dark till we can hit off some measure that will wind them about till our ain purpose, and the common interest of our aiu passion; so come along, cousin Charles. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.—SCENE I.—*A Library.*

Enter SIR PERTINAX *and* COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE.

Sir P. No, no. Come away, Counsellor Plausible; come away, I say; let them chew upon it. Why, Counsellor, did you ever see so impertinent, so meddling, and so obstinate a blockhead as that Sergeant Eitherside? Confound the fellow, he has put me out of a' temper.

Plaus. He is very positive, indeed, Sir Pertinax; and no doubt was intemperate and rude. But, Sir Pertinax, I would not break off the match notwithstanding; for certainly, even without the boroughs, it is an advantageous bargain both to you and your son.

Sir P. But, zounds! Plausible, do you think I will give up the nomination till three boroughs? Why, I would rather give him twenty, nay, thirty thousand pounds in any other part of the bargain; especially at this juncture, when votes are likely to become so valuable. Why, man, if a certain affair comes on, they will rise above five hundred *per cent.*

Plaus. You judge very rightly, Sir Pertinax; but what shall we do in this case? for Mr. Sergeant insists that you positively agreed to my lord's having the nomination to the three boroughs during his own life.

Sir P. Why, yes: in the first sketch of the agreement, I believe I did consent: but, at that time, mon, my lord's affairs did not appear to be half so desperate as I now find they turn out. Sir, he must acquiesce in whatever I demand; for I have got him into sic an hobble that he cannot—

Plaus. No doubt, Sir Pertinax, you have him absolutely in your power.

Sir P. Vary weel; and ought nae a man to make his vantage of it?

Plaus. No doubt you ought; no manner of doubt. But, Sir Pertinax, there is a secret spring in this business that you do not seem to perceive; and which, I am afraid, governs the matters respecting these boroughs.

Sir P. What spring do you mean, Counsellor?

Plaus. Why, this Sergeant Eitherside. I have some reason to think, that my lord is tied down, by some means or other, to bring the Sergeant in, the very first vacancy, for one of these boroughs; now, that, I believe, is the sole motive why the Sergeant is so strenuous that my lord should keep the boroughs in his own power; fearing that you might reject him for some man of your own.

Sir P. Odswunds and death! Plausible, you are clever, devilish clever. By the blood! you have bit upon the vary string that has made a' this discord. Oh! I see it—I see it now. But hauld—hauld—bide a wee bit—a wee bit, mon: I have a thought come intill my head—yes—I think, Plausible, with a little twist in our negotiation, that this vary string, properly tuned, may be still made to produce the vary harmony we wish for. Yes, yes, I have it: this Sergeant, I see, understands business; and, if I am not mistaken, knows how to take a hint.

Plaus. O! nobody better, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Why, then, Plausible, the short road is the best with sic a man. You must even come up till his mark at once, and assure him from me that I will secure him a seat for one of these vary boroughs.

Plaus. Oh! that will do, Sir Pertinax; that will do, I'll answer for't.

Sir P. And further, I beg you will let him know that I think myself obliged to consider him, in this affair, as acting for me as weel as my lord, as a common friend till baith; and for the services he has already done us, make my special compliments till him: and, pray let this amicable bit of paper be my faithful advocate to convince him of what my gratitude further intends for his great (*gives him a bank-bill*) equity in adjusting this agreement betwixt my lord and me.

Plaus. Ha, ha, ha! upon my word, Sir Pertinax, this is noble. Ay, ay! this is an eloqnent bit of paper, indeed.

Sir P. Maister Plausible, in a' human dealings, the most effectual method is that of ganging at once till the vary bottom of a mon's heart: for, if we expect that men should serve us, we must first win their affections by serving them. O! here they baith come.

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT *and* SERGEANT EITHERSIDE.

Lord L. My dear Sir Pertinax, what could provoke you to break off this business so abruptly? You are really wrong in the point; and, if you will give yourself time to recollect, you will find that my having the nomination to the boroughs for my life, was a preliminary article; I appeal to Mr. Sergeant Eitherside here, whether I did not always understand it so.

Serg. I assure you, Sir Pertinax, that in all his lordship's conversation with me upon this business, and in his positive instructions, both he and I always understood the nomination to be in my lord, *durante vitâ*.

Sir P. Why, then, my lord, to shorten the dispute, a' that I can say in answer till your Lordship is, that there has been a total mistake betwixt us in that point: and, therefore, the treaty must end here. I give it up. O! I wash my hands of it for ever.

Plaus. Well, but, gentlemen, gentlemen! a little patience. Surely this mistake, somehow or other, may be rectified. Pr'ythee, Mr. Sergeant, let you and I step into the next room by ourselves, and reconsider the clause relative to the boroughs, and try if we cannot hit upon a medium that will be agreeable to both parties.

Serg. (*With great warmth.*) Mr. Plausible, I have considered the clause fully; am entirely master of the question: my lord cannot give up the point. It's unkind and unreasonable to expect it.

Plaus. Nay, Mr. Sergeant, I beg you will not misunderstand me. Do not think I want his lordship to give up my point without an equivalent. Sir Pertinax, will you permit Mr. Sergeant and me to retire a few moments to re-consider this point?

Sir P. With a' my heart, Maister Plausible; anything to oblige his lordship; anything to accommodate his lordship; anything.

Plaus. What say you, my lord? [Sergeant.

Lord L. Nay, I submit it entirely to you and Mr.

Plaus. Come, Mr. Sergeant, let us retire.

Lord L. Ay, ay, go, Mr. Sergeant, and hear what Mr. Plausible has to say.

Serg. Nay, I'll wait on Mr. Plausible, my lord, with all my heart; but I am sure I cannot suggest the shadow of a reason for altering my present opinion: impossible, impossible.

Plaus. Well, well, Mr. Sergeant, do not be positive. I am sure, reason, and your client's conveniency, will always make you alter your opinion.

Serg. Ay, ay; reason and my client's conveniency, Mr. Plausible, will always control my opinion, depend upon it; ay, ay! there you are right. Sir, I attend you. [*Exeunt Lawyers.*

Sir P. I am sorry, my lord, extremely sorry, indeed, that this mistake has happened.

Lord L. Upon my honour, and so am I, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. But come, now, after a', your lordship must allow you have been in the wrong: come, my dear lord, you must allow me that now.

Lord L. How so, my dear Sir Pertinax?

Sir P. Not about the boroughs, my lord; for those I do not mind of a bawbee; but about your distrust of my friendship. Why, do you think, now—I appeal till your ain breast, my lord—do you think, I say, that I should ever have slighted your lordship's nomination till these boroughs.

Lord L. Why, really, I do not think you would, Sir Pertinax; but one must be directed by one's lawyer, you know.

Sir P. Ha! my lord, lawyers are a dangerous species of animals to have any dependance upon: they are always starting punctilios and difficulties among friends. Why, my lord, it is their interest that a' mankind should be at variance; for disagreement of every kind is the vary manure with which they enrich and fatten the land of litigation; and, as they find that that constantly promotes the best crop, depend upon it, they will always be sure to lay it on as thick as they can.

Lord L. Come, come, my dear Sir Pertinax; you must not be angry with the Sergeant for his insisting so warmly on this point; for those boroughs, you know, are my sheet anchor.

Sir P. I know it, my lord; and, as an instance of my promptness to study, and of my acquaintance till your lordship's inclination, as I see that this Sergeant Eitherside wishes you weel, and you of him, I think, now, he would be as guid a man to be returned for one of those boroughs as could be pitched upon; and, as such, I humbly recommend him till your lordship's consideration.

Lord L. Why, my dear Sir Pertinax, to tell you the truth, I have already promised him. He must be in for one of them, and that is one reason why I insisted so strenuously; he must be in.

Sir P. And why not? odswunds! why not? is nae your word a fiat? and will it nae be always so till me? are ye nae my friend, my patron? and are we nae, by this match of our children, to be united intill one interest?

Lord L. So I understand it, I own, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. My lord, it can nae be otherwise; then, for heaven's sake! as your lordship and I can have but one interest for the future, let us have nae mair words about these paltry boroughs, but conclude the agreement just as it stands; otherwise, there must be new writings drawn up, new consultations of lawyers; new objections and delays will arise; creditors will be impatient and impertinent; so that we shall nae finish the Lord knows when.

Lord L. You are right, you are right; say no more, Mac, say no more. Split the lawyers—you judge the point better than all Westminster-Hall could. It shall stand as it is: yes, you shall settle it your own way; for your interest and mine are the same, I see plainly.

Sir P. No doubt of it, my lord.

Lord L. O! here the lawyers come.

Enter Counsellor Plausible *and* Sergeant Eitherside.

Lord L. So, gentlemen—Well, what have you done?—How are your opinions now?

Serg. My lord, Mr. Plausible has convinced me; fully convinced me.

Plaus. Yes, my lord, I have convinced him: I have laid such arguments before Mr. Sergeant as were irresistible.

Serg. He has, indeed, my lord; besides, as Sir Pertinax gives his honour that your lordship's nomination shall be sacredly observed, why, upon a nearer review of the whole matter, I think it will be the wiser measure to conclude the agreement just as it is drawn.

Lord L. I am very glad you think so, Mr. Sergeant, because that is my opinion too: so my dear Eitherside, do you and Mr. Plausible despatch the business now as soon as possible.

Serg. My lord, every thing will be ready in less than an hour. Come, Mr. Plausible, let us go and fill up the blanks, and put the last hand to the writings on our part.

Plaus. I attend you, Mr. Sergeant.

[*Exeunt Lawyers.*

Lord L. And, while the lawyers are preparing the writings, Sir Pertinax, I will go and saunter with the women. [presently.

Sir P. Do, do, my lord; and I will come to you

Lord L. Very well, my dear Mac, I shall expect you. [*Exit singing.*

Sir P. So! a little flattery, mixed with the finesse of a gilded promise on one side, and a *quantum sufficit* of the *aurum palpabile* on the other, have at last made me the happiest father in Great Britain. Ha! my heart expands itself, as it were, through every part of my whole body, at the completion of this business, and feels nothing but dignity and elevation. Hauld! hauld! bide a wee, bide a wee! I have but one little matter mair in this affair to adjust; and then, Sir Pertinax, you may dictate till fortune herself, and send her to govern fools; while you shew and convince the world that wise men always govern her. Wha's there?

Enter Sam.

Tell my son, Egerton, I would speak with him here in the library. [*Exit Sam.*] Now I have settled the grand point with my lord, this, I think, is the proper juncture to feel the political pulse of my spark; and, once for a', to set it to the exact measure that I would have it constantly beat.

Enter Egerton.

Come, hither, Charles.

Eger. Your pleasure, sir.

Sir P. About twa hours since, I told you, Charles, that I received a letter express, complaining of your brother's activity at an election in Scotland, against a particular friend of mine, which has given great offence; and, sir, you are mentioned in the letter as well as he: to be plain, I must roundly tell you, that on this interview depends my happiness as a father and as a man; and my affection to you, sir, as a son, for the remainder of our days.

Eger. I hope, sir, I shall never do anything either to forfeit your affection, or disturb your happiness.

Sir P. I hope so, too: but to the point. The fact is this: there has been a motion made this vary day to bring on the grand affair, which is settled for Friday seven-night. Now, sir, as you are popular, have talents, and are weel heard, it is expected, and I insist upon it, that you endeavour to atone, sir, for your late misconduct, by preparing, and taking a larger share in that question, and supporting it with a' your power.

Eger. Sir, I hope you will not so exert your influence, as to insist upon my supporting a measure by an obvious, prostituted sophistry, in direct opposition to my character and conscience.

Sir P. Conscience! why, you are mad! Did you ever hear any man talk of conscience in political matters? Conscience, quotha! I have been in parliament these three and thraty years, and never heard the term made use of before. Sir, it is an unparliamentary word, and you will be laughed at for it.

Eger. Then, sir, I must frankly tell you, that you work against my nature; you would connect me with men I despise, and press me into measures I abhor; for know, sir, that the malignant ferment which the venal ambition of the times provokes in the heads and hearts of other men, I detest.

Sir P. What are you about, sir? Malignant ferment and venal ambition! Sir, every man should be ambitious to serve his country, and every man should be rewarded for it: and pray, sir, would nae you wish to serve your country? Answer me that. I say, would nae you wish to serve your country?

Eger. Only shew me how I can serve my country, and my life is her's. Were I qualified to lead her armies, to steer her fleets, and to deal her honest vengeance on her insulting foes;—or could my eloquence pull down a state leviathan, mighty by the plunder of his country, black with the treasons of her disgrace, and send his infamy down to a free posterity, as a monumental terror to corrupt ambition, I would be foremost in such service, and act with the unremitting ardour of a Roman spirit.

Sir P. Why, are you mad, sir? you have certainly been bit by some mad whig or other. Oh! you are young, vary young in these matters; but experience will convince you, sir, that every man in public business has twa consciences—a religious and a political conscience. Why, you see a merchant now, or a shopkeeper, that kens the science o'the world, always looks upon an oath at a custom-house, or behind the counter, only as an oath in business, a thing of course, a mere thing of course, that has nothing to do with religion; and just so it is at an eleotion: for instance, now, I am a candidate, (pray observe,) and I gang till a periwig-maker, a hatter, or a hosier, and I give ten, twenty, or thraty guineas, for a periwig, a hat, or a pair of hose; and so on, through a majority of voters; vary weel! what is the consequence? why this commercial intercourse, you see, begets a friendship betwixt us—a commercial friendship—and in a day or twa, these men gang and give their suffrages; weel! what is the inference? Pray, sir, can you, or any lawyer, divine, or casuist, ca' this a bribe? Nae, sir, in fair political reasoning, it is ainly generosity on the one side, and gratitude on the other. So, sir, let me have nae more of your religious or philosophical refinements; but prepare, attend, and speak till the question, or you are nae son of mine.—Sir, I insist upon it.

Enter Sam.

Sam. Sir, my lord says the writings are now ready; and his lordship and the lawyers are waiting for you and Mr. Egerton.

Sir P. Vary weel, we'll attend his lordship. [*Exit Sam.*] Come, sir, let us gang down and finish this business.

Eger. (*Stopping Sir P. as he is going off.*) Sir, with your permission, I beg you will first hear a word or two upon this subject.

Sir P. Weel, sir, what would you say?

Eger. I have often resolved to let you know my aversion to this match—

Sir P. How, sir?

Eger. But my respect, and fear of disobliging you, have hitherto kept me silent.

Sir P. Your aversion!—your aversion, sir! How dare you use sic language to me? Your aversion! Lookye, sir; I shall cut the matter vary short: consider, my fortune is nae inheritance; a' mine ain acquisition; I can make ducks and drakes of it; so do not provoke me, but sign the articles directly.

Eger. I beg your pardon, sir, but I must be free on this occasion, and tell you at once, that I can no longer dissemble the honest passion that fills my heart for another woman.

Sir P. How! another woman? and, you villain! how dare you love another woman without my leave? But what other woman? what is she? Speak, sir,

Eger. Constantia. [speak.

Sir P. Constantia! Oh, you profligate! What, a creature taken in for charity!

Eger. Her poverty is not her crime, sir, but her misfortune: her birth is equal to the noblest; therefore, sir—

Sir P. Hand your jabbering, you villain! haud your jabbering; none of your romance nor refinement till me. I have but one question to ask you; but one question, and then I have done with you for ever—for ever; therefore, think before you answer: will you marry the lady, or will you break my heart?

Eger. Sir, my presence shall not offend you any longer; but when reason and reflection take their turn, I am sure you will not be pleased with yourself for this unparental passion. (*Going.*)

Sir P. Tarry, I command you; and I command you, likewise, not to stir till you have given me an answer—a definitive answer: will you marry the lady, or will you not?

Eger. Since you command me, sir—know, then, that I cannot, will not marry her. [*Exit.*

Sir P. Oh! the villain has shot me through the head! he has cut my vitals! I shall run distracted! the fellow destroys a' my measures, a' my schemes: there never was sic a bargain as I have made with this foolish lord: possession of his whole estate, with three boroughs upon it—six members. Why, what an acquisition! what consequence! what dignity! what weight till the house of Macsycophant! O, d—n the fellow! three boroughs, only for sending down six broomsticks! O, miserable! O, miserable! ruined! undone! For these five-and-twenty years, ever since this fellow came intill the world, have I been secretly preparing him for ministerial dignity; and, with the fellow's eloquence, abilities, popularity, these boroughs, and proper connexions, he might certainly, in a little time, have done the deed: and sure never were times so favourable, every thing conspires, for a' the auld political post-horses are broken-winded and foundered, and cannot get on; and as till the rising generation, the vanity of surpassing one another in what they foolishly call taste and elegance, binds them hand and foot in the chains of luxury, which will always set them up till the best bidder; so that, if they can but get wherewithal to supply their dissipation, a minister may convert the political morals of a' sic voluptuaries, intill a vote that would sell the nation till Prester John, and their boasted liberties till the great Mogul. [*Exit.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.—*A Library.*

Enter SIR PERTINAX *and* BETTY HINT.

Sir P. Come this way, Betty; come this way: you are a guid girl, and I will reward you for this discovery. Oh, the villain! offer her marriage!

Betty. It is true, indeed, sir; I would not tell your honour a lie for the world; but, in truth, it lay upon my conscience, and I thought it my duty to tell your worship.

Sir P. You are right, you are right; it was your duty to tell me, and I'll reward you for it. But you say Maister Sidney is in love with her too; pray how came you by that intelligence?

Betty. O, sir, I know when folks are in love, let them strive to hide it as much as they will. I know it by Mr. Sidney's eyes, when I see him stealing a sly look at her; by his trembling—his breathing short;—his sighing when they are reading together. Besides, sir, he has made love-verses upon her, in praise of her virtue, and her playing upon the music. Ay; and I suspect another thing, sir; she has a sweetheart, if not a husband, not far from hence.

Sir P. Wha, Constantia?

Betty. Ay, Constantia, sir. Lord, I can know the whole affair, sir, only for sending over to Hadley, to farmer Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir P. Then send this instant, and get me a particular account of it.

Betty. That I will, sir.

Sir P. In the meantime, keep a strict watch upon Constantia; and be sure you bring me word of whatever new matter you can pick up about her, my son, or this Hadley husband or sweetheart.

Betty. Never fear, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir P. This love of Sidney's for Constantia is not unlikely. There is something promising in it. Yes, I think it is nae impossible to convert it into a special and immediate advantage. It is but trying. Wha's there? If it misses, I am but where I was.

Enter TOMLINS.

Where is Maister Sidney?

Tom. In the dining-room, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Tell him I would speak with him. [*Exit Tomlins.*] 'Tis more than probable. Spare to speak, and spare to speed. Try, try, always try the human heart; try is as guid a maxim in politics as in war. Why, suppose this Sidney, now, should be privy till his friend Charles's love for Constantia, what then? guid trath, it is natural to think that his ain love will demand the preference; ay, and obtain it, too. Yes; self, self is an eloquent advocate on these occasions, and seldom loses his cause. I hae the general principle of human nature, at least, to encourage me in the experiment; for only make it a man's interest to be a rascal, and I think we may safely depend upon his integrity—in serving himself.

Enter SIDNEY.

Sid. Sir Pertinax, your servant. Mr. Tomlins told me you desired to speak with me.

Sir P. Yes, I wanted to speak with you upon a vary singular business. Maister Sidney, give me your hand. Guin it did nae look like flattery, which I detest, I would tell you, Maister Sidney, that you are an honour till your cloth, your country, and till human nature.

Sid. Sir, you are very obliging.

Sir P. Sit you down, Maister Sidney; sit you down here by me. (*They sit.*) My friend, I am under the greatest obligations till you for the care you have taken of Charles. The principles, religious, moral, and political, that you have infused intill him, demand the warmest return of gratitude both fra him and fra me.

Sid. Your approbation, sir, next to that of my own conscience, is the best test of my endeavours, and the highest applause they can receive.

Sir P. Sir, you deserve it; richly deserve it. And now, sir, the same care that you have had of Charles, the same my wife has taken of her favourite Constantia; and sure, never were accomplishments, knowledge, or principles, social and religious, infused intill a better nature.

Sid. In truth, sir, I think so too.

Sir P. She is besides a gentlewoman, and of as guid a family as any in this country.

Sid. So I understand, sir.

Sir P. Sir, her father had a vast estate; the which he dissipated and melted in feastings, and friendships, and charities, and hospitalities, and sic kind of nonsense: but to the business. Maister Sidney, I love you; yes, I love you; and I have been looking out, and contriving how to settle you in the world. Sir, I want to see you comfortably

and honourably fixed at the head of a respectable family; and guin you were mine ain son a thousand times, I cou'd nae make a more valuable present till you for that purpose, as a partner for life, than this same Constantia, with sic a fortune down with her as you yourself shall deem to be competent, and an assurance of every canonical contingency in my power to confer or promote.

Sid. Sir, your offer is noble and friendly; but though the highest station would derive lustre from Constantia's charms and worth, yet, were she more amiable than love could paint her in the lover's fancy, and wealthy beyond the thirst of the miser's appetite, I could not, would not wed her. (*Rises.*)

Sir P. Not wed her! odswounds, man! you surprise me! Why so—what hinders?

Sid. I beg you will not ask a reason for my refusal; but, briefly and finally, it cannot be; nor is it a subject I can long converse upon.

Sir P. Weel, weel, weel, sir! I have done, I have done. (*Sidney sits down.*) Sit you down, mon; sit you down again; sit you down; I shall mention it no more: not but I must confess honestly till you, friend Sidney, that the match, had you consented to my proposal, besides profiting you, would have been of singular service till me likewise. However, you may still serve me as effectually as if you had married her.

Sid. Then, sir, I am sure I will, most heartily.

Sir P. I believe it, friend Sidney; and I thank you: I have nae friend to depend upon but yourself. My heart is almost broke; I cannot help these tears. And, to tell you the fact at once, your friend Charles is struck with a most dangerous malady—a kind of insanity. You see I cannot help weeping when I think of it; in short, this Constantia, I am afraid, has cast an evil eye upon him. Do you understand me?

Sid. Not very well, sir.

Sir P. Why, he is grievously smitten with the love of her; and, I am afraid, will never be cured without a little of your assistance.

Sid. Of my assistance! pray, sir, in what manner?

Sir P. In what manner? lord! Maister Sidney, how can you be so dull? Now, then, my vary guid friend, guin you would but give him that hint, and take an opportunity to speak a good word for him intill the wench; and guin you would likewise cast about a little, now, and contrive to bring them together once: why, in a few days after, he would nae care a pinch of snuff for her. (*Sidney starts up.*) What is the matter with you, mon? What the devil gars you start, and look so astounded?

Sid. Sir, you amaze me! In what part of my mind or conduct have you found that baseness, which entitles you to treat me with this indignity?

Sir P. Indignity! What indignity do you mean, sir? Is asking you to serve a friend with a wench an indignity? Sir, am I not your patron and benefactor, eh?

Sid. You are, sir, and I feel your bounty at my heart; but the virtuous gratitude that sowed the deep sense of it there, does not inform me that, in return, the tutor's sacred function, or the social virtue of the man, must be debased into the pupil's pander, or the patron's prostitute.

Sir P. (*Rising.*) How! what, sir? do you dispute? Are you nae my dependant, eh? and do you hesitate about an ordinary civility, which is practised every day by men and women of the first fashion? Sir, let me tell you, however nice you may be, there is nae a client about the court that would nae jump at sic an opportunity to oblige his patron.

Sid. Indeed, sir, I believe the doctrine of pimping for patrons, as well as that of prostituting eloquence and public trust for private lucre, may be learned in your party schools: for, where faction and public venality are taught as measures necessary to good government and general prosperity, there every vice is to be expected.

Sir P. Oho! oho! vara weel, vara weel; fine slander upon ministers! fine sedition against government! O, ye villain! You—you—you are a black sheep, and I'll mark you. I am glad you shew yourself. Yes, yes; you have taken off the mask at last: you have been in my service for many years, and I never knew your principles before.

Sid. Sir, you never affronted them before; if you had, you should have known them sooner.

Sir P. It is vary weel; I have done with you. Ay, ay; now I can account for my son's conduct: his aversions till courts, till ministers, levees, public business, and his disobedience till my commands. Ah! you are a Judas—a perfidious fellow: you have ruined the morals of my son, you villain! But I have done with you. However, this I will prophecy at our parting, for your comfort, that guin you are so very squeamish about bringing a lad and a lass together, or about doing sic an a harmless, innocent job for your patron, you will never rise in the church.

Sid. Though my conduct, sir, should not make me rise in her power, I am sure it will in her favour; in the favour of my own conscience, too, and in the esteem of all worthy men; and that, sir, is a power and dignity beyond what patrons, or any minister, can bestow. [*Exit.*

Sir P. What a rigorous, saucy, stiff-necked rascal it is! I see my folly now; I am undone by mine ain policy. This Sidney is the last man that should have been about my son. The fellow, indeed, hath given him principles that might have done vary weel among the ancient Romans, but are d—d unfit for the modern Britons. Weel, guin I had a thousand sons, I never would suffer one of these English university-bred fellows to be about a son of mine again; for they have sic an a pride of literature and character, and sic saucy English notions of liberty continually fermenting in their thoughts, that a mon is never sure of them. But what am I to do?—Zoons! he must nae marry this beggar; I cannot set down tamely under that. Stay! haud a wee: By the blood, I have it! yes, I have hit upon it.

Enter Betty Hint.

Betty. O, sir! I have got the whole secret out.

Sir P. About what?

Betty. About Miss Constantia. I have just got all the particulars from farmer Hillford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford. [quick; what is it?

Sir P. Weel, weel; but what is the story? quick,

Betty. Why, sir, it is certain that Mrs. Constantia has a sweetheart, or a husband; a sort of a gentleman, or a gentleman's gentleman, they don't know which, that lodges at Gaffer Hodges; for Sukey says she saw them together last night, in the dark walk, and Mrs. Constantia was all in tears.

Sir P. Zoons! I am afraid this is too guid news to be true.

Betty. O! sir, 'tis certainly true. Besides, sir, she has just writ a letter to her gallant, and I have sent John Gardener to her, who is to carry it to him to Hadley. Now, sir, if your worship would seize it—see, see, sir; here John comes, with the letter in his hand. [till me.

Sir P. Step you out, Betty, and leave the fellow

Betty. I will, sir. [*Exit.*

Enter John, *with a packet and a letter.*

John. (*Putting the packet into his pocket.*) There, go you into my pocket. There's nobody in the library, so I'll e'en go through the short way. Let me see—what is the name?—Mel—Meltil—O, no! Melville, at Gaffer Hodge's.

Sir P. What letter is that, sir?

John. Letter, sir!

Sir P. Give it me, sir.

John. An't please you, sir, it is not mine.

Sir P. Deliver it this instant, sirrah, or I'll break your head.

John. There, there, your honour.

Sir P. Begone, rascal! This, I suppose, will let us intill the whole business.

John. (*Aside.*) You have got the letter, old Surly, but the packet is safe in my pocket. I'll go and deliver that, however, for I will be true to poor Mrs. Constantia in spite of you. [*Exit.*

Sir P. (*Reading the letter.*) Um—um—"*and bless my eyes with a sight of you.*"—Um—um—"*throw myself into your dear arms.*" Zoons! this letter is invaluable. Aha, madam! yes, this will do; this will do, I think. Let me see how it is directed—"*To Mr. Melville.*" Vary weel. [*Enter* BETTY.] O, Betty, you are an excellent wench; this letter is worth a million.

Betty. Is it as I suspected—to her gallant?

Sir P. It is, it is. Bid Constantia pack out of the house this instant; and let them get a chaise ready to carry her wherever she pleases. But first send my wife and son hither.

Betty. I shall, sir.

Sir P. Do so; begone! [*Exit Betty.*] Aha, Maister Charles! I believe I shall cure you of your passion for a beggar now. I think he cannot be so infatuated as to be a dupe. Let me see, how am I to act now? Why, like a true politician, I must pretend most sincerity where I intend most deceit.

Enter EGERTON *and* LADY MACSYCOPHANT.

Weel, Charles, notwithstanding the misery you have brought upon me, I have sent for you and your mother, in order to convince you both of my affection and my readiness to forgive; nay, and even to indulge your perverse passion. Sir, since I find this Constantia has got hold of your heart, and that your mother and you think that you can never be happy without her, why, I'll nae longer oppose your inclinations.

Eger. Dear sir, you snatch me from the sharpest misery; on my knees, let my heart thank you for this goodness.

Lady M. Let me express my thanks, too, and my joy; for, had you not consented to his marrying her, we all should have been miserable.

Sir P. Weel, I am glad I have found a way to please you both at last. But, my dear Charles, suppose, now, that this spotless vestal—this wonder of virtue—this idol of your heart, should be a concealed wanton after a'? or should have an engagement of marriage, or an intrigue with another man, and is only making a dupe of you a' this time; I say, only suppose it, Charles—what would you think of her?

Eger. I should think her the most deceitful, and most subtle of her sex; and, if possible, would never think of her again.

Sir P. Will you give me your honour of that?

Eger. Most solemnly, sir.

Sir P. Enough; I am satisfied: you make me young again. Your prudence has brought tears of joy fra my very vitals. I was afraid you were fascinated with the charms of a crack. Do you ken

Eger. Mighty well, sir. [this hand?

Sir P. And you, madam? [stantia's.

Lady M. As well as I do my own, sir; it is Con-

Sir P. It is so; and a better evidence it is, than any that can be given by the human tongue. Here is a warm, rapturous, lascivious letter, under the hypocritical syren's ain hand—her ain hand, sir. Ay, ay; here, take and read it yourself.

Eger. (*Reads.*) "*I have only time to tell you, that the family came down sooner than I expected, and that I cannot bless my eyes with the sight of you till the evening. The notes and jewels, which the bearer of this will deliver to you, were presented to me since I saw you by the son of my benefactor.*"—

Sir P. Now mark!

Eger. (*Reads.*) "*All which I beg you will convert to your immediate use.*"—

Sir P. Mark! I say.

Eger. (*Reads.*) "*For my heart has no room for any wish or fortune, but what contributes to your relief and happiness.*"—

Sir P. Oh! Charles, Charles! do you see, sir, what a dupe she makes of you? But mark what follows.

Eger. (*Reads.*) "*O, how I long to throw myself into your dear, dear arms; to soothe your fears, your apprehensions, and your sorrows. I have something to tell you of the utmost moment, but will reserve it till we meet this evening in the dark walk.*"—

Sir P. In the dark walk! in the dark walk! Ah! an evil-eyed curse upon her! Yes, yes; she has been often in the dark walk, I believe. But read on.

Eger. (*Reads.*) "*In the meantime, banish all fears, and hope the best from fortune, and your ever dutiful* CONSTANTIA HARRINGTON."

Sir P. There! there's a warm epistle for you!—in short, the hussy, you must know, is married till

Eger. Not unlikely, sir. [the fellow.

Lady M. Indeed, by her letter I believe she is.

Sir P. Now, madam, what amends can you make me for countenancing your son's passion for sic a strumpet? And you, sir, what have you to say for your disobedience and your frenzy? O, Charles, Charles!

Eger. Pray, sir, be patient; compose yourself a moment: I will make you any compensation in my power.

Sir P. Then instantly sign the articles of marriage.

Eger. The lady, sir, has never yet been consulted; and I have some reason to believe that her heart is engaged to another man.

Sir P. Sir, that is nae business of your's. I know she will consent, and that's aw we are to consider. O! here comes my lord.

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT.

Lord L. Sir Pertinax, every thing is ready and the lawyers wait for us. [Rodolpha?

Sir P. We attend your lordship. Where is lady

Lord L. Giving some female consolation to poor Constantia. Why, my lady—ha, ha, ha!—I hear your vestal has been flirting.

Sir P. Yes, yes, my lord; she's in vary guid order for any man that wants a wife and an heir till his estate intill the bargain.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Sir, there is a man below that wants to speak to your honour upon particular business.

Sir P. I cannot speak till any body now; he must come another time: haud—stay—what, is he a gentleman?

Tom. He looks something like one, sir—a sort of a gentleman; but he seems to be in a kind of a passion; for when I asked his name, he answered hastily. "It is no matter, friend; go tell your master there is a gentleman here that must speak to him directly."

Sir P. Must? ha! vary peremptory indeed: pr'ythee, let's see him, for curiosity's sake. [*Exit Tom.*

Enter LADY RODOLPHA.

Lady R. O! my Lady Macsycophant, I am come an humble advocate for a weeping piece of female frailty, wha begs she may be permitted to speak till your ladyship, before you finally reprobate her.

Sir P. I beg your pardon, Lady Rodolpha, but it must not be; see her she shall not.

Lady M. Nay, there can be no harm, my dear, in hearing what she has to say for herself.

Sir P. I tell you, it shall not be.

Lady M. Well, my dear, I have done.

Enter TOMLINS *and* MELVILLE.

Tom. Sir, that is my master. [*Exit.*

Sir P. Weel, sir, what is your urgent business with me?

Mel. To shun disgrace, and punish baseness.

Sir P. Punish baseness! what does the fellow mean? Wha are you, sir?

Mel. A man, sir; and one whose fortune once bore as proud a sway as any within this country's limits.

Lord L. You seem to be a soldier, sir?

Mel. I was, sir; and have the soldier's certificate to prove my service—rags and scars. In my heart for ten long years, in Iodia's parching clime, I bore my country's cause, and in noblest dangers sustained it with my sword; at length, ungrateful peace has laid me down where welcome war first took me

up—in poverty, and the dread of cruel creditors. Paternal affection brought me to my native land, in quest of an only child: I found her, as I thought, amiable as parental fondness could desire; but foul seduction has snatched her from me; and hither am I come, fraught with a father's anger and a soldier's honour, to seek the seducer, and glut revenge.

Lady M. Pray, sir, who is your daughter?

Mel. I blush to own her—but—Constantia.

Eger. Is Constantia your daughter, sir?

Mel. She is; and was the only comfort that nature, fortune, or my own extravagance had left me.

Sir P. Guid traith, then, I fancy you will find but vary little comfort fra her; for she is nae better than she should be. She has had nae damage in this mansion. I am told she is with bairn; but you may gang till Hadley, till one farmer Hodge's, and there you may learn the whole story, and wha the father of the bairn is, frae a cheeld they call Melville.

Mel. Melville!

Sir P. Yes, sir, Melville.

Mel. O! would to heaven she had no crime to answer but her commerce with Melville! No, sir; he is not the man: it is your son, your Egerton, that has seduced her; and here, sir, are the evidence of his seduction.

Eger. Of my seduction!

Mel. Of your's, sir, if your name be Egerton.

Eger. I am that man, sir; but pray what is your evidence?

Mel. These bills, and these gorgeous jewels; not to be had in her menial state, but at the price of chastity! Not an hour since she sent them, imprudently sent them, by a servant of this house: contagious infamy started from their touch.

Eger. Sir, do you but clear her conduct with Melville, and I will instantly satisfy your fears concerning the jewels and her virtue.

Mel. Sir, you give me new life; you are my better angel: I believe in your words—your looks. Know, then, I am that Melville.

Sir P. How, sir? you that Melville that was at farmer Hodge's?

Mel. The same, sir; it was he brought my Constantia to my arms—lodged and secreted me; once my lowly tenant, now my only friend. The fear of inexorable creditors made me change my name from Harrington to Melville, till I could see and consult some who once called themselves my friends.

Eger. Sir, suspend your fears and anger but for a few minutes; I will keep my word with you religiously, and bring your Constantia to your arms, as virtuous and as happy as you could wish her.

[*Exit with Lady Mac.*

Sir P. The clearing up of this wench's virtue is d—d unlucky; I am afraid it will ruin a' our affairs again; however, I have one stroke still in my head that will secure the bargain with my lord, let matters gang as they will. (*Aside.*) But I wonder, Maister Melville, that you did nae pick up some little matter of siller in the Indies. Ah! there have bonny fortunes snapt up there, of late years, by some of the military blades.

Mel. It is very true, sir; but it is an observation among soldiers, that there are some men who never meet with anything in the service, but blows and ill-fortune. I was one of those, even to a proverb.

Sir P. Ah! 'tis pity, sir, a great pity, now, that you did nae get a Mogul, or some sic an animal, intil your clutches. Ah! I should like to have the strangling of a nabob, the rummaging of his gold dust, his jewel-closet, and a' his magazines of bars and ingots. Ha, ha, ha! guid traith, naw, sic an a fellow would be a bonny cheeld to bring till this town, and to exhibit him riding on an elephant; upon honour, a man might raise a poll-tax by him, that would gang near to pay the debts of the nation.

Enter Egerton, Constantia, Lady Macsycophant, *and* Sidney.

Eger. Sir, I promised to satisfy your fears concerning your daughter's virtue; and my best proof is, that I have made her the partner of my heart, and the tender guardian of my earthly happiness for life.

Sir P. How! married!

Eger. I know, sir, at present, we shall meet your anger; but time, reflection, and our dutiful conduct, we hope, will reconcile you to our happiness.

Sir P. Never, never! and, could I make you, her, and a' your issue beggars, I would move hell, heaven, and earth to do it.

Lord L. Why, Sir Pertinax, this is a total revolution, and will entirely ruin my affairs.

Sir P. My lord, with the consent of your lordship and Lady Rodolpha, I have an expedient to offer, that will not only punish that rebellious villain, but answer every end that your lordship and the lady proposed by the intended match with him.

Lord L. I doubt it much, Sir Pertinax; I doubt it much. But what is it, sir? what is your expedient?

Sir P. My lord, I have another son, Sandy—eh! he's a guid lad; and, provided the lady and your lordship have nae objection till him, every article of that rebel's intended marriage shall be amply fulfilled upon Lady Rodolpha's union with my younger son.

Lord L. Why, that is an expedient, indeed, Sir Pertinax. But what say you, Rodolpha?

Lady L. Nay, nay, my lord; as I ha nae reason to have the least affection till my cousin Egerton, and as my intended marriage with him was entirely an act of obedience till my grandmother, provided my cousin Sandy will be as agreeable till her ladyship as my cousin Charles here would have been, I have nae the least objection till the change. Ay, ay; one brother is as good to Rodolpha as another.

Sir P. I'll answer, madam, for your grandmother. Now, my lord, what say you?

Lord L. Nay, Sir Pertinax, so the agreement stands, all is right again. Come, child, let us begone. Ay, ay; so my affairs are made easy, it is equal to me whom she marries. I say, Sir Pertinax, let them be but easy, and rat me if I care if she incorporates with the cham of Tartary. [*Exit.*

Sir P. As to you, my Lady Macsycophant, I suppose you concluded, before you gave your consent till this match, that there would be an end of a' intercourse betwixt you and me. You shall have a jointure; but not a bawbee besides, living or dead, shall you, or any of your issue, ever see of mine: and so, madam, live with your Constantia, with your son, and with that d—d black sheep there. [*Exit.*

Lady R. Weel, cousin Egerton, in spite of the ambitious frenzy of your father, and the thoughtless dissipation of mine, Don Cupid has at last carried his point in favour of his devotees. But I must now take my leave; and so, guid folks, I will leave you with the fag end of an auld north-country wish: "May mutual love and guid humour be the guest of your hearts, the theme of your tongues, and the blithsome subjects of aw your tricksome dreams through the rugged road of this deceitful world; and may our fathers be an example till ourselves, to treat our bairns better than they have treated us." [*Exit.*

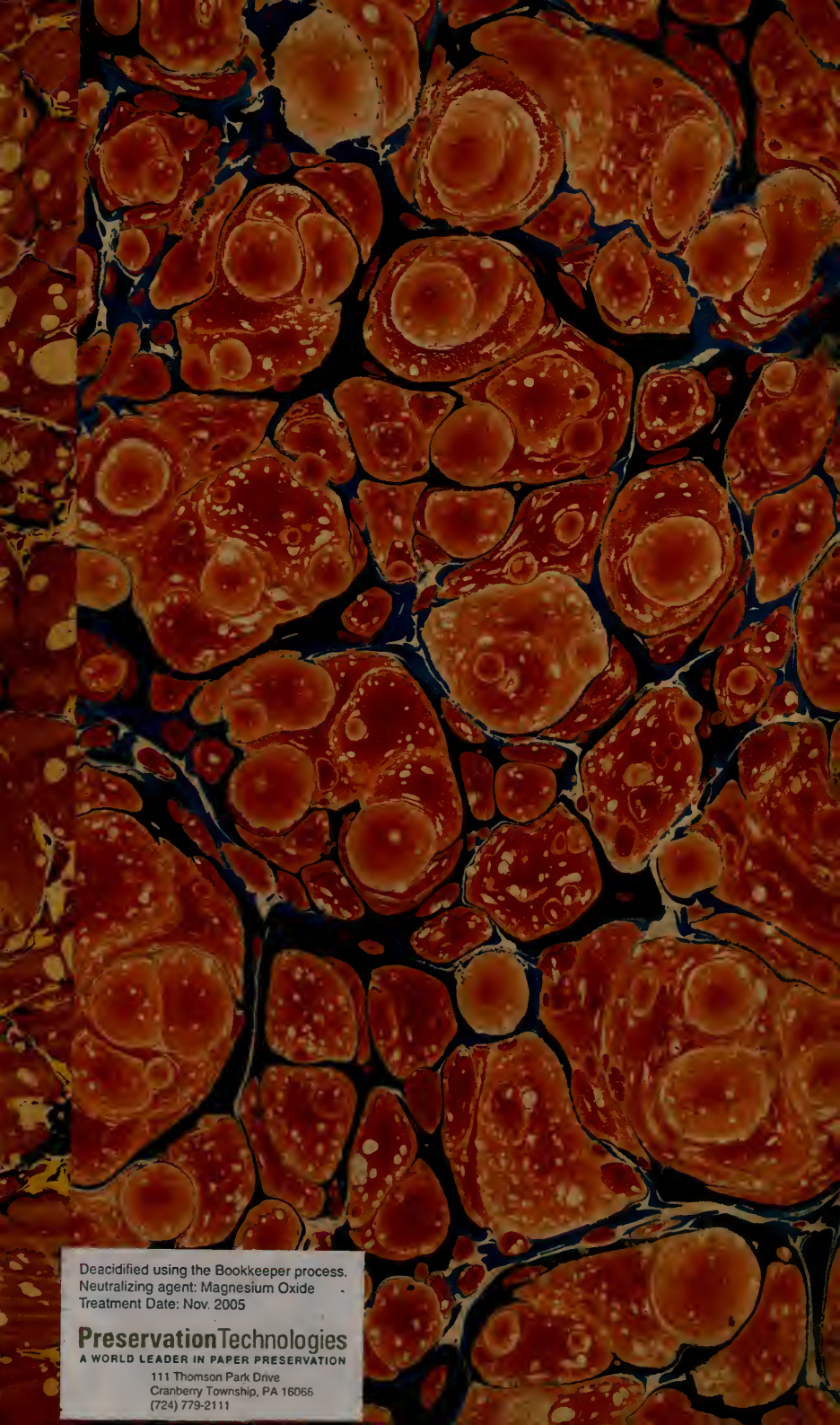
Eger. You seem melancholy, sir.

Mel. These precarious turns of fortune, sir, will press upon the heart; for, notwithstanding my Constantia's happiness, and mine in her's, I own, I cannot help feeling some regret, that my misfortunes should be the cause of any disagreement between a father and the man to whom I am under the most endearing obligations.

Eger. You have no share in his disagreement: if affluence can procure content and ease, they are within our reach. My fortune is ample, and shall be dedicated to the happiness of this domestic circle.

My scheme, though mock'd by knave, coquette, and fool,
To thinking minds will prove this golden rule:
In all pursuits, but chiefly in a wife,
Not wealth, but morals, make the happy life. [*Exeunt.*

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